

**Revelation: week #1**  
**Introduction & Chapter 1**

**Introduction to Revelation:**

**A. Author:**

- I. John, one of the 12 Disciples (Apostle John, John the Revelator) around A.D.95 (near the end of Domitian's rule)... he was release from Patmos under Nerva (A.D.96-98).
- II. Sentenced to Patmos (60 miles southwest of Ephesus in the Aegean Sea); he spent about 18 months there until he was released in A.D.96.
- III. Patmos was a labor camp to which criminals were banished and Christians were made to perform hard labor in mines and quarries.
- IV. Striking parallels exist between Revelation and the Gospel of John (his Gospel focuses on who Jesus is and the Holy Spirit).

**B. Background:**

- I. The Emperor Domitian ruled the Roman Empire at this time (A.D.81-96)
  - A. He unleashed severe persecution against the church. The main reason for this is that he was the first emperor to demand that all bow to him and call him "Lord and God."
  - B. The first day of the month was celebrated as the Emperor's Day all through Asia Minor. John's reference to the "Lord's Day (1:10) is a direct challenge to the blasphemy of emperor worship.
  - C. Domitian used political, economic/social measures to suppress Christian growth.

**C. Key Themes:**

- I. Written to the Church! (Rev. 1:3 –You are blessed b/c you study this Book)!
- II. Christ is no longer the suffering Passover Lamb, He is now the Lion of the Tribe of Judah.
- III. Revelation shows Jesus Christ in His fulfilled Majesty!
- IV. Predestination vs. Free Will (sin entering in the Garden of Eden)
  - As a result of choices, Satan is the ruler of this earth today
- V. Jesus takes back the "Title Deed" to His creation (earth!)
  - When He does; judgment will begin.
- VI. Revelation describes the "birth" of where we will spend eternity (Heaven or Hell). Christ referred to this time period as "birth pains" (Matthew 24:8).

**D. Symbolism & Allegory:**

- I. Revelation is the only NT book that uses the style of writing known as "apocalyptic writing," but it is used in the OT, often in the prophets (Daniel, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah, etc.).
- II. Why is Revelation steeped in allegory & symbolism?

- A. This style of writing frequently occurs during times of persecution and severe suffering! For Believers, this is an encoded message.
  - B. Evidence suggests that most Christians in the Roman Empire at this time had gone “under ground.”
  - C. Symbols, allegory and metaphor are also used to describe heavenly phenomena. This is the only way to describe heavenly realities in understandable, earthly terms. But even this figurative language is unable to convey the power and essence of what John saw: no speech could do this!
- III. Revelation was originally called “The Apocalypse,” which means the “unveiling” or “disclosure.”
- IV. This book was intended to clarify and reveal truth; not to conceal it!
- V. The title, “Revelation” (and even “Apocalypse”) are singular; this is ONE contiguous revelation.

### Chapter 1: v.1-8

- I. “Shortly come to pass” in v.1 (and terms such as “soon” and “quickly”) do not mean that these events will happen “soon,” but that they will happen “swiftly” once they begin to happen.
- II. The Greek word for “Angel” can also be translated “Messenger.”
- III. (v.4) “who is, who was, and is to come” is God the Father
- IV. The “7 Spirits” refers to the fullness of the Holy Spirit. “7” is totality in scripture (Jesus says to forgive 70x7 times... totally forgive, forever)!
  - A. In our culture today we use terms like “Perfect 10,” God says, “Perfect 7!”
- V. (v.4-5) John acknowledges the Trinity
  - A. “Him who is, and who was, and who is to come” = Father
  - B. “seven spirits” or “Seven-fold” Spirit = Holy Spirit (in His fullness)
  - C. Jesus Christ (v.5) = Son of God
    - Christ is represented in His 3-fold Person
      1. Prophet- “Faithful witness”
      2. Priest- “firstborn from the dead” (meaning most important of all who are raised from the dead; our intercessor)
      3. King- “Ruler of the kings of the earth”
- VI. (v.5-6) clearly depicts Jesus Christ as the victor over sin/death and His plan of Salvation.
- VII. “a kingdom of priests,” refers to the fact we do not need an earthly priest to intercede for us. We can go directly to God ourselves.
  - A. ***“Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” –Hebrews 4:16***
- VIII. (v.7) is the first mention in Revelation of the “Rapture” of Christ and should not be confused with the “Second Coming,” which we will participate in.

- A. *“For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.” -1 Thessalonians 4:16-18*
- B. In the “Second Coming” (Revelation 19), we will be with Him and He will set foot on the Mount of Olives (Zechariah 14:4).
- IX. (v.8) He is all-sufficient God!

### Chapter 1: v.9-11

- I. Trumpets are always significant in scripture
- A. Rev. 4:1 –a trumpet calls John into Heaven
  - B. Rev. 8 –trumpets signal that wrath of God will be poured out
  - C. In the OT, trumpets gathered the people to assemble, announced war and preceded proclamations.
  - D. In the future, trumpets will call the church home (1 Thess. 4:6), gather Israel (Matt. 24:31), and announce war on the world (Rev. 8:2).
- II. (v.9-10) John explains his circumstances & begins to explain what happened.
- III. (v.11) Each of the 7 Churches were all provincial capitals in Asia Minor.
- A. A courier could have run this circular route, and these churches, in turn, would function as distribution points for the *many* other churches in the area.
  - B. There were so many churches that Paul states in Acts 19:10 *“all the Jews & Greeks who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord.”*

### Chapter 1: v.12-20

- I. The 7 lamp stands are the 7 churches of Asia Minor (they may also represent the church in its totality... remember that 7 is totality, God’s perfect number).
- II. John sees Jesus as the exalted “High Priest!” His garments are that of the high priest.
- A. White hair = His eternalness (Dan. 7:9) & wisdom
  - B. His eyes (blazing fire) = see all judge what they see (Dan. 10:6)
  - C. Brass feet = Judgment; it was at the brass altar in the OT that sin was always judged. “Glowing in a blazing furnace” refers to purity!
  - D. Mighty voice “like the sound of rushing waters” = mightiness of His word and the “streams of divine revelation” that emanate from Christ (Psalm 29 & Ezekiel 43:2)
  - E. 7 Stars in His hand = the messengers (or pastors) of the churches.
  - F. Double-edged sword (coming from His mouth) = Authority and judgment of His word (Isaiah 11:4 & 49:2).
    - *“For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and*

*spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.” –Hebrews 4:12*

**G.** His shining face = His glory (Malachi 4:2)

\*NOTE: For more on “Jesus as High Priest,” see note #2 under “Points to Ponder” on Page #4.

III. (v.17) John falls at the feet of the “Glorified Christ”

IV. (v.18) Jesus describes Himself!

**A.** The Living One = He is the One who conquered death!

**B.** “I possess the keys of death and Hades (the realm of the dead).”

- Hades/Pluto was the **merciless** Greek/Roman god of the dead
- He ruled the afterlife, known as “the Realm of Hades”
- In the “Realm of Hades” was the place of judgment for souls and they were sentenced to spend eternity in one of 3 places;
  1. Elysium (Field of the Blessed) – equivalent to Heaven
  2. Tartus – equivalent to Hell
  3. The Asphodel Fields – equivalent to “Purgatory”
- He was often depicted holding a set of keys, indicating that there was no way out of his kingdom.
- Combining imagery from Greek/Roman mythology and Rev. 14:14-16, he was often portrayed as what we call the “Grim Reaper,” or an “angel of death.”

V. (v.19) Is a **clear** outline and instruction for interpretation of Revelation!

VI. (v.20) Is straight-forward in explaining “7 Stars” & the “7 Lampstands.”

**\*Some points to ponder:**

1. In **Matthew 24**, (which is a some-what lengthy chapter) Jesus goes into great detail about end times, covering such topics as
  - a. The Tribulation
  - b. The Rapture
  - c. His Return (or Second Coming)
  - d. The Anti-Christ, and so on...
  - e. In **Matthew 25**, Jesus goes on to tell some familiar parables about these topics.
2. **Jesus as “High Priest:”**
  - a. The purpose (or function) of a priest is to be the intercessor between God and mankind.
  - b. Jesus Christ, as all-sufficient God, is likened to the high priest Melchizedek of the OT (Genesis 14) by David & the author of Hebrews!
    - *The Lord has sworn and will not revoke or change it: You are a priest forever, after the manner and order of Melchizedek. The Lord at Your right hand will shatter kings in the day of His indignation. He will execute judgment [in overwhelming punishment] upon the nations; He will fill the valleys with the*

*dead bodies, He will crush the [chief] heads over lands many and far extended. -Psalm 110:4-6 (Amp)*

- The author of Hebrews makes this point throughout Hebrews; **Hebrews 4:14 - 8:13.**
- c. Melchizedek was High Priest of God Most High AND King of Salem in Genesis 14:17-24.
- His name “Melchizedek” means “King of Righteousness,” and his title, “King of Salem” means “King of Peace!”
  - No wonder Christ is compared to him, but Christ brings this to fruition by being the complete package as Prophet, Priest & King!

**Revelation: week #2**  
**Chapters 2-3**

**Chapter 2: Introduction**

I. The 7 Churches:

- A. The 7 churches to which Christ speaks are not the only churches of that day which had something wrong; rather, they represent all the sins & shortcomings that were rampant in all churches.
- B. They are actual, literal churches that did exist in Asian Minor (modern day Turkey).
- C. They also represent the “7 dominant ages (or stages)” of the church throughout history. In that view...
  - **Ephesus**- 1<sup>st</sup> century, apostolic church which started to grow cold and leave its first love (Jesus Christ as the center).
  - **Smyrna**- is the suffering church of the 2<sup>nd</sup>& 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries.
  - **Pergamum (Pergamos)**- was the church that joined the Roman Empire (the state church).
  - **Thyatira**- The period when the church introduced false doctrine and departed from Biblical truth.
  - **Sardis**- the church that comes back to the Word of God as sole authority of the church.
  - **Philadelphia**- the mission-minded church near the last days.
  - **Laodicea**- the lukewarm, apostate church of the end times.
- \*Note that the divisions between these ages are NOT exact. No definite lines exist between the ages.
- D. These churches also represent the 7 dominant types of churches (or congregations) that will exist through all ages.
  - **Ephesus**- Correct theology, but loveless
  - **Smyrna**- Suffering/persecuted church
  - **Pergamum (Pergamos)**- Politically correct church
  - **Thyatira**- False teaching (“sin is okay” in this church)
  - **Sardis**- Appears to be alive, but is spiritually dead
  - **Philadelphia**- Persevering, “missional” church
  - **Laodicea**- Wealthy, uncommitted, “lukewarm” church

\*It is clear that these are letters to 7 different types of churches, but one cannot ignore they do seem to follow the history of the church. I believe that these letters are to be interpreted in BOTH manners.

My own *personal* take on this “Church Ages” theory is not so much that one age ends and another begins, but that we **add to the previous age**.

For example; we take the *forsaking of our First Love* from Ephesus and in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Centuries add suffering and persecution. Later, under Constantine’s rule, we add “politics” to the mix; then false teaching is added in the “Age of Thyatira” and so on.

\*Note that a special word of commendation and encouragement is given to the true believers in each of the groups. The implication is that not all people who claim to

be true believers in each church are actually believers. Many will profess to know Christ, but will only be “going through the motions” of religion (see Matthew 7:22).

\*The message to almost every church contains 7 points:

1. Location of the church
2. Description of Jesus
3. A commendation
4. A conviction
5. An exhortation
6. A promise to the over-comer
7. A call to listen to the Holy Spirit

### Chapter 2:1-7 (Ephesus)

- I. The city of Ephesus was founded upon worship of Artemis (Diana). Her temple in one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world. Worship of her involved some of the most grotesque practices (fertility/sexuality practices, temple prostitutes, infant sacrifice, etc.).
- II. This is where Paul was almost killed in a public riot (Acts 19:23-41)
- III. (v.1) Christ is described as the center and focus of the church!
- IV. (v.2-3) They have persevered and remained faithful
- V. (v.4) They had become so caught up in “doing good things” that they had lost their fervor in serving Jesus Christ (He was no longer their center & focus) On the outside, they were busy with full calendars and no room for false teaching, they had become insincere in their love for Christ and each other {see Romans 12:9-11}.
- VI. (v.5) Repent! Yes, the church needs to repent!
  - A. If they do not repent, there is a consequence; they will be in darkness!
    - *“In the absence of light, darkness prevails!”*
  - B. Refocus on Christ!
    - *“Let us fix our eyes on Jesus Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith.” -Hebrews 12:2*
- VII.(v.6) The practices of the Nicolaitans were combinations of Christianity and pagan practices!
  - A. Nicolaitans were followers of Nicolaus (whose name means “to conquer the people”).
  - B. A “priestly” clergy developed in Ephesus which lorded over the people by making them believe that these clergy alone had a monopoly on spiritual insight and they were the people’s intercessors to God.
    - This is clearly an ungodly approach to spiritual leadership. Jesus warned us of this in Matthew 20:25-26, *“Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant.”*

- C. Some evidence suggests that the “Nicolaus” who began this movement was one of the original 7 Deacons mentioned in Acts 6:5, who was a recent convert.
  - D. Paul warned Timothy (who had been the pastor of the church in Ephesus) not to allow recent converts to serve in leadership roles.
- VIII. (v.7) Listen to the Holy Spirit! The “tree of life,” mentioned reflects the state of God’s relationship with mankind before the “fall” (Genesis 2:9). It is later mentioned in Revelation 22.
- IX. The Jewish menorah (which was a lamp stand) that was placed in the OT temple was designed to depict the “tree of life.”

### Chapter 2:8-11 (Smyrna)

- I. Smyrna is the suffering church.
- II. The name “Smyrna” is derived from the same word as “myrrh,” a lovely herb that gives off its beautiful scent when crushed. Many theologians believe this to be a parallel to Christians being most “Christ-like” in the midst of persecution.
- III. Rebuilt by Alexander the Great, Smyrna became a wealthy and famous city with an unbreakable allegiance to Rome.
- IV. In A.D. 26, the city of Smyrna petitioned Emperor Tiberius to allow the community to build a temple to his deity! Permission was granted, and Smyrna constructed the second Asian temple to the emperor. Smyrna has worshipped Rome & the Emperors since 195 B.C.
- V. (v.8) Christ is identified to Smyrna as “First and Last,” “the who died and came to life again,” reminding believers that He too was persecuted.
- VI. (v.9) Christ has only good things to say about this church! Despite their poverty, Christ tells them that they are spiritually rich (which is in great contrast to the church of Laodicea).
  - A. Their poverty was due to their faithfulness to Christ. Their businesses were boycotted or shut down and their goods confiscated.
- VII. The “Jews” mentioned in v.9 does mean the Jewish nation, rather, “Judaizers” who were spreading legalism throughout the church that believers were not really saved unless they adopted Jewish rituals and ceremonies.
- VIII. (v.10) Christ encourages them to remain faithful and persevere.
  - A. Many scholars believe that the “10 days” mentioned refers to the 10 massive waves of persecution that were unleashed on the church by the Caesars during the 2<sup>nd</sup>& 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries.
  - B. The 10 Caesars who persecuted the church were **Nero, Domitian, Trajan, Antoninus, Severus, Maximian, Decius, Valerian, Aurelian, and Diocletian.**
  - C. The “crown of life” mentioned is not a *royal* crown, but *victor’s* crown awarded to the winner of athletic contests in the Roman Empire.
    - This same imagery is used by Paul; “*Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games*

*goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.” -1 Corinthians 9:24-25*

- D. Smyrna was also famous for science, medicine and the majesty of its buildings. The “Crown of Porticoes” was a circle of beautiful public buildings that ringed the summit of Mount Pagos like a diadem. (v.10 is yet another slam on the Roman Empire).
- E. The Romans were too pragmatic to indulge in the costly custom of keeping alive such a large criminal population at the cost of the state.
- IX. (v.11) The “second death” refers to hell. As the old adage goes “those who are born twice die only once; those who are born once, die twice.”

### **Chapter 2:12-17 (Pergamum; aka. Pergamos)**

- I. The Greek name Pergamos means “married.” This church became “married” to the world’s wrong ways, thus false doctrine and practices crept into the church.
- II. Pergamum was a great city, famous for its learning, refinement and science, especially medicine.
- III. It did not have much commerce, but it was so attractive and “elite” that many kings and nobles made it their home. Its library consisted of 200,000 volumes (second only to the library at Alexandria).
- IV. Pergamum was famous for worship of Aesculapius, noted by the sign of the weathered serpent (still used in medicine today)! The early pagan days of medicine were identified with worship of Satan who counterfeited the place of Christ; Aesculapius was known as “Savior” and “Preserver.”
- V. (v.12) The double-edged sword of God’s Word that refers judgment (Hebrews 4:12) is accentuated to Pergamum because of their departure from His Word.
- VI. (v.13) “where Satan has his throne” is direct attack on the pagan kings who had made Pergamum their home and that emperor worship was centered in this city.
- VII. (v.14) Balaam refers to the hireling prophet of the OT who “led Israel into sin in return for the wealth and prestige he received.
  - A. Baal worship dominated the “Fertile Crescent” in the OT. Balaam tried to curse the Israelites and drive them out. When he was unsuccessful, “Plan B” was to have the Moabites marry the Israelites and eventually draw them away from the Lord and eventually they worshipped the Moabite gods.
- VIII. (v.15) Where Nicolaitism had started to creep into the church earlier, it is by this time established by dividing the church into 2 “classes;” priests and people. This is not advocated by scripture, since all believers are a part of the body of Christ and all are a royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9). This teaching at its worst maintains the priests’ infallibility, which is NEVER endorsed by scripture!
- IX. In (v.16) we find a call for the church to repent!
- X. (v.17) “manna” was bread from Heaven in the OT.

- A. This could be a reference to when Jesus described Himself as the "Bread of Life."
  - B. It could also refer to manna that was placed in the Ark of the Covenant before it vanished {see Hebrews 9:3-5}. John later sees the Ark of the Covenant in Revelation 11:19.
  - C. More likely, because Christ's depiction with the double-edged sword coming out of His mouth, it refers to the Word of God sustaining believers. Jesus tells Satan in Matthew 4:4, *"It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" He was quoting from Deuteronomy 8:3, "He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD."*
- XI. The "white stone" with a new name on it is admission into Heaven (or to the "Marriage Feast of the Lamb {Rev.19})."
- A. Polished black and white stones were used to cast votes in elections and jury trials. Small stones engraved with the secret name of a god were carried as amulets that protected the owner. Wealthy benefactors and government agents gave engraved stones that entitled the bearer to food, money from the public treasury, or admission to sporting events and concerts. Of special interest are the engraved stones awarded to victorious athletes and gladiators. The stones granted privileges, including free admission to feasts. Common folk were given small stones as engraved invitations to participate in pagan feasts celebrated in honor of the gods.

\*During the "age of Smyrna," persecution came from outside the church. In the centuries that followed, "age of Pergamum," Satan tried to destroy the church from within by "wedding" it to the world. Here's how it happened...

- Emperor Constantine made Christianity the state religion of the Roman Empire. While that appeared to be a good thing, it was, in fact, awful since people were paid to be converts. Gibbon (in the [Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire](#)) writes, *"A white garment with 20 pieces of gold had been promised by the emperor to every convert."* These "converts" were brought into a church that tolerated (and often incorporated) their pagan practices. *"Thus, state and church were wed on that unfortunate day and we have paid the price ever since." (Dr. Ron Shafer).*

### **Chapter 2:18-29 (Thyatira)**

- I. Christ says more to this church than any other six.
- II. The "Thyatira Age" existed approx. A.D. 600-1500. A very sad and disappointing time in history for the church because the church had grown so weak. We call this period "The Middle Ages," or "The Dark Ages."
- III. During this period, the "church" was married to the political system. Rome became incredibly corrupt and punished those people who would not bow

- down to its system. Rome punished those who clung to Biblically-based worship of God. Although the Roman Empire was on the decline politically and militarily, its spiritual grip on entire known world grew substantially! The church in Rome was a stronger force than the kings of queens of various countries (i.e. France, England, Spain, etc.). These kings and queens were subject to what Rome declared.
- IV. *Pergamos began to allow compromise because it had married the world. But what was rare in that church became business as usual in Thyatira. Compromise had started in Pergamos, but it was nevertheless still somewhat rare, and many people fought against compromise; but in Thyatira such heresy became the norm of the day. It is fare to say that the beginnings of sin in Pergamos became full blown in Thyatira: it represented full-scale idolatry and immorality. (Dr. Ron Shafer)*
- V. It was during this time period (A.D. 600-1500) that such non-Biblical, human-initiated practices came into being in the church (i.e. indulgences, simony, purgatory, ecclesiastical infallibility, etc.). These practices have no basis in scripture, but rather hold human teaching and ideology to be equal to or greater than God's Word!
- VI. During John's time there was an impressive temple to the goddess Artemis (Diana) located in Thyatira, and much like Ephesus worship centered around the temple prostitutes.
- VII. (v.18) Again, Christ is depicted as "all-seeing" and with judgment implied. The fiery eyes represent "refinement" and the bronze feet refer to judgment of sin.
- VIII. Note that Jesus refers to Himself as "Son of God," not "Son of Man" (as He often used this name for Himself in the Gospels). The reason for this is that "Son of Man" refers to Christ's humanity (God in human form); this statement (Son of God) refers to His divine majesty!
- IX. (v.19) This church is commended for their love, faith and service! This is in great contrast to Ephesus. However, in spite of their love, they forsook Biblical doctrine and allowed immorality to become rampant!
- X. (v.20) "Jezebel" is most likely not the name of a specific woman in the church at Thyatira, but is comparing the current woman and/or women in leadership of that church to Queen Jezebel from the OT.
- A. It's interesting to note that in the NT, we are required to follow 3 specific principles of Jewish law; 1. Do not drink blood, 2. Do not eat foods sacrificed to idols, 3. Abstain from sexual immorality. "Jezebel" leads the church into participating in 2 of the 3 as acts of worship! The trouble here is NOT that they have rejected Jesus Christ as Savior, but have attempted to combine pagan practices with worship of a Holy and Perfect Savior.
- XI. "Jezebel" in the OT was a prophetess of Baal (fertility god), who seduced King Ahab into leading God's people to destruction, including hunting down and killing the prophets of the Lord (1 Kings 18).
- A. *Ahab son of Omri did more evil in the eyes of the LORD than any of those before him. He not only considered it trivial to commit the sins of*

*Jeroboam son of Nebat, but he also married Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and began to serve Baal and worship him. He set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal that he built in Samaria. Ahab also made an Asherah pole and did more to arouse the anger of the LORD, the God of Israel, than did all the kings of Israel before him. -1 Kings 16:30-33*

- B. Asherah was the female fertility goddess paired with Baal.
  - C. It was in response to Jezebel's rule that Elijah challenged the 450 prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. When he was successful and put the priests of Baal to death, Ahab ran to inform Jezebel who then became bent on killing Elijah.
  - D. *There was never anyone like Ahab, who sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord, urged on by Jezebel his wife. -1 Kings 21:25*
- XII. (v.21) Notice God's grace in the midst of this message of judgment, "I have given her time to repent," God does not tolerate open sin. We must accept the sinner and hate the sin just as Christ loves us and hates the sin in our lives. The true love of God does not condone sinful behavior in name of sparing one's feelings.
- XIII. (v.22-23) These verses are a direct prophecy of STDs and infertility.
- XIV. (v.24-25) Words of encouragement to those who have not compromised!
- XV. (v.26) This verse is in reference to the 1,000-year reign mentioned in Revelation 20.
- XVI. (v.28) This verse implies that the over-comers will be like and reign with Christ (the Morning Star).

### **Chapter 3:1-6 (Sardis)**

- I. Sardis is the dead church that appears to be alive.
- II. The "Sardis Age" in church history was about A.D. 1500-1700. This was the period of the Reformation in Europe.
  - A. Much good came out of the Reformation because it helped to check non-scriptural teachings (priest as confessor, priest as mediator between believer and God, purgatory, Virgin Mary over-emphasis, indulgences, celibacy for priests, etc).
  - B. However, the Reformation also caused people to become "protestant" in droves without truly accepting Christ as Savior and becoming Christians! Whole countries converted to "Protestantism" because it became the state religion and such state churches as the "Church of Ireland," the "Church of England" and others sprung into being with their own "Popes," "Bishops," and non-Biblical traditions. This created a wave a "believers" who were not sincere "Christians." They were not saved and did not have the Holy Spirit, did a lot of good things and behaved "religiously." This gave them the reputation of being alive, but really being spiritually dead!
  - C. Yet, despite the negative repercussions of the Reformation, the truth of God's Word being spread paved the way for an age of Christianity

that would bring the Gospel message with zeal (Philadelphia Age) from about A.D. 1700-1900.

- III. Sardis was once a proud and prosperous city, but by John's time was on the decline. However, the church in Sardis had a great history of good works and success and they relied on their "glory days" to sustain them. As a result, Christ tells them to "Wake up!" in verse 2.
  - IV. (v.1) Christ is depicted holding the fullness of the Holy Spirit and the 7 Pastors of the churches in His hands.
  - V. (v.2) Christ challenges the church to "strengthen what remains." They had become lazy and felt that all their hard work and success in the past was enough, but their work is not done.
    - A. Paul warns Timothy of these kinds of people when he write to him about those who "have a form of godliness, but deny the power of it" (2 Timothy 3:5)
  - VI. (v.3) He reminds them of their calling as a church and calls them to repent! Most scholars believe that the warning "come like a thief in the night" refers to the rapture.
  - VII.(v.4-5) Point out that despite the church's laziness, there are still those who remain on fire for Christ!
  - VIII. We've found 3 groups of people in the church of Sardis:
    - A. Unsaved- This was the majority of them. They thought they were saved because of their good works, but there were not.
    - B. Carnal Christians- Believers who allowed themselves to become apathetic in their walk with Christ.
    - C. Pure & undefiled- Those He commends that "*have not soiled their clothes.*"
  - IX. (v.6) This message also ends with a warning to listen to the Holy Spirit!
- \*Note that this church did NOT receive a word of praise, only a warning and an encouragement to those who still have a zeal for Christ.

### **Chapter 3:7-13 (Philadelphia)**

- I. Philadelphia was a newer city than the other 6 (founded in 140 B.C. by the king of Pergamos, named Attalus Philadelphus who was famous for his devotion to his brother Eumenes. Hence, his name means "brotherly love").
- II. Earthquakes and volcanic activity in this area were often forcing residents to flee. An earthquake in A.D. 17 destroyed the city and it was rebuilt under Tiberius.
- III. Agriculture was the economic mainstay, and grapes were the chief crop causing a thriving wine-making industry. Thus, worship of Dionysus (god of wine and drunkenness) was popular. He was also a fertility god. Agriculture societies linked human sexual practices to the fertility of crops. Their worship was an attempt to seduce the fertility gods into sexual activity that would fertilize the ground and produce crops.
- IV. Christ offers NO words of condemnation to this church!
- V. The "Philadelphia Age" was approx. A.D. 1700-1900. A time when the church began to break apart structurally, but Christians sought none-state religious

- freedom in a new land (U.S.A.) and missionaries took the Gospel all over the globe. The Gospel spread widely during this time in history, however, there were those that came along during this time period and did terrible, ungodly things in the name of Christianity (they are a “synagogue of Satan”).
- VI. (v.7) Christ is depicted holding the “key of David.” This key implies that Christ alone has the authority to open & close the door of Heaven. This key is mentioned by the prophet Isaiah, *“I will place on his shoulder the key to the house of David; what he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.” –Isaiah 22:22*
- VII.(v.8-9) Christ commends their faithfulness. The “synagogue of Satan” does not refer the Jewish nation, but to those who infiltrated the church and were teaching that to be a Christian you had to first become Jewish & follow all the Jewish customs of old. Paul calls these people “agitators” (Galatians 5:12) and says that they were “perverting the Gospel and throwing the church into confusion” (Galatians 1:7), and that they should be “eternally condemned” (Galatians 1:9). He also points out that those who follow them and their teaching are NOT saved, *“If you seek to be justified and declared righteous and to be given a right standing with God through the Law, you are brought to nothing and so separated (severed) from Christ. You have fallen away from grace (from God’s gracious favor and unmerited blessing).” –Galatians 5:4 (Amp)*
- VIII.(v.9) is reminiscent of Philippians 2:10-11, *“that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*
- IX. (v.10) makes 2 points, the first that the Tribulation is on its way, and the second that He will take care of His people. Most scholars agree that this is a reference to the Rapture.
- X. (v.11-13) Encouragement to remain faithful and persevere. The “crown” mentioned in v.11 is most likely a “victor’s crown” that we mentioned in the letter to Smyrna.
- XI. (v.12) The reference to being a “pillar in the temple” and having written on it “the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem,” has several significant points.
- A. *“In the ancient world, people were recognized by having pillars erected in their memory or honor. Their names were placed on these pillars which were part of their temples.”(Dr. Ron Shafer)*
  - B. Pillars are built upon a solid, firm foundation (Jesus Christ). Christian leaders who were solid in their faith in Christ were often referred to as “pillar.” (i.e. *“James, Cephas [Peter] and John, those esteemed as pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me.” –Galatians 2:9*)
  - C. It is also interesting to note that the ancient city of Philadelphia exists today. Its modern name is Alasehir, which means “City of God” in Arabic and it is strictly Muslim. Christianity (if it exists at all there today) is under-ground. The only remaining remnant of a church is one huge pillar amongst the ruins.

XII.(v.13) Again, we find a warning to listen to the Holy Spirit.

### Chapter 3:14-22 (Laodicea)

- I. This is probably the most well known section of Revelation today. Laodicea is the “Lukewarm Church.”
- II. The name Laodicea means “Rule of the People.” While at first glance this may appear to be a good, democratic society, the problem is that is not ruled by God!
- III. The “Laodicea Age” begins in the early 1900s and continues until the Tribulation. During this time period, the church has become compromised, and lost its “fire” for Christ. It is more about superficial success than Jesus Christ. This is the age we live in today. Scholars & theologians have MUCH to say about the “Age of Laodicea,” but we won’t get into all of it due to time. The evidence of “Lukewarm Christianity” is obvious and evident in our Post-Modern society. Just one example is our universities...
  - A. The first 123 institutions of higher learning in this country were founded to propagate the Gospel, to tell the world of Jesus Christ. The charters, constitutions, and by-laws of these institutions contained wording to this effect. *“All of these institutions have sold out to Satan, and rarely can one even mention Jesus without being laughed to scorn.”* (Dr. Ron Shafer)
- IV. The ancient city of Laodicea was known for its wool, wealth and medicine; so, Christ uses those images (v.18). It was founded in 250 B.C. by Antiochus II and named for his wife, Laodicea. It was also the crossroads of 3 main highways. Laodicea was a famous banking center and due to its wealth and influence, was quite fashion-conscious. Today, Laodicea is a mass of ruins.
- V. Not one good word is spoken to this church!
- VI. (v.14) Christ is established at the ruler (not the people). The term “Amen” refers to Christ as the One we put our faith in.
  - A. The word “Amen” itself is a statement of faith meaning “*so be it,*” or “*I believe it.*”
- VII.(v.15-16) Christ makes a VERY strong point that He is disgusted with their luke-warmness! His reference to “spewing them out of His mouth” is an image that resonates in the hearts and minds of the Laodicean Christians!
  - A. The nearby area of Hierapolis was famous for its hot, mineral springs. This water was irrigated to Laodicea via aqueduct, but by the time it reached its destination was disgustingly lukewarm. At the same time, ice-cold, crystal-clear water was aqueducted to Laodicea from Colossae, but it lost its coldness and also became lukewarm. This caused a severe drinking water issue in Laodicea and people would literally get sick and spitting and vomiting in the streets!
- VIII. (v.17-18) are direct references to their physical wealth and “trendiness.” Each one of the statements in these verses is a correction of their dependence upon themselves rather than God.
  - A. Banking was one of their largest businesses.

- B.** A much sought-after black wool was manufactured in Loadicea.
- C.** Laodicea's medical college had developed an eye salve and people would travel great distances to come there and have this salve put on their eyes to cure blindness and cataracts.
- IX. (v.19) He corrects this church calls them to repent because He LOVES them!
- X. (v.20) Note that Christ is outside the door of the CHURCH! He is not standing and knocking at the doors the unbelievers' heart, He has been put outside of the church itself!
- XI. (v.21) Our reward in Heaven is that we are "joint-heirs" with Jesus Christ!
- XII.(v.22) Once more, "listen to the Holy Spirit!"

**Revelation: week #3**  
**Chapters 4-6**

**Chapter 4: Introduction**

- I. The key word/theme for this chapter is “THRONE!” In Chapter 4, we enter the Throne Room of Heaven and encounter God in His complete fullness and glory seated upon His throne!

**Chapter 4**

- I. (v.1) John is “raptured” into Heaven. This is one of 7 “raptures” mentioned in scripture.
  1. Enoch (Genesis 5:24)
  2. Elijah (2 Kings 2:11)
  3. Isaiah (Isaiah 6)
  4. Christ (Acts 1:9)
  5. Apostle Paul writes of a man who had a vision of being raptured into heaven (2 Corinthians 12:1-5) (some believe this man was Paul).
  6. John (Revelation 4:1)
  7. The Church (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18)

\*One more note about the “rapture:”

- After Chapter 3, the church is not mentioned again until Christ’s Return in Chapter 19, only believers who come to accept Christ during the Tribulation! This opens up debate between scholars about when the rapture will take place.
  1. Pre-Trib (right before the Tribulation begins)
  2. Mid-Trib (exactly half-way through the Tribulation)
  3. Post-Trib (as soon as the Tribulation ends; this is the least-likely scenario).

\*Some believe that the “rapture” will happen in 3 stages and believers will be raptured in all 3 of these stages.

II. (v.2) John enters the Throne Room of Heaven!

III. (v.3) God the Father on His throne!

- A. Jasper is clear in color representing God’s purity & holiness.
- B. Carnelian (or sardine) is red and represents His right to judge.
- C. Emerald green- Grace & mercy (these 3 are all stones that were worn on the breastplate of the OT priest).
- D. Rainbow- God’s covenant of Salvation & mercy.
  - Note that John sees a rainbow completely encircling the throne (we only see rainbow as an arch or half-circle).
- E. It’s also interesting to note that all throughout this book of judgment we are continually reminded of God love, grace & mercy!

IV. (v.4) The 24 Elders are NOT angels for several reasons:

- A. Angels are NEVER depicted on thrones (they serve God and God’s people).
- B. Angels NEVER appear with crowns
- C. Revelation 7:11 distinguishes these elders from the angels

- D. 24 priests served in the OT.
- The OT tabernacle & temple were to be an earthly representation of approaching this throne in Heaven!
- V. (v.5) This is a picture of judgment beginning. God “thundered” when He gave the Law. The 7 lamps are the Holy Spirit in His fullness (remember 7 is completeness).
- VI. Lightning is also a picture of judgment and power/authority. Satan lost his authority & power when he was ejected from Heaven (Isaiah 14:12-15), and we find that **WE** have authority over him through Jesus Christ (Luke 10:18)
- A. *The seventy-two returned with joy and said, “Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.” He replied, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.” –Luke 10:17-20*
- VII. Fire and smoke often depicted the presence of the Holy Spirit (especially in the OT).
- VIII. (v.6) The “sea of glass” represents holiness and purity.
- IX. The 4 “creatures” (which is a better translation than “beasts” that is used in some translations represent God’s covenant with the earth, and they are all-seeing (hence being covered in eyes).
- A. 4 is the “earth’s number” in scripture (4 directions, 4 seasons, etc.)
- X. (v.7) Lion (wild animals), ox (domesticated animals), man (human race) and the eagle (fowl) are all before the throne worshipping God. These creatures represent all of creation, which was designed to bring glory to God.
- XI. (v.8) Each of these creatures had 6 wings, which means they are “Seraphim” (Seraphs). Seraphim are a “class” of angel that have 6 wings and always stay in the throne room of Heaven.
- A. *In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty the whole earth is full of his glory.” At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. –Isaiah 6:1-4*
- \*Note the title they give God, “**Lord God Almighty.**” This is the exact title Emperor Domitian used for himself! This title may be a shot at the Roman emperors who saw themselves as god.
- XII. (v.9-10) The 24 Elders (the church) join in the worship and lay their crowns before Lord God Almighty!
- XIII. (v.11) Notice that their song proclaims God worthiness as well as referencing creation!
- \*The stage is now set for Jesus Christ to receive the “title deed” to the earth!

## Chapter 5

- I. (v.1-3) This scroll is incredibly important...
  - A. It is in God's RIGHT hand (note also that Christ sits at the "right hand of the throne of God"). See "Acts 2:33" & "Hebrews 12:2."
  - B. It has writing on BOTH sides!
  - C. It is sealed. *Legal documents in those days were closed by listing witnesses and were sealed shut with wax over the threads that tied the scroll shut. The witnesses would press their seals into this wax. Seals reserved the contents for the rightful recipient(s) –as authenticated by the witnesses. (Archaeological Study Bible)*
  - D. This scroll is the will (or testament) that gives Christ His rightful inheritance, namely the earth (all creation). The only rightful recipient, of course, then is Jesus Christ!
    - *The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. –Colossians 1:15-16*
  - E. Until now (since the Fall in Eden) the earth has been under the dominion of Satan, sin and death, but here we see Christ taking back what is rightfully His.
- II. (v.4-5) John weeps because Christ, the rightful heir, is nowhere to be found! Many scholars believe that John expected to see Jesus in His glory, just as he had seen Him in Chapter 1, but John now sees Christ as the Lamb that was slain! This is somewhat reminiscent to how Christ was treated when on this earth; the people wanted a "king" to overthrow the Romans and be a political leader, but Christ came to be the suffering Lamb of God (and many did not recognize Him as the Messiah b/c He was not what they expected Him to be).
- III. (v.6) Christ is the only One worthy to take this scroll b/c He was slain for our sin and He is now enthroned on high!
  - A. Horns were an ancient Jewish symbol of strength. Here, the Lamb (even though He was slain) has complete, full strength!
  - B. We also see another picture of the Trinity here (the Lamb [Son] on the throne [Father] with the 7 spirits [Holy Spirit]).

\*It is also interesting to note that the 7 spirits had been sent out into all the earth!
- IV. (v.7-13) Once Jesus takes back the title deed to the earth Heaven erupts into worship! A few points to note about this time of worship:
  - A. Incense always represents the prayers of the saints
  - B. The redeemed and Seraphim sing a new song of "redemption"
  - C. Countless angels sing a song of praise to the Lamb (v.11-12)
  - D. Together, everyone sings praise & honor to the Lamb (v.13)
- V. (v.14) The 4 creatures declare, "Amen" and Elders (the church) keep worshipping.

## Chapter 6: The Tribulation Begins

- I. The opening of each seal (each “wave” of the Tribulation) is announced!
- II. Jesus said in Matthew 24:14, *“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”*  
This does not mean that the whole world will hear the Gospel before the Tribulation. Many will hear the Gospel during the Tribulation.
  - A. The Tribulation is not “the end,” but rather “the beginning of the end.”
- III. These events are things that will take place. Many have fallen into the mis-teachings that many of these prophecies are events that have already taken place in history. These events that are described as the Tribulation are much more dire and drastic than any dreadful point in history.
- IV. Besides Revelation, many other Books of the Bible describe the Tribulation (Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 17 & 21, and many of the prophets mention it such as Jeremiah & Daniel).

## Chapter 6

- I. (v.1) The rider on the **white horse** is the Anti-Christ (a counterfeit Messiah).
  - A. Satan is an excellent imitator and throughout time has always led people astray by mimicking God, and will even set up a “false trinity!”
  - B. The Anti-Christ comes to power through diplomacy and politics, not war (he has bow, but no arrows for it).
- II. (v.2) The rider on the **red horse** is war! Jesus prophesied this...
  - A. *You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. –Matthew 24:6*
  - B. Ezekiel prophecies a great deal about war in the Tribulation (i.e. Ezekiel 38)

\*Note that even though the Anti-Christ comes to power through diplomacy, his peace treaties do not last. Only Christ (the Prince of Peace) can bring lasting peace!

- III. (v.3-6) The rider on the **black horse** is famine. Famine and economic downturn always follow war!
  - A. People will be paying a day’s wage for a loaf of bread! (v.5)
  - B. Even precious metals & stones will become worthless and the wealthy will find themselves among the poor.
    - *They will throw their silver into the streets, and their gold will be treated as a thing unclean. Their silver and gold will not be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD’s wrath. It will not satisfy their hunger or fill their stomachs, for it has caused them to stumble into sin. –Ezekiel 7:19*
  - C. Oil and wine have 2 references in scripture:
    - Oil often refers to the Holy Spirit & wine represents Christ’s blood when speaking of redemption, healing & worship.
    - Oil & wine also refer to luxury in pagan cultures in Biblical times. Because scripture is speaking of the time when the Anti-Christ rules, Rev. 6:6 is referring to the luxury that the Anti-

Christ and his “cronies” will lavish themselves with in the midst of famine, starvation and inflation.

- This is more likely a reference to basic cooking supplies. “Do not hurt the oil & and the wine” may refer to the necessities of food prep in the First Century.
- V. (v.7-8) The rider on the **pale horse** is death (referred to as Hades; the Greek god death and the underworld).
- A. Death will come in many ways; war, famine, disease, wild animal attacks, etc.
- VI. (v.9-11) These are Tribulation martyrs!
- A. They are wanting God’s revenge on those that killed them which shows us that are not souls from a former place in history.
  - B. They are under the altar (the place where the blood of the sacrificial Lamb flows), so they are covered by the saving grace of Christ’s redeeming blood.
  - C. They receive new, white robes. Some theologians believe these white robes could possibly be their new bodies.
- VII.(v.12-17) Earthquakes, eclipses, meteorites hitting earth, hurricanes and all kinds of natural disasters are unleashed on earth. Again, the prophets & Christ Himself spoke of these disasters to come during the Tribulation.
- A. Also note that people always seem to turn to God in the midst of disaster (9-11, Hurricane Katrina, Tsunamis, etc.).

**Revelation: week #4**  
**Chapters 7-9**

**Chapter 7: Introduction**

- I. 2 Groups are seen in this chapter:
  1. 144,000 evangelizing Jews
  2. Multitudes of Gentiles who are saved during the Tribulation
- II. This chapter is a “break” in the judgment and reminds us that God’s love and mercy are present even during the Tribulation to those who will accept Christ as Savior!

**Chapter 7**

- I. (v.1) These are not “4 corners” to a flat earth. These are the 4 points of the compass: North, South, East & West.
  - A. It is documented that people did NOT believe the earth to be flat as early as 600 B.C. A spherical earth became a popular belief in the known world around 330 B.C. The prophet Isaiah, who wrote from about 740-680 B.C. also leads us to believe that the earth is round and not flat (Isaiah 40:22). It is also debated whether or not that “Flat Earth Theory” was a popular in the 1400’s or if that was just romanticized by author Washington Irvin in his book “*A History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*” which was an early work of “Historical Fiction.”
- II. (v.2-3) Again, we see the great significance of seals!
  - A. The wicked have received their seal already (the mark of the beast); Satan’s seal (a counterfeit) is for earthly goods that will be destroyed.
  - B. Believers are sealed with the Holy Spirit! (an eternal seal)
    1. *“And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.” –Ephesians 1:13-14*
    2. When the church is raptured out of the earth, the Holy Spirit (who dwells within the believers) is no longer present on earth. The Holy Spirit is seen in his completeness in the throne room (7 spirits of God).
    3. During the Tribulation many will receive Christ as Savior and **then** receive the Holy Spirit! These believers being sealed are being baptized in the Holy Spirit much like the believers in Ephesus that Paul encountered! (Acts 19:1-6)
- III. (v.4-8) The 144,000 Jews are sealed!
  - A. These are NOT the church, or “true believers” or “Seventh Day Adventists” or “Jehovah’s Witnesses” or any other group. They are the Jews who accept Christ as Savior during the Tribulation and evangelize like never before!

- B. The Jews are sealed first. Christ went to the Jews with salvation first. Paul and others in the early church would preach first to the Jews, then to the Gentiles.
  - C. Notices that the Tribe of Dan is missing. Possibly because Dan had led Israel into idolatry (Judges 18:30 & 1 Kings 12:28-30). God said that He would blot out the name of the idolater. Perhaps, that's why there is no reference to Dan.
  - D. One other point about these 144,000 Jews:
    - 1. When the church is gone (raptured), who will be left on earth to shared the Gospel? The Jews! They will be the only ones with the knowledge that Jesus Christ was the Messiah and they did not recognize Him! Therefore, they will become the greatest evangelists the world has ever known! Up until this point, the Holy Spirit is the One who holds back the lawlessness and evil of the Anti-Christ.
    - 2. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-11 Explains this in great detail.
      - a. 2 Thessalonians 2:1 points out that the Second Coming and the Rapture are 2 separate events.
      - b. When Christ returns and overthrows the Anti-Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:8) we will be with Him. This is a reference to the Second Coming in Revelation 19).
- IV. (v.9-10) Countless Gentiles are saved and receive the Holy Spirit.
- A. They are holding palm branches (sign of the Jewish nation), Romans 11 tells us that the Gentiles are “grafted” into the family of God in the same way that a wild olive shoot is grafted into the vine (Jesus is the Vine, we are the branches [John 15]).
  - B. They are singing a song of salvation!
- V. (v.11-17) Heaven again erupts into worship and celebration over the saved!
- A. Note that the angels sang a song of glory to God; the believers sang a song of salvation.
  - B. Some theologians believe (v.14) to be a reference to a “Mid-Trib” rapture.
  - C. Also note that the suffering these “Tribulation saints” endured is gone!

### Chapter 8: Introduction

- After a pause between Seal #6 & Seal #7 (Chapter 7), we now return to the judgment on earth.

### Chapter 8:

- I. (v.1) Silence for 30 minutes; all of heaven is in awe of what is about to come.
  - A. Notice pause before the final seal is opened (when the 7 trumpet blasts come, there will be a pause before the final trumpet).
- II. (v.2) Again, we see the importance of trumpets making announcements; here these trumpets will announce 7 judgments on the earth.
- III. (v.3-4) This is a time of prayer just before the 7<sup>th</sup> judgment.

- IV. (v.4-5) This “angel” is most likely Christ Himself!
- A. This angel is the intercessor, offering the prayers of the saints on the altar of God. Only Christ can do this! (*“For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, and that man is Christ Jesus.”* -1 Timothy 2:5) (Romans 8:34 and other verses speak of this).
  - B. Christ appeared as an angel MANY TIMES in the OT.
    - 1. Talking with Abraham (Genesis 18)
    - 2. Jacob wrestling with an angel (Genesis 32)
    - 3. Shadrach, Meshach & Abednego in the fiery furnace (Daniel 9)
  - C. We see Christ (the angel) taking these prayers to the throne and then delivering judgment upon the earth (Christ has the authority to do this).
  - D. The prayers of the saints mentioned here may refer to the prayers of the martyrs under the altar in Revelation 6:10.
- V. (v.6) Time for the 7<sup>th</sup> (and final) judgment of the Tribulation, however, it has 7 parts to it.
- VI. (v.7) The **first trumpet**: This seems pretty literal and there’s really no evidence that this verse should be taken any other way. The reference to “blood” simply means death.
- VII.(v.8-9) The **second trumpet**: this describes a meteor-like object hitting the earth and falling into the sea affecting the oceans.
- VIII.(v.10-11) The **third trumpet**: another meteor-like object affecting fresh water! The name “Wormwood” means “Bitterness.” This will cause “wormwood water,” or the fresh water to become bitter.
- A. “Wormwood water” is mentioned in Jeremiah 9:15.
- IX. (v.12) The **fourth trumpet**: The sun, moon, & stars are dimmed creating extended darkness.
- A. Incidentally, these were created on the **fourth day** (Genesis 1:14).
- X. (v.13) An angel warns of how much more horrific the following three trumpet blasts will be!
- XI. Some scholars believe these first **4 trumpets** are an unleashing of demonic power on the earth. It is possible, given the absence of the Holy Spirit, but there is little evidence to support this type of interpretation of these verses.
- A. Always interpret God’s word literally unless otherwise directed to by scripture.
  - B. Author *C.S. Lewis* in his book *“The Screwtape Letters,”* named a character (who is an apprentice demon) *“Wormwood.”*

## Chapter 9: Introduction

- I. Until this point, God’s wrath has not been directed toward man. So far, each attack has been on “nature” that has had adverse effects on man.
- II. These “natural catastrophes” may be the direct result of advanced and nuclear warfare.
- III. Chapter 9 contains the **5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet blasts!**

**Chapter 9:1-11**

- I. (v.1) This “star” is Satan himself.
  - A. Satan is referred to as the morning star (an imitation of Jesus Christ).  
*How you have fallen from heaven, morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! – Isaiah 14:12*
  - B. Notice that “had fallen” is past tense (Satan has already fallen from Heaven).
  - C. Remember, that Jesus holds all the keys! He gives Satan the keys to the Abyss.
- II. (v.2) This pit called the Abyss (that is referred to 9 different times in the NT) is a “holding place,” and should not be confused with Hell.
  - A. In Luke 8:31, the demons in Legion beg Jesus not to send them to this “holding place.”
  - B. The demons in this Abyss have been held there for a very long time, possibly since the time of Noah.
    - 1. 2 Peter 2:4 & Jude 1:6 make mention of these demons being held in the Abyss.
    - 2. They may possibly be the demons who created the Nephilim (Genesis 6:1-7)
    - 3. Jesus said, *“As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.” –Matthew 24:37*
- III. (v.3-6) These are not literal locusts, but are the demons who are released from the Abyss.
  - A. Notice that they cannot harm those who are sealed (have the Holy Spirit)!
  - B. *He replied, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. –Luke 10:18-19*
  - C. The demons cannot kill anyone. Even during the Tribulation, Satan and his demons must still submit to God’s rules. This is much like the account of Job.
    - 1. *The LORD said to Satan, “Very well, then, everything he has is in your power, but on the man himself do not lay a finger.” Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD. –Job 1:12*
    - 2. *The LORD said to Satan, “Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life.” –Job 2:6*
  - D. Note the time frame of “5 months.” The normal life cycle of a locust is 5 months (May-September). Not that they are locusts, but this is part of their locust-like description.
- IV. (v.7-10) These demons are further described in metaphoric language:
  - A. John, a man in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century, does his best to describe beings that will be unleashed on the earth thousands of years later.
  - B. Their crowns refer to their power and authority: it is a royal strength

- C. Faces like men suggest their intelligence (do not ever make the mistake of believing the demons are not intelligent).
  - D. Hair of women suggests their attractiveness (also another misconception most Christians have of Satan and demons), they are NOT hideous, ugly beings.
  - E. Teeth like lions suggests their cruelty and destructiveness
  - F. Breastplates of iron describe their strength and invulnerability
  - G. Noise of their wings show us the calamity and chaos they bring
- V. (v.11) Satan (the Destroyer) is their king and commander!

### Chapter 9:12-21

- I. (v.12) Warning of the final 2 trumpet blasts to come!
- II. (v.13) This voice is God's voice of judgment, this is His response the prayers of the martyred saints under the altar (from Revelation 6:9-11).
  - A. The voice coming from the horns depict authority and strength.
  - B. The fact that the voice comes from the horns on the **altar** depicts God's judgment.
- III. (v.14-16) These "angels" are fallen angels (demons).
  - A. The Euphrates River is in the region of modern day Iraq & Iran.
  - B. This region has spawned most of the pagan religions throughout history.
  - C. This area has been a spiritual battleground ever since Cain & Able. It is quite possible that this is b/c the Garden of Eden may have been located there.
  - D. No, the Persian Gulf War in 1991 was NOT fulfillment of this scripture!
  - E. These demons are a mounted army of 200,000,000!
  - F. They kill 1/3 of the earth's population.
    - 1. Remember, 1/3 of the earth's population was killed by the **pale rider** when the **fourth seal** was opened (Revelation 6:7-8)
    - 2. Consider this: if the world's population is 6,000,000,000 and 1/3 were killed that would take it to 4,000,000,000. If this takes 1/3 of the remaining population the number drops to 2,666,666,667 (less than half the population of earth). \*These population numbers are if there's no rapture. Assume that the number of earth's inhabitants are much less post-rapture.
- IV. (v.17-19) This is a demonic army that wipes out 1/3 of the remaining inhabitants of the earth! It is possible that this mounted army could also be a demonically possessed and/or empowered coalition of Asian armies!
  - A. Sulfur rock is common to the Dead Sea region and, when ignited, produces burning streams and suffocating gas.
  - B. Deadly forces coming from the "horses' mouths and tails" show their ability to cause death and destruction in 2 directions at once!
  - C. This is not warfare as we commonly know it (fought with missiles and guns), but it is warfare conducted biochemically and/or **spiritually** causing death, disease and suffering!

- V. (v.20) Despite this horrific ordeal, mankind places their hope in their own strength, their money and demons.
- VI. (v.21) There are 5 major sins listed in the latter half of the Tribulation; murder, occultism, drug use, sexual immorality & stealing.
- A. *There are 27 uses of the word "sorcery" [magic arts, etc.] in the Bible, and those usually refer to witchcraft/black magic/occult activity. But 5 of the uses in the NT are references to drug use. How can this be? Because the root word here is "**pharmakeia**," and that word, besides meaning actual sorceries, can translate to mean "**enchantment with [or high on] drugs.**" The rampant drug use we see today is nothing to epidemic that will exist during the Tribulation when people will seek to escape the pain and suffering. (Dr. Ron Shafer)*
- B. Revelation 21:8 also speaks of "sorcerers," and this is a Greek word "**pharmakeus**" and refers to the enchanter with drugs; or the one who uses and/or sells the drugs.

\*One final point on this chapter:

Wherever there is false worship immorality becomes a way of life. When God's direction of right and wrong are removed, evil is masked in goodness.

**Revelation: week #5**  
**Chapters 10-12**

**Chapter 10: Introduction**

- Chapter 10 is a brief break from the mayhem of the Tribulation.
- Between the opening of Seal #6 & Seal #7 there was a break; now there is a break between Trumpet Blast #6 & Trumpet Blast #7.

**Chapter 10**

- I. (v.1) This angel is NOT Jesus Christ. Some may think him to be Christ, but there are some very specific reasons why this high-ranking angel is not Jesus.
  - A. (v.1) points out that John saw "***another***" angel (we already saw Christ as angel in Chapter 8).
  - B. This angel appears on the earth; Christ does NOT appear on the earth as "angel" after His physical birth.
    1. Yes, Christ did appear the "Angel of the Lord" in the OT. This is referred to as the "pre-incarnate Christ," meaning that it was Christ before He was clothed in humanity.
    2. For example: Jesus appears to Saul in Acts 9 as Himself, not angel. The same is true when He appears to John in Revelation 1. In fact, Jesus Christ only appears to people as Himself in the NT.
    3. What about John seeing Jesus as an angel in Revelation 8? John saw Jesus as angel in Revelation 8 at the altar in the throne room of Heaven, not on the earth. This angel in Chapter 10 comes down from heaven (v.1).
  - C. This angel takes an oath and swears by God of Creation (v.6). If he were Christ, we would swear by HIMSELF.
- II. (v.2) This angel's description shows us that he brings a message to all of creation directly from the throne of God.
  - A. Robed in a cloud (presence of God, judgment)
  - B. Rainbow over his head (the throne on which God sits is encircled with a rainbow). This rainbow over the angel's head shows that he is bringing this message under the authority of Him who sits on the throne.
  - C. His face shining like the sun (the Shekinah glory of God)
  - D. Legs like fiery pillars (strong judgment)
  - E. The "little scroll" is most-likely a declaration of judgment (and/or part of God's Word dealing with judgment).
- III. (v.3-4) He shouts and the 7 thunders respond, but we do not know what was said. John was instructed in (v.5) NOT to write it down.
- IV. (v.6) This angel's message; "*There will be no more delay!*"
- V. (v.7) The angel with the 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet is mentioned and his time to blast is almost here
- VI. (v.8-11) John eats the little scroll as he is instructed to. It is sweet in his mouth, but turns sour in his stomach.

- A. The Gospel is a sweet message, but the flip-side of it is judgment. Those who reject Jesus Christ as Savior are eternally separated from Him spend eternity in the torment of Hell.
- B. There are other Biblical references to eating God's word.
  1. *When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, LORD God Almighty. – Jeremiah 15:16*
  2. *How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! –Psalm 119:103*
  3. *"Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him." –Psalm 34:8* this verse does not necessarily refer to tasting God's Word, but does contain the same metaphor of "eating."
- C. John tastes the sweetness of Salvation, but is also given the "sour" task of prophesying about God's judgment.
  1. You cannot preach ONLY a "feel-good" version of the Gospel. This is a 2-sided coin that many preachers in our day neglect.
  2. Sin will be judged; but there is GRACE through JESUS CHRIST!

### Chapter 11: Introduction

- This chapter deals with the nation of Israel. They will turn to Christ and the Word of God will be preached.

### Chapter 11:1-14

- I. (v.1) The measuring rod mentioned here was about 10 feet in length.
  - A. The first temple was Solomon's Temple that is described in 1 Chronicles 22, 28 & 29, as well as 2 Chronicles 2-7. It was destroyed about 586 B.C. by Nebuchadnezzar.
  - B. The second temple was built about 70 years later by Zerubbabel. This temple was destroyed in about 195 B.C. by Antiochus Epiphanes.
    1. Incidentally, Antiochus Epiphanes and his ruthlessness is a picture of the Anti-Christ himself.
    2. Antiochus Epiphanes oppressed the Jews, outlawed their worship practices and declared that they must worship Zeus. He desecrated the temple with pig blood, slaughtered Jews and forced many Jewish women to wear the carcasses of dead babies around their necks!
    3. *Raging like a wild animal, he set out from Egypt and took Jerusalem by storm. He ordered his soldiers to cut down without mercy those whom they met and to slay those who took refuge in their houses. There was a massacre of young and old, a killing of women and children, a slaughter of virgins and infants. In the space of three days, eighty thousand were lost, forty thousand meeting a violent death, and the same number being sold into slavery. -2 Maccabees 5:11-14*

4. *Not long after this the king sent an Athenian senator to force the Jews to abandon the customs of their ancestors and live no longer by the laws of God; also to profane the temple in Jerusalem and dedicate it to Olympian Zeus, and that on Mount Gerizim to Zeus the Hospitable, as the inhabitants of the place requested...They also brought into the temple things that were forbidden, so that the altar was covered with abominable offerings prohibited by the laws. A man could not keep the Sabbath or celebrate the traditional feasts, nor even admit that he was a Jew. At the suggestion of the citizens of Ptolemais, a decree was issued ordering the neighboring Greek cities to act in the same way against the Jews: oblige them to partake of the sacrifices, and put to death those who would not consent to adopt the customs of the Greeks. It was obvious, therefore, that disaster impended. Thus, two women who were arrested for having circumcised their children were publicly paraded about the city with their babies hanging at their breasts and then thrown down from the top of the city wall. Others, who had assembled in nearby caves to observe the Sabbath in secret, were betrayed to Philip and all burned to death. -2 Maccabees 6:1-11*
- C. That temple was rebuilt and enlarged by Herod the Great and was finished in A.D. 64. It was then destroyed in A.D. 70 by a Roman General named Titus (who would later become emperor). Its destruction was prophesied by Christ in Matthew 24:1-2; over 30 years before it was even completed!
- D. The Temple consisted of the "Holy of Holies" (the inner-most part where God dwelt), the "Inner Court" (where Jews worshipped) and the "Outer Court" (where God-fearing Gentiles could worship).
- II. (v.2) Notice that John is told that the Gentiles will trample the holy city (Jesus prophesied this in Luke 21:24). This shows us the absence of the church during this time (most likely due to the rapture). By this point, the only gentiles left have sided with the Anti-Christ and will come together against Israel!
- III. (v.3) According to the ancient Hebrew calendar, a year was made up of 12 months; each month having 30 days. So, 7 years = 84 months = 2520 days.
- A. The Tribulation is 7 years long
- B. The Gentiles will trample Jerusalem for 3 ½ years.
- C. The "2 Witnesses" will prophesy for 3 ½ years.
- D. Being clothed in sackcloth represents their message of redemption.
- IV. (v.4) These "2 Witnesses" are God's prophets during the Tribulation. The imagery of "Olive Trees" and "Lampstands" refers to the fact that they are Jewish, full of the Holy Spirit (Olive Trees represent the Jewish nation and olive oil represents the Holy Spirit), and that they shine the Light of Jesus Christ into the world.
- A. Jesus said, "**You** are the light of the world," in Matthew 5:14.
- B. The "Light" is given off by the fire of the Holy Spirit within us (them).

- V. (v.5-6) These prophets are given supernatural ability and protection by God, much like the prophets of the OT; Moses, Elijah, etc.
- VI. (v.7-10) These verses are clear. Satan will kill them when their message is finished. He will be enraged that they have led the Jewish nation back to God!
  - A. City of Jerusalem is figuratively called “Egypt” and “Sodom” here b/c the same sins and evil leadership of those kingdoms will be present in Jerusalem.
  - B. Imagine how easy it is for the world to view big events from around the globe on cable, satellite television, the internet, smart phones and more. It is not difficult to comprehend that all the world will see the dead bodies of these 2 men. Why will God allow this? (read v.11).
- VII.(v.11) These 2 prophets are resurrected after the world has seen their dead bodies lying in the street for 3 days!
- VIII.(v.12) They are “raptured” into heaven. I suppose this would be an 8<sup>th</sup> rapture that we could add to our list on **page 17**.
- IX. (v.13-14) Another earthquake takes place. This section of scripture ends with the announcement of the **3<sup>rd</sup> Woe**. Here comes the 7<sup>th</sup> (and final) trumpet blast...

\*Before we examine the final trumpet blast, the question comes to mind, “Who are these 2 Witnesses?”

- A. We don’t know for sure who these 2 men are...
- B. Most scholars agree that one of them is Elijah.
  - 1. Elijah did not die a “natural” death, but was taken up to Heaven. (2 Kings 2:11)
  - 2. *“I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the LORD Almighty. –Malachi 3:1*
  - 3. *“See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. –Malachi 4:5*
- C. The other is possibly Moses?
  - 1. Moses was with Elijah and Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mark 9:4)
  - 2. Moses’ body was preserved by God Himself (Jude 1:9).
- D. The other is possibly Enoch?
  - 1. Enoch (much like Elijah) did not die a “natural” death (Genesis 5:24).

### Chapter 11:15-19

- I. (v.15) The **7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet** sounds and all of heaven breaks into worship and proclaims that Christ holds the “title deed” to the earth!
  - A. This verse is the inspiration for one of the most famous music compositions: Handel’s Messiah!

- B. Supposedly, during the London premier of “*Messiah*,” King George II, was so moved during the “*Hallelujah Chorus*” that he rose to his feet obliging the entire audience to also rise. To this day, when the “*Hallelujah Chorus*” is performed the audience rises to their feet.
- II. (v.16) Note the song that the 24 Elders sing: it is a song of thankfulness and rejoicing that Judgment Day has come!
- III. (v.19) The “Holy of Holies” is opened and John sees the Ark of the Covenant! Lightning, thunder, earthquake and hailstorms again refer to judgment.
- A. Notice the Ark of the Covenant is there! God will NEVER forget His covenant.
- B. It’s also interesting to note, or to ask, “What happened to the Ark of the Covenant?”
1. It housed the “10 Commandments.”
  2. It was placed in the Temple by King Solomon around 930 B.C. (1 Kings 8:1-21)
    - *There was nothing in the ark except the two stone tablets that Moses had placed in it at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the Israelites after they came out of Egypt. When the priests withdrew from the Holy Place, the cloud filled the temple of the LORD. And the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled his temple. Then Solomon said, “The LORD has said that he would dwell in a dark cloud: I have indeed built a magnificent temple for you, a place for you to dwell forever.” -1 Kings 8:9-13*
  3. It was visited by the High Priest on one day each year (Yom Kippur, holiest day of the year), and so was mostly out of sight. The Ark is not mentioned in the Bible again, except for a brief reference during the reign of King Josiah (640 - 609 BC).
    - *He said to the Levites, who instructed all Israel and who had been consecrated to the Lord: “Put the sacred ark in the temple that Solomon son of David king of Israel built. It is not to be carried about on your shoulders. Now serve the Lord your God and his people Israel. -2 Chronicles 35:3*
  4. About 587 B.C. the Babylonians attacked Jerusalem and destroyed the temple. The Ark of the Covenant disappears from the history at that point!
  5. Several scholars and archeologists have speculated that they know where it is, but no one has produced any evidence.
- C. The “Second Coming” is about to take place, but we have to wait until Chapter 19 to read about it.

**\*Some points to ponder:**

- A. Remember:** Jesus tells John in Revelation 1:19 that we are viewing “what has happened, what is happening, what will happen.”
- B.** Revelation 12:1 – 19:5 shows the Tribulation more in depth. These verses take place simultaneously with Chapters 5 – 11.
- C. Some thoughts about the **Ark of the Covenant**:**
  - 1. The Ark contains the tablets of the “10 Commandments.”
  - 2. It is also where God dwelt in the Temple in the OT.
  - 3. The top of the Ark was the “**Mercy Seat**” where the blood of the sacrificial lamb was sprinkled (during Yom Kippur) that cleansed God’s people from sin.
  - 4. Note that the Ark of the Covenant vanishes once the Babylonians (and their wicked king who went insane) take over Jerusalem. Once this happens, God no longer shows up like He did previously in scripture.
    - He only does miracles and brings His word through the prophets. Of course, the people refuse to listen to the prophets.
    - B/c of their refusal to listen to God’s prophets, He does not speak to His people again until it is time for the Messiah to come.
    - This creates a time period of about 400 years where Israel did not hear from God, but kept trying to re-instate their “religious practices.”
    - The relationship between God and man is severed at this point and is not restored until Christ comes at the start of the NT when the angel Gabriel appears to Zechariah (Luke 1).
  - 5. The Ark now appears in the throne room of heaven just as John is about to see a display of the Gospel message that begins with Christ’s birth and sums up the entire God’s entire “Plan of Salvation.”

**Chapter 12:1-6**

- I. (v.1) This woman is the Jewish nation. The “12 stars” on her head make that quite clear.
  - A.** 12 is the number of the Jewish nation. There were 12 Tribes of Israel, 12 Disciples (all Jewish men), etc.
  - B.** This image is also reminiscent of Joseph’s dream in Genesis 37.
    - 1. Then he had another dream, and he told it to his brothers.

*“Listen,” he said, “I had another dream, and this time the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me.” –Genesis 37:9*
  - C.** Isaiah prophesied about this women (the nation of Israel) giving birth to the Messiah
    - 1. *“Before she goes into labor, she gives birth; before the pains come upon her, she delivers a son. Who has ever heard of such*

*things? Who has ever seen things like this? Can a country be born in a day or a nation be brought forth in a moment? –Isaiah 66:7-8a*

- II. (v.2) The Jewish nation gave birth to Jesus Christ, the Messiah.
- III. (v.3) This is the clearly Satan (this is stated in v.9)
  - A. Even since the “Fall” in Eden (Genesis 3), Satan has attempted to wipe the Jews off of the face of the earth! When Christ was born, Satan tried to kill Him. This was foretold to Satan by God in Genesis 3:15, *“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”*
  - B. Remember, 7 represents fullness or completeness.
    - 1. The 7 heads suggest extreme intelligence or full wisdom (Satan know exactly what he’s doing, however, if he had known what victory would have come to you and me through the cross, he would have never killed Jesus- see *1 Corinthians 2:7-8*).
    - 2. Ezekiel 28 is one of the clearest OT passages on Satan and it refers to this quality very clearly. In it, God describes the angel Lucifer (who became Satan) and how majestic he was before his fall: *“You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.” –Ezekiel 28:12*
    - 3. The 7 crowns, most likely, refer to his power as “prince of this world” (John 12:31)
  - C. 10 represents fullness or completeness in our present-day cultures. We will see 10 associated a lot with the world, Satan and the Anti-Christ throughout the rest of Revelation.
  - D. Also, remember that horns depict power. This is an image of Satan’s complete power and authority over all who reject Christ (be it kings of old or rulers of this present age, or those who will rule tomorrow).
- IV. (v.4) The stars are angels. Satan led a third of angels in rebellion against God.
- V. (v.4) Remember, Herod (who was insane and clearly under the guidance of Satan) was killing all the Jewish males under the age of 2 in an attempt to kill Jesus before He could become our Savior.
- VI. (v.5) Mary & Joseph were told by an angel to take Jesus and flee to Egypt until Herod died. They did, and it saved Jesus’ life. This passage maybe a reference to that, but more likely is a reference to His resurrection and ascension since it also points out that Jesus now sits on the throne of God!
- VII.(v.6) This may refer to the time that Mary, Joseph and Jesus spent in Egypt. Historians claim that they were there anywhere from 2 – 4 years (possibly 3 ½ years; 1260 days on the Jewish calendar). It is more likely a reference to super-natural protection that God will give the Jewish nation during a Tribulation b/c there will be anti-Semitism like we have never seen before! Many of the prophets speak of this, (Daniel 12:1, Jeremiah 30:7, etc.).

## **Chapter 12:7-17**

- I. (v.7-9) Show us what happened when Satan lost his place in heaven.

- A. Notice that he was not thrown into Hell (as many Christian assume today) he was thrown to the earth! (Hence, “prince of this world” and other similar titles/names that are given to him).
- B. Some scholars argue that this war described here has not taken place yet and that it is Satan and his demons attempting to attack believers as they are raptured through the air, but are supernaturally protected by angels as they make their flight into heaven.
1. We find in Job 1 & 2 that Satan is allowed to enter into the throne room of Heaven. Here in Revelation he is cast out permanently!
- C. **Personally**, I find that doubtful since it is a clear depiction of what has taken place already. Although, it could be describing both.
1. Consider this, Adam & Eve were in the Garden of Eden for some unknown amount of time before Satan came along and tempted them. It could stand to reason then, that he made his appearance in the Garden once he was thrown to the earth.
  2. As for his access to Heaven in Job, many scholars believe he lost his “permission” or “access” to the throne room of Heaven when Jesus Christ conquered the grave and took his place at the right hand of the Father.
    - *Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. –John 12:31*
    - *But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: about sin, because people do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. –John 16:7-11*
  3. **Either way, the important fact to note is that Satan is intelligent and cunning. To paraphrase v.9, “He leads the whole world astray.”**
- II. (v.10-11) Heaven rejoices at the “Plan of Salvation!”
- III. (v.12) A warning that Satan knows his time is limited and wants to separate as many people as possible from God.
- IV. (v.13) Satan pursues the Jewish nation!
- V. (v.14) God protects the Jews from Satan’s awful attack!
- A. Most scholars & theologians agree that the city of Petra is where the Jews will take refuge.
  - B. Other passages of scripture use the same imagery of the eagle’s wings used to save His people.
    - *“You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself.” –Exodus 19:4*

- *but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. –Isaiah 40:31*
- C. A “time” is 1 year. “Times” is 2 years. “Half a time” is ½ year. Add them up, and the time that the Jewish nation will be given supernatural protection against Satan is 3 ½ years.
- VI. (v.15-16) Again, God provides protection for the Jewish nation!
  - A. *The flood Satan releases is difficult to interpret. It could refer to an actual flood. If it does, it shows Satan doing what he always does—mimicking God and trying to destroy the nation of Israel with water as God destroyed the world by water at the time of the Flood [of Noah]. (Dr. Ron Shafer)*
  - B. *Possibly the flood is not an actual flood but a figurative reference to the volumes of anti-Semitic hate propaganda which Satan will propagate against the Jews during this period. It could be international slander against the Jews of the sort Hitler started in WWII, only much worse. (Dr. Ron Shafer)*
- VII. (v.17) Satan, angered and frustrated, now goes out to attack anyone (Jew or Gentile) who will have accepted Christ during the Tribulation.

**\*Points to ponder:**

- Many scholars and theologians believe that the **7 crowns** that the dragon (Satan) wears represents his rule of “7 Pagan Kingdoms.”
  1. Egyptian
  2. Assyrian
  3. Babylonian
  4. Medo-Persian
  5. Greek
  6. Roman
  7. Revived Roman Empire (a one-world government of the end times).
- Many scholars and theologians also believe that the **10 horns** represent 10 nations that will make up the “Revived Roman Empire” or “one-world government” of the Tribulation. {See **Revelation 17:9-14**}

**Revelation: week #6**  
**Chapters 13-14**

**Chapter 13: Introduction**

- Chapter 13 is a continuation of Chapter 12 and deals with Satan’s domination of the earth.
- This begins to show us the second half (3 ½ years) of the Tribulation.
- In Chapter 13 we will see the “false trinity”
  1. “Dragon” –Satan (the devil, himself, who is in charge of this)
  2. “Beast Out of the Sea” –Anti-Christ (who is a perversion of Jesus Christ as King and will dominate **politically**).
  3. “Beast Out of the Earth –False Prophet (who is a perversion of Jesus Christ as Prophet and will dominate **religiously**).
- Notice that this “false trinity” has no “*imitator*” of the Holy Spirit!
- Anti-Semitism will run ramped during this time!

**Chapter 13:1-10**

- I. (v.1) The dragon is, of course, Satan. The beast rising from the sea is the Anti-Christ (most likely, a demon possessed, or at least a demon-empowered, political leader).
  - A. “10 horns” = Complete *earthly* strength & power {see v.7}
  - B. “10 crowns” = Complete *earthly* dominion.
    1. Some scholars & theologians argue that these 10 horns & crowns also depict the 10 nations that will make up the “one world government”
  - C. “7 heads” = Complete, *super-natural* intelligence (from Satan).
    1. Again, many scholars and theologians believe these 7 heads to be a reference to 7 kings of the 7 kingdoms that we mentioned on **page #36**. The final king being the Anti-Christ as he rules this one-world government.
- II. (v.2) The qualities describing this beast may be meant to reflect this leader’s similarities to the great pagan kings of old. The similarity to this description is uncanny to that of Daniel’s! {see Daniel 7:4-7}

<b><u>Daniel</u></b>	<b><u>Revelation</u></b>
Lion	Beast
Bear	Leopard
Leopard	Bear
Beast	Lion

- A. Notice that these are in opposite order of each other. Daniel saw the great kingdoms coming into replace one another (with the Anti-Christ being the final one [the beast]). John is looking back from future to the past and noticing that the Anti-Christ has ALL the qualities of evil, pagan rulers!
- B. Also, note that Daniel sees the Anti-Christ with 10 horns as well!

- III. (v.3-4) The fatal wound that had been healed is a reference to a “mock-resurrection!” Remember, Satan is the great imitator and the Anti-Christ is supposed to look like the Savior. Nations will turn to him and worship him b/c of this “resurrection.”
- A. Some theologians believe this to be a death that is “faked.”
  - B. Some believe that he will die and Satan will bring the Anti-Christ back to life
  - C. Others believe that when he is resurrected that Satan will possess him.
  - D. *\*I tend to lean towards “point B.”*
  - E. This “mock-resurrection” will take place half way through the Tribulation.
- IV. (v.5-6) “42 months” refers to 3 ½ years. He will slander God and everything holy!
- V. (v.7-8) The Anti-Christ is given authority and those who do not turn to Christ, turn to the Anti-Christ. At this point, there is no “middle ground.” The lines are drawn and you either stand with Jesus Christ or the Anti-Christ!
- A. (v.7) Points out that the Anti-Christ will be given power to make war against the saints and *conquer* them! This is another good argument in favor of the rapture already taking place (Pre-Trib or Mid-Trib) because Jesus proclaimed that the *gates of Hades will not prevail against the church* {Matthew 16:18}.
  - B. These who are faithful to Christ and are killed here are most-likely the “souls under the altar” that we saw in **Revelation 6:9 (5<sup>th</sup> Seal)**.
  - C. (v.8) points out that the Lamb was slain from the creation of the world... in other words, Christ always existed and the moment sin entered, the Plan of Salvation was instituted!
    1. John makes this point very clear as he begins his Gospel, *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.”* –John 1:1-3
- VI. (v.9-10) Again, God gives a warning to listen to His Word and remain faithful!
- A. It is interesting to note that (v.9) now omits “*what the Spirit says to the churches*” in this refrain! {see **Revelation 2:7, 2:11, 2:17, 2:29, 3:6, 3:13, 3:22**} Why? Most-likely b/c the church has been raptured.

**\*Points to Ponder:**

- It’s rather amazing that Jesus Christ was accused of being a blasphemer {see Matthew 9:3}, yet here the Anti-Christ is praised and people believe he is the real Savior!
  - We should NOT be surprised by this!
  - *And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming. The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with*

*how Satan works. He will use all sorts of displays of power through signs and wonders that serve the lie, and all the ways that wickedness deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness. -2 Thessalonians 2:8-12*

### Chapter 13:11-18

- I. (v.11) begins to describe to us the “beast out of the earth,” the “false prophet.”
  - A. “2 horns **like a lamb**” = a direct reference to his imitation of Christ
  - B. “but spoke like a dragon” = only speaking a “false gospel” from Satan
    1. Consider what Jesus said to the Pharisees (who would not accept Him as the Messiah): *“You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.” –John 8:44*
    2. Many scholars also liken this “false prophet” to a “counterfeit Holy Spirit.” Jesus described the Holy Spirit this way, *“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.” –John 16:13-15*
- II. (v.12) The False Prophet & the Anti-Christ work “hand-in-hand” with the False Prophet leading the “one-world religion” and the Anti-Christ in control of the “one-world government.”
  - A. Notice also, another reference to the Anti-Christ having a *“fatal wound that was healed.”*
  - B. Consider this as well, controlling a “one-world religion” as well as a “one-world government” would give you and your “cohorts” control over just about everything (military, economies, banking, finance, trade, commerce, worship, construction, contracting, utilities, law enforcement, etc.).
  - C. Keeping “**Point B**” in mind, Henry Spaak of the “Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications (SWIFT) made this statement in the mid 2000’s (I believe it was around 2005): *“We do not need another committee. We have too many already. What we want is a man of sufficient stature to hold the allegiance of the people and lift us out the economic morass into which we’re sinking. Send us such as man and, be he God or devil, we will accept him.”*

- III. (v.13-14) This religious leader performs many miracles. Jesus told us this would happen.
- A. *For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. –Matthew 24:24*
  - B. *He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God. –2 Thessalonians 2:4*
- IV. (v.15) There are 2 common interpretations of this verse:
- A. The somewhat less “popular” is to take this verse literally
  - B. The more widely accepted interpretation is that this large “*image*” or structure is a complex, advanced computer. It communicates (much like most computers, smart-phones & other technological devices do today) and will be able to calculate and keep tabs on the population.
- V. (v.16-17) What will the mark of the beast be? Most likely an implanted computer chip or a laser tattoo-like mark. The technology for both of these exists today. It could also be a form of technology that we have not yet produced, but will clearly be implanted into or “tattooed” onto the forehead or right hand.
- A. The finances of a one-world government will consist of a cashless and checkless society.
- VI. (v.18) Some thoughts from scholars and theologians about the number of the beast are as follows:
- A. 666 could be part of the number (such as the prefix of the individual numbers).
  - B. 666 could refer to 3 separate 6-digit numbers.
  - C. Whatever the interpretation of the “666,” most scholars also believe it be a reference to this “false trinity.” Meaning that “666” falls short of the perfection of God's true Trinity; God's perfection represented in 3-Persons... a “perfect 777.”
  - D. Notice also, that God's judgment in Revelation contains **3 sets of 7!**Satan is taking this chance to bring *his “judgment”* against believers!
    1. 7 Seals (Ch. 5-8)
    2. 7 Trumpet Blasts (Ch. 8-9 & 11)
    3. 7 Bowls (or plagues) of Wrath (Ch. 15-16)

**\*Points to Ponder:**

- Remember in Chapter 10, the angel stood with one foot of judgment on the land and the other foot of judgment on the sea and proclaimed that there would be no more delay. This comes later when the “beasts of the sea & earth” are about to receive judgment as well as mankind!

## Chapter 14: Introduction

- This chapter consists of 7 parts, but they do not necessarily occur in chronological order.
- Rather than a “prophecy,” this chapter gives us a “panoramic overview” of Revelation.

### Chapter 14:1-5

- I. (v.1) This passage is reminiscent of **Revelation 7**; remember that we are now getting a more detailed look at what has taken place in earlier chapters.
  - A. The Lamb, of course is Jesus
  - B. Mount Zion is a hill in Jerusalem just outside the walls of the Old City. It was the highest point in ancient Jerusalem. In the Bible, Mount Zion is synonymous with Mount Moriah, the site of the binding of Isaac and the Jewish Temple. The term is also used for the entire Land of Israel.
  - C. “Zion” is also used as a reference for the “New Jerusalem” that we will read about in **Revelation 21**.
  - D. The 144,000 are the same 144,000 that we saw in **Chapter 7**. {see notes on **pages #22 & #23**}
  - E. The name on their foreheads is in reference to their being sealed by God with the Holy Spirit, “marking” them as belonging to Christ! {see notes on **page #22; Ch.7, B, 1**}
- II. (v.2-3) Again, heaven erupts into loud worship over the salvation of the 144,000! They sing a new song of salvation, but it is like no one else’s song b/c it is the song that is sung by the Jews who have been saved during the Tribulation!
- III. (v.4) The common interpretation during the *Middle Ages* that these were priests and other religious clergymen who were practicing celibacy—that is, priests who had chosen to remain virgins. That interpretation implies a greater level of purity than that experienced by married people, and that is a **radically wrong** interpretation.
  - A. *Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral. –Hebrews 13:4*
  - B. *He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the LORD. –Proverbs 18:22*
  - C. *“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. –Ephesians 5:31-32*
  - D. Marriage is NOT only blessed by God, but is also the picture of the relationship that He has with the church (His bride).
  - E. These (and other scriptures) make it clear that to suggest the sexual act between a husband and wife is somehow less than Godly or unholy is heresy!

- F. "Not **defiling**" themselves with women indicates that they will have resisted the temptation of *illicit sex*.
  - G. "Not defiling themselves with women" or "remaining as pure as virgins" is, most-likely, a reference to:
    - 1. Their faithfulness and not being led astray by ungodly women (as their ancestors were).
    - 2. Their faithfulness to Jesus Christ, "*following the Lamb wherever He goes,*" and not joining the "one-world religion" since the very next portion of scripture speaks of the judgment of "Babylon" (the one-word religion). {v.7-8}
      - a. Scripture often refers to those who are unfaithful to Christ as "adulterer."
      - b. "*You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.*" –James 4:4
      - c. "*I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him.*" –2 Corinthians 11:2
- IV. (v.5) These 144,000 do not lie! God hates the sin of lying.
- A. **Revelation 21:15** makes it clear that there a no liars in Heaven.
  - B. Jesus Christ is the Way, the **Truth**, and the Life (John 14:6), and the Holy Spirit is the **Spirit of Truth** (John 16:13); Satan is the **Father of Lies**.
  - C. It was Satan's lie to Eve in the Garden of Eden that caused sin to enter the world (Genesis 3:1-6).
  - D. Remember that Satan is the "Father of Lies." (John 8:44) {see notes on **page #39**}

### Chapter 14:6-13

- I. (v.6-7) This angel proclaims the Gospel!
  - A. "Gospel" means "good news." The Greek phrasing used here that is translated "gospel," is the same phrase which is translated as "glad tidings" or "good tidings," (Luke 1:19, Luke 2:10, 1 Thessalonians 3:6).
  - B. Again, in the midst of the Tribulation, the message of God's grace and mercy is the focus!
  - C. This angel's message is the "final call" to accept Christ! Because of His love for mankind, God gives opportunity for salvation all the way down to the zero hour!
- II. (v.8) This angel announces the judgment against Babylon! There are 2 judgments of Babylon:
  - A. "Religious Babylon" (Revelation 17)
  - B. "Political Babylon" (Revelation 18)

- III. (v.9-11) This angel announces judgment of those who have not accepted Christ!
- A. Hell is real and eternal! This scripture is the Bible's most graphic picture of judgment against sin. Too many people think that God's love wouldn't do this or allow this to happen. However, Jesus makes it clear in **Matthew 25:41** that Hell was never intended for man but for Satan and his demons, but b/c of our sin we (in a sense) send ourselves to Hell.
  - B. Isaiah 66:24, Matthew 25:46, Mark 9:43 & other scriptures speak of the eternal punishment of Hell.
  - C. The phrase "day and night" used here (and in many other passages of scripture) shows that it is "*unceasing!*"
- IV. (v.12-13) *"This is a beautiful promise placed in the text to give saints assurance during this most difficult time in history. It is reassuring to know that our good works "follow" us into heaven—that is, they don't get us there (contrary to the thinking of many religions), but they do "follow" us and determine the quality and kinds of rewards and service given us in Heaven."* (Dr. Ron Shafer)

#### Chapter 14:14-20

- I. (v.14) Again, we see a cloud & Christ.
- A. In the OT, the cloud was the presence of God (on the mountain during the giving of the Law, during the moving of the Tabernacle as they wandered in the wilderness, etc.)
  - B. In the NT we see the cloud with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration, during His ascension, and at the rapture.
  - C. If this angel is NOT Christ, he is (at least) a high ranking angel that is moving with the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- II. (v.15-16) The time has come to "harvest" the earth.
- A. Jesus makes it clear in the "Parable of the Sower" (Matthew 13:1-23), that the Word of God is the seed being planted into the hearts of mankind.
  - B. This "harvest" is most-likely another picture of the rapture (Christ comes on the cloud and we are caught up in the air to meet Him) {see 1 Thessalonians 4:17 & notes on **pages #3 & #17**}.
- III. (v.17) **Another** angel with a sickle (clearly, NOT Christ), now comes out of the Temple in Heaven. He will reap the earth of the "ungodly" in a *similar*, but different manner than the angel in (v.14).
- IV. (v.18) Now, a 4<sup>th</sup> angel comes on the scene (1<sup>st</sup> is Christ on the cloud, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> angels come from the Temple and this 4<sup>th</sup> angel comes from the altar).
- V. (v.19) This is a picture of cutting branches off of the vine.
- A. True believers are attached to the Vine (Jesus Christ), but Jesus tells His disciples in John 15:2 that "unfruitful" branches will be cut off.

These branches are “unfruitful” b/c the fruit that they bear is death (blood), not the Fruit of the Spirit.

1. The "fruit" they produce could refer to war.
  2. The "fruit" they produce could also refer to sin.
    - *"The wages of sin is death"* (Romans 6:23)
    - *"Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin."* (Hebrews 9:22)
- B.** In the false “one-world church,” worshippers will be connected to the “false vine” (Satan). The “fruit” of their allegiance to the Anti-Christ and the False Prophet will be war, death & judgment!
- VI. (v.20) Gives a gruesome detail of how horrific the battle Armageddon will be.
- A.** Several OT references speak of this battle in graphic terms (Joel, Ezekiel & Zechariah to name a few).
  - B.** 1,600 *stadia* (or *furlongs*) is about 180-200 miles, which is the length of Israel!
  - C.** Dr. Nathan Meyer (and other scholars) has (have) pointed out that the area where this battle will take place (the Valley Jezreel) becomes a marshy bog during heavy rains. The horses will sink their hooves and legs clear to their stomachs; that could contribute to why the blood runs into the horses’ mouths.
  - D.** Most militaries today still have active Cavalry units!
  - E.** The most graphic text in the Bible to describe this battle is **Ezekiel 39:8-16**. It will take 7 months to bury the dead!
  - F.** Russia, the “Northern Army,” is called Gog, Magog, Tubal, Rosh and Meshech in scripture.
  - G.** **Ezekiel 38:16** says that they will come against Israel like a storm cloud rolling in.
  - H.** **Revelation 9:16** says how large this army will be (200,000,000 men)!
  - I.** Many OT scriptures speak of this battle and suggest the weaponry used. It is because of this weaponry that Jeremiah calls this the period of “Jacob’s Trouble,” (Jeremiah 30:7). Daniel calls it “*a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that time (Daniel 12:1)*.”
    - *Fire goes before him and consumes his foes on every side. –Psalm 97:3*
    - *See, the LORD is coming with fire, and his chariots are like a whirlwind; he will bring down his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. –Isaiah 66:15*
    - *Say to the southern forest: ‘Hear the word of the LORD. This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am about to set fire to you, and it will consume all your trees, both green and dry. The blazing flame will not be quenched, and every face from south to north will be scorched by it. –Ezekiel 20:47*
    - **Joel 2:1-11, 20**

**Revelation: week #7**  
**Chapters 15-16**

**Chapter 15: Introduction**

- This chapter "sets the scene" for the "7 Bowls of Judgment" in Chapter 16.

**Chapter 15:1-4**

- I. (v.1) These 7 angels bring 7 plagues upon the earth.
  - A. 7 is God's number of fullness & completion.
  - B. The wrath & judgment are almost over!
- II. (v.2) This "sea of glass" represents God's holiness and purity.
  - A. The fire is symbolic of His judgment.
  - B. Notice that those who remained faithful to Christ in the Tribulation are there. This is reminiscent of 1 Peter 1:7, *"These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed."*
  - C. Because they did not come to know Christ until the Tribulation, their faith was refined with the fire of the Tribulation.
  - D. It is possible that these "faithful victors" may have been killed during the Tribulation.
- III. (v.3-4) They erupt into worship!

**Chapter 15:5-8**

- I. (v.5) The Temple (more specifically the Holy of Holies) is opened and John is able to peer inside of it and sees 7 angels coming out of it.
- II. (v.6) These 7 angels are dressed in garments worn by the OT priests. They come directly from the "Most Holy Place" to pour out God's judgment.
- III. (v.7) One of the "4 creatures" gives the bowls of wrath to the angels.
  - A. Remember that the "4 creatures" are always in the throne room of Heaven, yet they see everything.
- IV. (v.8) Most scholars & theologians believe that during the final stage of God's judgment (at the end of the Tribulation) people, and possibly angels, will not be able to enter the Temple in Jerusalem b/c God's glory will fill it.
  - A. Smoke coming out of the Temple and being associated with the glory of God appears several places in the OT (i.e. **1 Kings 8:10, Isaiah 6:4, Ezekiel 44:4**).

**Chapter 16: Introduction**

- Chapter 16 contains the "7 Bowls of Wrath" (also called the "7 Bowls/Vials of Judgment").

- Many of these judgments remind us of the plagues on Egypt in the OT. (However, Egypt's judgments were attacks on pagan Egyptian gods. Here judgment comes against Satan & his one-world religion & government).
- This is God bringing the Tribulation to a conclusion!

## Chapter 16

- I. (v.1) This voice we hear is the voice of God coming from the Holy of Holies.
- II. (v.2) The **first bowl of wrath** brings ulcerated sores to those who had received the "mark of the beast."
  - A. This verse can be taken literally; God causes those with the "mark of the beast" to be covered in sores.
  - B. It is also possible that the "long-term" effect of having the mark placed in (or on) your body is to break out in sores!
- III. (v.3) With the **second bowl of wrath** the sea turns to blood!
  - A. This refers to bodies of *salt water*
  - B. This most-likely refers to the oceans becoming polluted and ocean-life dying.
- IV. (v.4) With the **third bowl of wrath** all fresh water turns to blood.
  - A. Much like the 2<sup>nd</sup> bowl, fresh-water life will die
- V. (v.5-7) Remind us that God is Holy and just! His judgment is not without reason!
- VI. (v.8-9) With the **fourth bowl of wrath** the sun scorches the earth and the people.
  - A. Much like the 1<sup>st</sup> Bowl, the sun scorching the earth & the people may be a result of their own actions such as nuclear & bio-chemical warfare. Perhaps, under the one-world government, things become less "eco-friendly."
  - B. Isaiah 24:4-6 prophesies about this.
  - C. Most scholars & theologians also note the sun (although more intense than ever before) will probably not be in the sky as long by this point.
    - **Revelation 6:12** tells us the sun will be black as sackcloth.
    - This will be another example of God's mercy in the midst of His judgment. He will do this for the sake of the Believers {see Matthew 24:22-29}
  - D. Notice that the unsaved do NOT turn to God in the midst of this wrath, but harden their hearts (much like Pharaoh did).
- VII. (v.10) The **fifth bowl of wrath** brings darkness!
  - A. This is in great contrast to the 4<sup>th</sup> Bowl.
  - B. This could refer to the sun not being in the sky as long.
  - C. This could also be a long solar-eclipse.
  - D. This darkness that occurs during this judgment is mentioned by many prophets {see Amos 5:18, Joel 2:2}
  - E. Consider this, think of how angry and frustrated the Anti-Christ & the False Prophet will become during this time!
- VIII. (v.11) Again, they become angry with God.

- IX. (v.12-16) The **sixth bowl of wrath** sets the stage for the Battle of Armageddon.
- A. The area of the Euphrates River covers modern day Iraq, Iran and Syria. This geographical area is *obviously important* in end times prophecy.
  - B. The “kings of the east” refers to an Asian military that will come into Israel by way of the Middle East! **Revelation 19:6** tells us that this army is 200,000,000 strong, making it the largest army known to man!
  - C. The drying up of the Euphrates is probably a result of the massive heat wave from the sun’s intense heat!
  - D. (v.13) shows us that this army will be empowered by Satan and most-likely it’s commander(s) will be demonically possessed!
  - E. The reference to these demons looking like frogs is 2-fold: frog’s always represents “*un-cleanliness*” in scripture, and as John sees these demons leave the “false trinity” they may be “hopping” about in an “oafish” manner like frogs.
  - F. (v.15) is a comforting reminder (to the believers that are still on earth) that the end of the Tribulation is almost here.
- X. (v.17-18) The **seventh bowl of wrath** brings about the end!
- A. This bowl is God wrath upon Satan (finally it’s here)!
  - B. This bowl is poured out into the air; Satan is called “prince of the power of the air” or the “ruler of the kingdom of the air” (Ephesians 2:20).
  - C. The voice from the temple that precedes an earthquake is the voice of Christ proclaiming, “*It is done.*” Remember Christ’s last words on the cross (as Satan’s doom was sealed), “*It is finished,*” which also preceded an earthquake.
- XI. (v.19-21) This is not complete destruction of earth, but it is devastating!
- A. This is Christ preparing to set up His Kingdom on earth for 1,000 years!
    - *Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed, ”says the LORD, who has compassion on you. –Isaiah 54:10*
    - *“Jerusalem will be split into 3 parts (Zechariah 14:4), not as judgment, but as improvement. The additional water supply (Zechariah 14:8) and topographical changes (Zechariah 14:4, 5) will prepare the city for its central place in the millennial kingdom. –John MacArthur*
  - B. The hailstones mentioned in (v.21) are about 100 pounds each!
  - C. Still, men harden their hearts against God.
  - D. “Babylon’s” judgment (mentioned in v.19) is explained in greater detail in Ch.17-18.

**Revelation: week #8**  
**Chapters 17-18**

**Chapter 17: Introduction**

- This chapter is the judgment of "religious Babylon."
- This is the judgment of the "one-world religion."

**Chapter 17:1-8**

- I. (v.1-2) This "prostitute" is the one-world religion
  - A. "Many waters," in scripture, often refers to a worldwide system. We know this interpretation to be correct here b/c of (v.15).
  - B. The "adultery" mentioned here refers to idolatry. This one-world religion may be a version of "false Christianity."
  - C. This "false church" will most likely be some perversion of Christianity, much like many current cults and pagan religions are today.
    1. *"Any time the Bible has ceased to be the touchstone of truth, then people are following the teachings of men and compromise has begun."* (Dr. Ron Shafer).
    2. **Galatians 1:6-9**
  - D. (v.2) also refers to the fact that the one-world religion will create an alliance with the one-world government
- II. (v.3) The beast that the woman rides is the one-world government.
  - A. This is the same beast that we saw in Ch.13 except we now add that he is red in color.
    1. The **red color** may be symbolic of his rule of the world (red and purple are always associated with royalty). Incidentally, those were the colors of the Roman emperors.
    2. It could also be a reference to bloodthirsty domination.
- III. (v.4) Depicts the vast wealth & power this one-world religion will have; especially since she is "in bed" with the one-world government. Her gold cup, full of abominations, shows us that she is drunk on power!
- IV. (v.5) Describes how detestable this "false church" is to God!
  - A. Prostitutes in the Roman Empire would wear headbands with their names written on them. They would usually hang around in "taverns" and prey upon patrons who were drunk.
  - B. "**Mystery**" = She will be the one to declare the "secrets" of God and the universe; or so she will claim.
  - C. "**Babylon the Great**" = a great *earthly*, pagan kingdom
  - D. "**Mother of Prostitutes & Abominations**" = she (the false church) will spawn other groups under her that will further pervert the Gospel. This may also be a reference to the fact that Satan is the one behind all false religions, cults & doctrine.
- V. (v.6) Her power has been granted to her b/c of her murderous heart towards faithful believers in Christ! John is *amazed* at the power and influence of the false church.

- VI. (v.7) An angel tells John that he will explain this part of the vision to him.
- VII.(v.8) An angel explains that the beast is the Anti-Christ, who existed, died and then resurrected. Again, we see Satan mimicking God (who was and is and is to come).

### Chapter 17:9-18

- I. (v.9) The “7 hills” may be a reference to...
- A. Rome, which sits on 7 hills (Aventine, Gaelian, Palatine, Quirinal, Esquiline, Viminal, & Capitoline). Some scholars & theologians believe Rome will be the center of the one-world religion.
  - B. Rome, but in a sense of representing the “Revived Roman Empire.”
  - C. Her *complete* hold on 7 kingdoms & their “kings.” {See “points to ponder” on page #36}
- II. (v.10) Scholars debate that the “7 kings” mention here are either, the kings of the “7 kingdoms” (that we mentioned on page #36), or 6 of the Roman emperors and the 7<sup>th</sup> is the Anti-Christ.
- A. By John’s time, 5 of the Roman emperors had fallen (Julius Caesar, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius & Nero). Domitian would be the 6<sup>th</sup> emperor who ruled during John’s day (the king who is).
  - B. No matter which theory you subscribe to of who these kings are one thing is clear... the 7<sup>th</sup> king is the Anti-Christ!
- III. (v.11) At first glance this appears to be one of the most puzzling verses in Revelation. It is a direct reference to the Anti-Christ (king #7) and his resurrection (king #8).
- IV. (v.12-13) This describes the one-world government as having “10 kings.” It will most likely be made up of 10 nations.
- A. *My interpretation* is a slight variation of this. The one-world government may be broken up into 10 “kingdoms” or “districts” and with the Anti-Christ appointing “kings” to rule reach “kingdom.”
  - B. **Daniel 11:36-39**
- V. (v.14) They will join together against God’s people, but will be defeated by Christ and the church!
- VI. (v.15-18) Show us that in the end the one-world government and religion will turn on each other!
- A. *“Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them: “Any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and a house divided against itself will fall. If Satan is divided against himself, how can his kingdom stand?” –Luke 11:17-18a*
  - B. *“After using the false religious system to unify the world kingdoms and gain control of all, the Anti-Christ – with the help of his 10 sub-rulers – will turn against the system, plunder, and destroy it, and seize all power and worship for himself.” (John MacArthur)*
  - C. During the first 3-½ years of the Tribulation (the time of false peace), even the nation of Israel will be showing their gratitude!

D. *If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other. –Galatians 5:15*

**\*Points to Ponder:**

- The “*European Common Community*” and the “*World Council of Churches*” began unity proceedings in **1948!**
- Israel became a nation again **May 14, 1948!**
- Incidentally, the PCUSA, United Church of Christ, and MANY other “Christian denominations” have taken political stances (throughout the early 2000’s) to side *against* Israel and support Palestine! The questions that arise from this is “**Why** are they involved in these politics?” and “If so, **why** would they side against Israel?”

**Chapter 18: Introduction**

- This is the destruction of the “political Babylon!”
- In Ch.17 Babylon is called “mother” or “brother,” in Ch.18 Babylon is called a city (great city, mighty city, burning city, etc.).
- In Ch.17 Babylon was destroyed by the “kings of the earth;” in Ch.18 they mourn Babylon’s destruction (that comes from the hand of God).

**Chapter 18:1-8**

- I. (v.1) “After this” (meaning after the fall of “religious” Babylon).
  - A. This angel, again, may possibly be Jesus Christ (*the true Light that gives light to the whole world* –*John 1:9*)
- II. (v.2-3) Judgment of “political Babylon;” all nations have been corrupted by her!
- III. (v.4-8) A call to believe in Christ and “come out” of Babylon! Again, we see God’s grace available even in the Tribulation.
  - A. (v.6) points out that “political Babylon’s” punishment will be double the torment that she has caused. This goes back to the *Mosaic Law*(*Exodus 22:4-7*).

**Chapter 18:9-24**

- I. (v.9-24) News of political Babylon’s fall will bring devastation & sorrow!
  - A. These verses show us the vast wealth that the one-world government will amass before things fall apart.
  - B. We also see that **slavery** exist! Those who do conform to this one-world government may be enslaved, sold into prostitution or worse during the Tribulation!
  - C. Notice that the laments of all the groups we see (merchants, sailors, etc.) as well as the imagery (fire, smoke, darkness, etc.) match up with

the wrath that is poured out during the last 3 ½ years of the Tribulation.

1. (v.9-10) War breaks out & "Babylon" is destroyed (Armageddon)
2. (v.11-19) Famine & economic destruction. (Remember the **rider on the black horse**).
3. (v.20) God people are called to rejoice that His judgment has come! For the believer, judgment is NOT a scary thing, but a joyous time of receiving our reward!
4. (v.21) Is reminiscent of the meteors that contaminated the water in **Revelation 8:8-11 (2<sup>nd</sup>& 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet blasts)** and **Revelation 16:3-4 (2<sup>nd</sup>& 3<sup>rd</sup> Bowls of Wrath)**.
5. (v.22-23) Darkness is part of God's judgment on "Babylon" that has been mentioned *several* times! (**Revelation 8:12**; the **4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet blast**), & **Revelation 16:10** (the **5<sup>th</sup> Bowl of Wrath**).
6. We have seen *countless* references to "Babylon" shedding blood (i.e. the Rider on the Red horse in Revelation 6:2, the Tribulation Martyrs in Revelation 6:9-11, the 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet blast in Revelation 8:7, the "2 Witnesses" in Revelation 10:7-11, etc.)

#### Points to Ponder:

\*Notice that BOTH *religious* Babylon (Ch.17) & *political* Babylon (Ch.18) are held responsible for all the shed blood of those faithful to Christ!

\*The prophet **Jeremiah** gives us a great picture of the judgments of "**Babylon!**"

- Jeremiah 50
- Jeremiah 51

**\*These judgments & destruction of *religious & political* Babylon raise an important question: "Where is the USA in all of this?"**

Many scholars believe this verse to be a reference to the United States:

- *Woe to the land of whirring wings along the rivers of Cush, which sends envoys by sea in papyrus boats over the water. Go, swift messengers, to a people tall and smooth-skinned, to a people feared far and wide, an aggressive nation of strange speech, whose land is divided by rivers. - Isaiah 18:1-2*

Here are the 2 most-common (or most-likely) interpretations concerning the USA:

1. Some believe that the United States is "**Babylon!**" They argue that the USA is the picture of the Revived Roman Empire.

2. Another interpretation is that "Babylon" is either Jerusalem, or a re-built city similar to Ancient Babylon and that the United States is warned NOT to side against God and take sides with "Babylon."
- *"Foreigners will rebuild your walls, and their kings will serve you. Though in anger I struck you, in favor I will show you compassion. Your gates will always stand open, they will never be shut, day or night, so that people may bring you the wealth of the nations—their kings led in triumphal procession .For the nation or kingdom that will not serve you will perish; it will be utterly ruined." -Isaiah 60:10-12*
  - *"Come, Zion! Escape, you who live in Daughter Babylon!"For this is what the LORD Almighty says: "After the Glorious One has sent me against the nations that have plundered you—for whoever touches you touches the apple of his eye" -Zechariah 2:7-8*
  - *For behold, in those days and at that time when I shall reverse the captivity and restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all nations and will bring them down into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and there will I deal with and execute judgment upon them for [their treatment of] My people and of My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations and [because] they have divided My land. -Joel 3:1-2*

\*Whether or not these scriptures (and other like them) are references to the United States or to any nation that comes against Israel is open to interpretation. The USA may, or may not be mentioned specifically in scripture, but one thing is clear:  
*We must remain faithful to Jesus Christ!*

\**Personally*, I'm not if verses like these are direct references to the USA or not. However, I do NOT subscribe to the theory that the USA is "Political Babylon." I do, however, feel that we (as Americans) should heed these types of warning found in scripture and not take them lightly.

**Revelation: week #9****Chapters 19-20****Chapter 19: Introduction**

- This is the chapter we've all been waiting for!
- Here, after all the destruction of Tribulation, we see Christ and the church victorious!
- Chapter 19 picks **immediately** as Chapter 18 ends.

**Chapter 19:1-10**

- I. (v.1-8) ALL of heaven rejoices of the destruction of "Babylon!"
  - A. Every group that we have seen throughout Revelation joins this "Hallelujah chorus!"
  - B. Even God Himself on His throne joins in and calls the saved to rejoice (v.5)
  - C. (v.7-8) point out that the time for the Wedding Feast of the Lamb has come. Christ (the groom) is now being united *eternally* with His bride! This "feast (banquet, supper)" is the 1,000 year kingdom!
    1. Ephesians 5:25-33
    2. Matthew 25:1-13 (parable of the 10 Virgins)
    3. (John the Baptist describes Jesus as the Bridegroom). *You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Messiah but am sent ahead of him.' The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. He must become greater; I must become less.* -John 3:28-30
- II. (v.9) raise a great question: "*Who are the guests at the wedding banquet?*" Some different thoughts on the "Wedding Banquet" are:
  - A. The guests are those who accepted Christ during the Tribulation.
  - B. They are the Jewish nation
  - C. They are the saints who did not live during the "Church Age" (before Pentecost and after the rapture).
  - D. Some believe that they are the Church and the Bride is the Jewish nation (those Jews who accepted Christ).
  - E. *My interpretation* is that the Church (including the Tribulation saints) is the Bride. These guests are the saints who lived & died before Pentecost. Although they are not the "bride," they are glorified with Christ. Again, Matthew 25:1-13 gives us the best picture of this.
  - F. Whatever your interpretation, 2 points remain clear:
    1. The **Groom** is Christ!
    2. The **Bride** are faithful to Him!
- III. (v.10) Reminder that ALL WORSHIP must be directed to Christ only!

**Chapter 19:11-21**

- I. (v.11) Christ is now revealed as conqueror! This is the "**Second Coming!**"
  - A. This is drastically different than the "rapture." In the rapture, the faithful met Christ in the air. Here, He returns to earth with them!
- II. (v.12) He comes to reclaim what is His and bring judgment.
  - A. "**Blazing eyes**" are reminiscent of Revelation 1:12-20 {see notes on page #3}.
  - B. His **crowns** are that of kingly diadems. The earth is His to rule (*The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;* -Psalm 24:1)
  - C. Name that no one knows ("a name that no one can comprehend" is much better translation of this phrase).
- III. (v.13) Jesus Christ is the only one in Heaven not wearing white. His garment is blood-stained red. His shed blood is the victory over Satan and death!
  - A. John takes note that His name is the "Word of God." John is so fascinated with this title for Jesus that he uses it to begin his gospel (which he writes shortly *after* Revelation). {see John 1:1}
- IV. (v.14) The armies of heaven are the raptured Church, OT saints & Tribulation saints! They are purified by Christ and wear white garments. {see Revelation 3:4-5}
  - A. Notice that they have no need for weapons! Their weapons, the Word of God! {see Hebrews 4:12 & Revelation 19:15}
- V. (v.15) Christ conquers by the Word of His mouth!
  - A. The imagery used in this verse shows us that His judgment will be swift.
  - B. Remember the power of God's Word. He spoke the world into existence, and His words will bring this world as we know it to an end.
- VI. (v.16) He is the One who is entitled to rule the earth; His creation!
- VII. (v.17-18) The battle of Armageddon will be more of an execution than a battle. The birds will feast on the remains of the dead. This was seen by many of the prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, etc.).
  - A. Notice that judgment to all people; "*free and slave, small and great.*" In the same way that Gospel and grace are available to all, so judgment will be for **all** who do not accept Christ as Savior.
  - B. *Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right. You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. -Acts 10:34-36*
- VIII. (v.19) The Anti-Christ gathers his remaining troops to attack Christ.
- IX. (v.20) The Anti-Christ, along with False Prophet are thrown into Hell!
- X. (v.21) Those who followed the Anti-Christ meet their judgment as well.
  - A. **1 Corinthians 6:9-11** gives us a clear list of those who will NOT inherit the Kingdom of God, "*Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men*

*nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."*

**Remember:**

- Although the Anti-Christ and the False Prophet are thrown into Hell, Satan has not yet been judged! His fate still awaits him at this point!

**Chapter 20: Introduction**

- In Chapter 20, we see the Millennial Kingdom & the Great White Throne of Judgment.
- There are 3 main views to the Millennial Kingdom:
  1. **Pre-millennialism** -sees this as a literal 1,000 year period during which Jesus Christ, in fulfillment of numerous prophecies, reigns the earth (*i.e. 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Psalm 2; Isaiah 11:6-12, 24:23; Hosea 3:4-5; Joel 3:9-21; Amos 9:8-15; Micah 4:1-8; Zephaniah 3:14-20; Zechariah 14:1-11; Matthew 24:29-31, 36-44; just to name a few*).
  2. **Post-millennialism** -interprets the 1,000 year period as only symbolic of a "golden age" of righteousness and spiritual prosperity during the present "church age." In this view, Christ's reign refers to His spiritual reign in the hearts of believers.
  3. **A-millennialism** -Interprets the 1,000 years to merely be symbolic of a long period of time, but that Christ will reign over an earthly kingdom.

**Chapter 20:1-6**

- I. (v.1) This angel may be Christ (since He holds the keys), or may be another angel to whom Christ has given this key. Notice, however, that John does NOT say "*another*" angel. He just sees an angel.
- II. (v.2-3) Satan is bound for a 1,000 years and cannot deceive anyone, but will be release briefly when the 1,000 years is over. The **Abyss** is a "holding" place for Satan & the demons {see notes under "**I**" & "**II**" on page #25}. This is not Hell, but a temporary holding place.
- III. (v.4a) Who are these that sit on thrones to judge? The Church!
  - A. *Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. - Matthew 19:28*
  - B. *Or do you not know that the Lord's people will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases?*

*Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life! -1 Corinthians 6:2-3*

- C. Scholars & theologians debate whether these "judges" include the OT saints. The only saved group that scripture is clear to not include in these "judges" are the Tribulation Martyrs.
- IV. (v.4b) The second part of this verse points out that the souls from under the altar (the Tribulation Martyrs) that we saw in Revelation 6:9-11, 18:24, & 19:2 will also reign with Christ.
  - A. The reference to them being "beheaded" may show us how they were executed for their faith.
  - B. It may also be a generic term for "executed." The Greek phrasing used here may be translated to reflect execution, not necessarily beheading.
- V. (v.5) This is the resurrection of unbelievers so that they may stand before the White Throne of Judgment!
- VI. (v.6) Several scriptures point out 2 resurrections. (John 5:29, Daniel 12:2, Acts 24:15)
  - A. The resurrection of life (the 1<sup>st</sup> resurrection)
  - B. The resurrection of judgment or condemnation (the 2<sup>nd</sup> resurrection)
  - C. *"Do not be surprised and wonder at this, for the time is coming when all those who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and they shall come out—those who have practiced doing good [will come out] to the resurrection of [new] life, and those who have done evil will be raised for judgment [raised to meet their sentence]."* -John 5:28-29 (Amp)
  - D. Another take on this is that the **1<sup>st</sup> resurrection** is those who have lived and died before the Millennial Kingdom. The **2<sup>nd</sup> resurrection** involves those who died during the Millennial Kingdom.

### Chapter 20:7-15

- I. (v.7-8) Satan is released and (despite the awesomeness of the 1,000 year reign with Christ) he will deceive countless people the same way that he deceived Adam & Eve.
- II. (v.9) They will surround Jerusalem and God's people. This is the last battle on earth (and should NOT be confused with Armageddon). God will consume this massive army.
- III. **(v.10) Satan finally meets his doom!**
- IV. (v.11) Now we come to one of the most awful portions of scripture in the entire Bible. Here, heaven & earth cease to exist!
  - A. Here we see the Great White Throne of Judgment.
  - B. This is the "resurrection of judgment" (2<sup>nd</sup> resurrection).
  - C. Jesus Christ sits upon this throne of purity/righteousness. {see **John 5:22-27**}
- V. (v.12-13) The dead are judged!
  - A. Some scholars & theologians believe these who are being judged here are only unbelievers.

1. Those that subscribe to this believe that believers will NOT appear at the White Throne of Judgment, but rather at the "Bema Seat" to receive their rewards.
  2. The "Bema Seat" is where the prize is awarded to the victors of contests in the Roman Empire. This is the image given to the believers throughout the NT (Romans 14:10-12, 1 Corinthians 3:10-4:5, 2 Corinthians 5:1-10)
- B.** Others believe that those being judged here are all who have lived & died during the Millennial Kingdom.
- C.** Another common take on this scripture is that those being judged here are everyone (believers who receive their rewards & unbelievers who stand condemned).
1. Those who subscribe to this believe that we **all** stand before the White Throne, but for the believer it will be a joyous time to receive your heavenly rewards; for the unbeliever, a time of "sentencing." (2 Corinthians 5:10)
- VI. (v.14) Death (as we know it now) and "Hades" will be destroyed and as they are also thrown into Hell.
- A.** Death & Hades are not "personas," but rather places that will no longer exist one judgment has been passed.
  - B.** Unfortunately, most people base their beliefs of what "Hell" is on *Dante's Inferno*, rather than on scripture!
  - C.** The difference between "Hades" & "Hell" is similar to that of "jail" & "prison." A criminal is held in a local *jail* until his/her trial. Once sentenced, he/she is then placed in *prison* as a final place of incarceration.
  - D.** Currently, unbelievers, upon dying, go to "Hades," not "Hell."
  - E.** This is most clearly explained in **Luke 16:9-31**
  - F.** One note that most scholars point out is that **all sinners (or unbelievers) will experience death**. If they have not died previously, they will be killed in the final battle (v.9). Therefore, they will **all** experience "Hades" as well as "Hell."
- VII. (v.15) Those who have NOT accepted Christ as Savior are **eternally** condemned!
- A.** *"Then He will say to those on His left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'" - Matthew 25:41*
  - B.** *"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'" - Matthew 7:21-23*
  - C.** *"Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned." - Mark 16:16*

- D. *"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved." -Acts 4:12*
- E. *"By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain." -1 Corinthians 15:2*
- F. **2 Thessalonians 2:9-12**

**Revelation: week #10**  
**Chapters 21-22**

**Chapter 21: Introduction**

- There are 2 main topics to this chapter:
  - The eternal state of all people, whether saved or lost.
  - A detailed description of the New Jerusalem.

\*Keep in mind that in the same way that John tried his best to put into words indescribably horrific scenes in the Tribulation, he now has the task of putting into words indescribable beauty!

**Chapter 21:1-8**

- I. (v.1) Heaven & earth (as we know it, today) are destroyed when the White Throne of judgment comes. {see Revelation 20:11 & notes IV, V, VI & VII on pages #56 & #57}
  - A. *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away."*  
 –Matthew 24:25
  - B. **By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment** and destruction of the ungodly. *But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. **The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.** Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. **But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.** -2 Peter 3:7-13*
  - C. The "New Jerusalem" will apparently hover over the new earth, or be placed on the "new earth."
  - D. Notice the phrase, "there is no more sea." Currently, 75% of the earth is covered by water! *"This new environment will no longer be water-based and will have completely different climatic conditions." (John MacArthur)*
- II. (v.2) There are 2 "Jerusalems" in scripture. The earthly city that we know today, and the "New Jerusalem" that Christ creates after judgment. These 2 Jerusalems are likened to *Sarah* and *Hagar* of the OT.

- A. *These things are being taken figuratively: The women represent two covenants. One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves: This is Hagar. Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother. –Galatians 4:24-26*
  - B. The “New Jerusalem” (or this new universe) that God creates is mentioned in the OT as well as the NT (Psalm 102:25-26, Isaiah 65:17, 66:22, Luke 21:33, Hebrews 1:10-12).
  - C. The New Jerusalem is compared to that of a **bride!** The Jewish marriage was comprised of 3 parts;
    1. *“The **Betrothal**,”* the groom would be responsible for building a home for him & his wife. When construction was complete, he would come for his bride. This is the imagery given to us in John’s Gospel {see John 14}. Also, as the bride was promised (or betrothed) to the groom, he would partake in a ceremony of sharing wine with the bride’s father. Jesus gives us the imagery of preparing a place for us in the “Upper Room” just before taking the cup of wine and declaring a “New Covenant.”
    2. *“The **Presentation**,”* festivities that lasted several days and preceded the ceremony. Again, we see this imagery elsewhere in scripture {see Ephesians 5:25-32}
    3. *“The **Ceremony**,”* where vows are exchanged and the bride is presented to the groom. Here we have “*her*” being presented.
    4. It is also note-worthy that John is the only one of the Gospels that points out Christ’s first miracle was at a wedding.
- III. (v.3) The “Tabernacle” is the dwelling place or “house” of God.
- A. Up until now, God’s tabernacle was in Heaven, but in the OT His presence would inhabit an “earthly” tabernacle.
  - B. All that done in the OT was done to demonstrate and prepare God’s people for the coming of the Messiah and to spend eternity with Him!
  - C. The OT Tabernacle was a mobile tent as the Israelites wandering in the wilderness. Upon making camp each of the 12 Tribes would encamp surrounding the tabernacle so that God’s dwelling was the center of their civilization.
- IV. (v.4) All pain, sorrow and any other *imperfection*, including death will be eradicated!
- A. *“The last enemy to be destroyed is death.” -1 Corinthians 15:26*
  - B. *“Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting? -1 Corinthians 15:55*
- V. (v.5-6) The only water mentioned in the New Jerusalem is the River of Life that will eternally quench our thirst. This is reminiscent of the conversation Jesus had with the woman at the well, **recorded by John!** (John 4:1-12)
- A. Notice that again we see the phrase, “It is done!” Much like when Christ died on the cross and proclaimed, “It is finished,” death has been defeated!

VI. (v.7) A reminder of what is promised to us in Heaven. We are heirs to this through Christ Jesus!

A. *“Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.” –Romans 8:17*

VII.(v.8) Is yet another reminder of the fate that awaits non-believers! As we have seen many verses like this in Revelation, as well as other books in the Bible, I feel that it’s important to mention the following...

A. This scripture is in GREAT CONTRAST to a horrific doctrine/theology called “Eternal Reconciliation” or “Ultimate Reconciliation.” This heresy, that has come & gone in popularity throughout church history, is making a huge come-back in our culture with the release of the book, *“Love Wins”* by Rob Bell in 2010. {see page #62}

1. This false doctrine teaches that Christ will reconcile **every soul** to spend eternity with Him!
2. Throughout history, theologians who have taught this theory have also made such claims that Christ was not God, there is no Trinity, even Satan & the demons will be saved, and that Hell is Bell believes that hell is a “period of pruning” and “an intense experience of correction” (to quote Rob Bell).
3. This doctrine/theology is based upon **several** scriptures that are taken out of context and/or misinterpreted.
4. Those who teach “Eternal (Ultimate) Reconciliation make little to no mention of scriptures about Hell like the one’s in this study. The most you will find is that Hell, Hades, etc. are one-in-same and are temporary, or you may find scriptures that twisted out of context such as, *2 Corinthians 5:14, “For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died,” 2 Peter 3:9, “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance,”* and other scriptures like these.
5. {See insert “**Eternal (Ultimate) Reconciliation**”}
6. Other arguments for this heresy also include claims that all the names for Hades & Hell (such as Sheol and Gehenna) all mean “Hell” and are temporary.
7. Some theories include Christ going into Hell when He died and taking all the souls there with Him into Heaven.
8. Many who teach this heresy also claim the “*eternal*” does NOT mean eternal, but is just a *really long time*, and that words like “*torment*” really mean “purifying” or “correcting.”

## **Eternal (Ultimate) Reconciliation:**

### **Ultimate Reconciliation – Understanding God's Mercy and His Justice**

It is important to understand that the concepts of mercy and justice are understood in a unique fashion in Christianity. In every other religion in the world that holds to the idea of a supreme deity, that deity's mercy is always exercised at the expense of its justice. For example, in Islam, Allah may grant mercy to an individual, but it's always done at the expense of his justice. In other words, the offender's punishment that was properly due him/her is brushed aside so that mercy can be extended. Islam's Allah, and every other deity in every other non-Christian religion of the world, lays aside the requirements of the moral law in order to be merciful. Most people would have a major complaint against any human judge who acted in such a fashion.

Christianity is different. In Christianity, God exercises His mercy *through* His justice. The Christian doctrine of penal substitution states that sin and injustice were punished at the cross of Christ, and only because the penalty of sin was satisfied through Christ's sacrifice does God extend His mercy to undeserving sinners.

### **Ultimate Reconciliation – Conclusion**

It is sobering to remember that the first doctrine to be denied in Scripture is judgment. The Bible records Satan saying to Eve, "You surely will not die!" ([Genesis 3:4](#)). Unfortunately, many Universalists feel the same way and deny that an eternal separation from God is a reality for anyone who refuses Christ as their savior. But simply put, those who reject Jesus Christ in this life will have their request honored also in the next.

The doctrine of ultimate reconciliation or universalism may be appealing to human sensibilities, but it is simply wrong and unbiblical. Scripture teaches that beyond this life, there are no second chances. Instead, the Bible declares, "Today is the day of salvation" ([2 Corinthians 6:2](#)). Love does indeed win for those who turn by faith to Christ in this life and embrace Him as Savior. Those who don't and dismiss the concept of hell will find out eternity is an awfully long time to be wrong. As writer Os Guinness puts it, "For some, hell is simply a truth realized too late."

-S. Michael Houdmann

**Chapter 21:9-27**

- I. (v.9-10) This angel has an amazingly different task now than before! Time to show John around the New Jerusalem!
- II. (v.11) The brilliance of the “*Shekinah*” glory of God will fill the city in an almost indescribable way!
  - A. The description of “jasper” is clear & perfect, much like part of the description of God on His throne in *Revelation 4:3*.
  - B. John’s descriptions of “*jasper*” are that of a diamond which is clear, but refracts all the colors of the spectrum in wondrous brilliance (remember also in Ch.4 that there was a “rainbow” surrounding the throne).
- III. (v.12-14) John begins to get a tour of the outside of the New Jerusalem.
  - A. Some scholars & theologians maintain a theory that the 12 angels mentioned here are 12 angels that were assigned to each of the 12 Tribes of Israel in the OT. It’s an interesting theory, but with very little scriptural basis.
  - B. It’s also interesting to note that the names of the 12 Apostles are written on the 12 foundations. Remember, Jesus changed Simon’s name to “Peter,” which means “Rock” and said, “*And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.*” –*Matthew 16:18*. The 12 Apostles were also told by Christ that they would judge the 12 Tribes of Israel (*Matthew 19:28 & Luke 22:30*).
- IV. (v.15-17) *“The New Jerusalem is tetragonal in shape; that is, it’s a perfect cube with the same width, length & height. 12,000 furlongs [or stadia] is about 1,400-1,500 miles. Think of the enormous size, then, of the New Jerusalem: it is cube 1,500 mile on a side, as high as it is wide and long! If superimposed on the USA, it would extend from Maine to Florida, and from the Eastern seaboard clear out to Colorado; now that is one big city! It could easily contain all the people living on planet earth today and **billions** more. (Dr. Ron Shafer)*
  - A. This also brings up an interesting question: “What will our new, glorified bodies look like?” Will we inhabit the surface, or ground level of the New Jerusalem? Will there be several floors, or level? I suppose we’ll have to wait and see!
- V. (v.18-20) **John MacArthur describes these verses best...** *“Because some of the names of gems have changed throughout the centuries, it is difficult to identify each one with certainty. Eight of the 12 stones are found on the breastpiece of the High-Priest (Exodus 28, 39), and the other 4 may also be related to the breastpiece. The gems picture a brilliant, indescribable panoply of beautiful colors that send forth the light of God’s glory. The following are possible identifications for these gems.*
  - A. **Agate (Chalcedony)** – *This gem is sky blue with translucent, colored stripes. The name derives from “Chalcedon,” an ancient name for a city in modern-day Turkey.*

- B. **Onyx (Sardonyx)** – A variety of “Chalcedony” with parallel layers of red and white.
- C. **Ruby (Sardius)** – A common stone from the quartz family, which ranged in color from orange-red to brownish-red to blood-red.
- D. **Chrysolite** – A gem with a transparent gold or yellowish tone.
- E. **Beryl** – A mineral with several varieties of gems, ranging from the green emerald to the golden yellow beryl to the light blue aquamarine.
- F. **Topaz** – Ancient topaz was a softer stone with a yellow or yellow-green color.
- G. **Turquoise (Chrysoprase)**–The modern form of this jewel is an apple-green variety of quartz. The Greek name suggests a gold-tinted, green gemstone.
- H. **Jacinth** – Today this stone is a transparent zircon, usually red or reddish-brown. The one John saw was blue or shining violet in color.
- I. **Amethyst** – A clear quartz crystal that ranges in color from a faint purple tint to an intense purple.

VI. (v.21) I can’t even begin to imagine these gates!

- A. Each gate is a single pearl that is almost 1,400-1,500 miles high!
- B. *Even as earthly pearls are formed in the response to the wounding of oyster flesh, so these gigantic, supernatural pearls will remind saints throughout eternity of the magnitude of Christ’s suffering and its eternal benefit. (John MacArthur)*
- C. Notice that the gold mentioned in the New Jerusalem is “clear as glass.” We have nothing like this on planet earth today! I can’t wait to see it!

VII.(v.22-27) These verses are to be taken literally.

- A. The gates will never be closed. There will never be a need to keep anyone out!
- B. Clearly, people will travel freely in and out of the city.

**\*Points to Ponder:**

- Many scholars & theologians believe that the “New Earth” will be inhabited by the OT & Millennial saints while the “New Jerusalem” will be inhabited by the “Church Age” & “Tribulation” saints.
- Some other thoughts are that the “New Jerusalem” will be suspended in the air and the “New Earth” will revolve around it.
- No matter what your theory is on exactly how this will work, the fact remains clear that the saints who spend eternity with Christ will be able to freely come and go in and out of the “New Jerusalem.”

## Chapter 22: Introduction

- John continues his tour of the New Jerusalem.
- He closes this Revelation by reminding us to heed God's word.

## Chapter 22:1-5

- I. (v.1-2) These verses give us glimpse of our "glorified bodies."
  - A. Much like Christ after His resurrection, we will eat food (Luke 24:41-42) (1 John 3:2)
  - B. The fruit of the trees & the River of Life will supply all our needs!
- II. (v.3) The curse of sin is gone!
- III. (v.4) We will gaze upon the face of God, sealed by Him!
- IV. (v.5) There will be no night! Again, John is amazed at the brilliance of the glory of God. There is no need for any other light than the light of Christ!
- V. Notice that these verses read similarly to when the Garden of Eden was created.

## Chapter 22:6-21

- I. (v.6-7) The angel showing John around confirms to him that this Revelation is true and is the Word of God. It is not to be doubted, and the fulfillment of these prophecies will soon begin.
- II. (v.8) John tells us that he really did see all these things.
- III. (v.9) John begins to worship this angel, but *again*, is warned not to worship angels. {see Revelation 19:10}
- IV. (v.10) John is told to share this Revelation and not to keep it sealed up like Daniel was instructed to do.
  - A. *"He replied, "Go your way, Daniel, because the words are rolled up and sealed until the time of the end." –Daniel 12:9*
- V. (v.11) *"This verse simply indicates that the kind of life we desire to have in eternity is the kind of life we will have: we get what we want. Or to say it more accurately, we get the life we have prepared for. Those who are righteous in Christ here will be righteous there. Those who are unholy here, because they have rejected Christ, will be unholy there." (Dr. Ron Shafer)*
- VI. (v.12-17) These verses remind us of God's promise to the believer, and the condemnation of the unbeliever. (v.17) is our personal invitation to Heaven!
- VII. (v.18-19) We **must** accept and believe **all** of God's word, not just the parts that we like and we are NOT to add to what He has said. This is specific to the book of Revelation, but it is also true about the Bible in its entirety.
  - A. This has been an issue for many denominations, especially the Catholic and Orthodox churches. According to Catholicism, if the Pope declares it, then it's as good as if God Himself has said it!

VIII. (v.20) We get one more reference to Christ coming “quickly,” or more accurately, “swiftly.” (However, we God’s watch & calendar are very different from ours).

A. *“But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.” -2 Peter 3:8*

IX. (v.21) What a great way to close not only Revelation, but the Bible!

A. *“The grace of the Lord Jesus be with **you** all. Amen.” (NASB)*

B. *“The grace of the Lord Jesus be with **God’s people**. Amen.” (NIV)*

C. *“The grace of **our** Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.” (KJV)*

D. *“The grace of the **Master Jesus** be with all of you. Oh, Yes!” (MSG)*

E. *“May the grace of the Lord Jesus be with **God’s holy people**.”(NLT)*

F. *“The grace (blessing and favor) of the Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah) be with all the saints (God’s holy people, those set apart for God, to be, as it were, exclusively His). Amen (so let it be)!” (AMP)*