

Study Guide

Revelation

ΑΩ



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SUNSET
International Bible Institute



REVELATION

THE KINGDOM VICTORIOUS



INTRODUCTORY
NEW TESTAMENT
STUDIES

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(Also Available in Spanish)



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The Book of Revelation Study Guide

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without the written permission of the publisher except in the case of brief
quotations within critical articles and reviews, including translation.

DISCLAIMER

The textbook used in this course was selected because we consider it one of the best and well adapted to this course of study. **“The Commentary on Revelation”** by Jim McGuiggan contains a wealth of knowledge which will increase your understanding of this apocalyptic book which closes out the New Testament. The insights Jim presents on this study will enhance your understanding and help you to appreciate the over all content of this study. As with all books written by men, there may be some things with which you and I would not agree. The principle, “use what is good and discard what is not good” applies to all textbooks used with our courses. Please be wise enough to discard any and all teaching that is not biblical.

Instructions and Assignments

Level II Students

(Non-Transferable)

Each lesson is built around the instruction on either the VHS tape, DVD, CD, or audio cassette tape. Listen to the lecture on the tape as you follow along in the course Study Guide book.

Reading: Read the book of Revelation 3 times by the end of this course of study

Tests: There is a Self Exam at the end of each lesson. Preview each lesson by reading these questions first. There will be only two tests to complete for this course. One test is to be done at the end of lesson twelve (12) and the other will be done at the end of the study. (Tests will be sent only to those students taking the courses for credit.)

Memory Work: All memory work will be done on the honor system. You are asked to either write your verses on the Self Exams or quote them to someone at the end of each lesson where memory work is required. **(You need to bring the version out of which you memorized to him)** All memory work assigned must be completed in order to pass this course. You have a total of twenty-one (21) verses to memorize. **(This will be 10% or your final grade).**

Due with the Mid-term exam: (10 verses)

Revelation 1:1-3, 7-8, 10, 17-18; 10:1-2.

Due with the Final exam: (11 verses)

Revelation 12:1-2, 17; 14:1; 15:1; 16:1; 17:1-2; 22:14-15, 18.

ASSIGNMENTS:

- The self-exam questions for each lesson are to be read previous to listening or viewing the material on the tapes.
- All self-exams are to be completed at the end of each lesson.
- Level II students must obtain a 70% or better on each test to pass this course
- Grades will be based on, 10% for memory work, 10% for reading and 80% for the tests.

Instructions and Assignments

Level III Students

(Transferable)

Each lesson is built around the instruction on either the VHS tape, DVD, CD, or audio cassette tape. Listen to the lecture on the tape as you follow along in the course Study Guide book.

Reading: One book will be required. "*Commentary On Revelation*", by: Jim McGuigan. This book must be read in its entirety by the time this course is completed. Write a ½ page evaluation of the book and turn it in with your final test. The book of Revelation must be read four (4) times before the end of this course. If you are reading from a modern version (example: NASV, NKJV, or NIV) you need one of the readings to be from an old version (examples: King James or American Standard). If reading from a older version one of your readings must be from a modern version. (**Readings and evaluation paper is 10% of your final grade**)

Memory Work: You have forty (40) verses to memorize in your study of Revelation. These verses are designed to help as you go through this study and to help you remember the content of each chapter. Write out your memory verses, correct them with a different colored ink, and turn them in to your test administrator. Or you may quote the verses to your administrator. (**10% of your final grade**)

Due with the Mid-term exam: (21 verses)

Revelation 1:1-3, 7-8, 10, 17-18; 4:1, 5; 5:1-2; 6:1-2; 7:1; 8:1-2; 9:1-2; 10:1-2.

Due with the Final exam: (19 verses)

Revelation 11:1; 12:1-2, 17; 14:1; 15:1; 16:1; 17:1-2; 18:1-2; 19:1-2; 20:1; 21:1, 8; 22:14-15, 18.

The "Topical Outline" and the "Textual Outline" with Scripture divisions on page nine (9) in this Study Guide. (These will be required on the first test).

Tests: There will be two test, a mid-term and a final. You must obtain a 70% or better on each test. The two test will be worth **80% of the total grade**. All Self-Exam questions in the Study Guide (found at the end of each lesson) must be completed to pass this course.

All work must be completed to pass this course. Unfinished/left out work will receive an incomplete on the transcript and no certificate will be issued until incomplete work is turned in within the time allotted for late work.

Papers: You will be required to write a one-half page paper on the Richard's method of interpreting the book of Revelation. Material for this can be found in his book, "Hallelujah Anyway". This paper will be due with the mid-term test. Be sure and give reasons and scriptures for his interpretation.

Suggested readings

The Apocalypse Of St. John, by Henry Barclay

Worthy Is The Lamb, by Ray Summers

More Than Conquerors, by William Hendriksen

Notes On The Revelation Of John, by Albertis Pieters

Grading:

Reading	10%
Memory work	10%
Paper	5%
Exams	75%
TOTAL	100%

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LESSON ONE

DEFINING TERMS

INTRODUCTION

This book is one of the most controverted of all the books of the Bible. Yet, when given only a cursory examination, towering above all the difficulties involved in interpreting the perplexing visions of the lonely seer of Patmos is the picture of **an eternal kingdom ruled by the lamb slain for its purchase**. This kingdom which began on Pentecost extends through time and eternity.

Since this picture of the kingdom is the main emphasis of the book, anything that would detract from it would not only be irrelevant but actually at counter purposes with the theme. This being the case, we must reject the majority of the popular interpretations of the book which would see either the establishment of a future kingdom or a forecast of all the minute happenings of history in the book.

LESSON TEXT: None

LESSON AIM: To discover the most practical/rational way to approach the book of Revelation in order to understand its intent both for those of John's day and those of today.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. Learn that the book of Revelation is a picture book addressed primarily to the imagination.
 2. Study the words "*soon*" and "*near*" and discover that the book is an *imminent* book – written for those primarily of John's day.
 3. Understand the contrast between a "*sealed*" book and an "*unsealed*" book.
 4. Discover that Revelation is deeply rooted in Old Testament language and figures.
-

REVELATION IS A "PICTURE" BOOK

(Read 1:2) The capability of understanding Revelation rests in seeing the pictures.

A. Revelation Cannot Be Approached the Same Way as Books of History (e.g. Joshua) **Or An Epistle** (e.g. 1 Corinthians or Philipppians). These types of books are literal with only an occasional figure of speech and with little symbolic language.

B. Revelation Is an Apocalyptic Book

1. Since Revelation is stated to be a series of visions (Read 1:2 again), we must not only ask "What is the picture?" but also "What does this picture

symbolize, portray or mean?”

- a. One might ask, “Why did he couch such an important book in symbols or pictures?” We may never know the full answer to that question, but here are a few suggestions.
 - 1) Apocalypse was a type of literature used in the first century to convey the thought of victory of good over evil and apocalyptic literature always used symbols (symbols that the reader already understood) to convey its thought.
 - 2) Symbols draw a much more dramatic picture than pure words.
 - 3) Things that are illustrated for the eye and not merely spoken for the ear are much easier remembered. They are thus made both memorial and rememberable.
 - 4) A picture also makes its point quicker than an essay does.

NOTE: Because many do not understand that there is a “key” to understanding the symbols in the book, Revelation either is viewed as a “mystery” or is used as a “hotbed” of all kinds of personal views to support favorite doctrines.

STUDY NOTES

1. The book of Revelation is not a difficult book. It is made difficult:
 - a. By the fact that it is a symbolic book.
 - b. Also, because of the fact that we have allowed ourselves to view the book superstitiously.
2. In making an interpretation of the book, we must:
 - a. Approach it with a sober mind.
 - b. Remember that it is a certain kind of book.
3. Any set of figures used to convey truth has a *key* that enables it to convey that truth.
 - a. If that key is not understood, it must be explained.
 - b. If that key is understood, it does not need to be explained.
4. The book of Revelation is a “Picture book.”
 - a. Things illustrated are made memorable.
 - b. The book presents the victory of Christ and the church over the enemies of John’s day.
5. Our understanding of the visions of this book depends entirely upon our method of approach. If we approach the vision:
 - a. Literally, then we will understand it to be a literal picture.
 - b. As symbolic of truth, then we will ask not only “What is the picture?” but also, “What does this picture symbolize, portray or mean?”

REVELATION IS AN “IMMINENT” BOOK

(Read 1:1, 3; 22:6, 7, 10 – 11, 12, 20) There is definite internal evidence which show this book was completely fulfilled in the day in which it was written.

A. A Study of the Words Translated *Soon*

1. “Soon” – lit. with speed of haste, *quickly*.
2. “Near” (*ENGUS*) means *in hand*, i.e. (present).
 - a. Of place and position:

- 1) John 19:42 – “*The Tomb was **nearby**.*”
- 2) Luke 19:11 – “*He was **near** Jerusalem.*”
- 3) John 3:23 – “*Aenon, **near** Salim.*”
- 4) John 6:19 – “*Jesus **approaching** boat*”.
- 5) Acts 1:12 – “***Near** Jerusalem; a Sabbath-day’s walk.*”
- b. Figuratively:
 - 1) Ephesians 2:17 – **Near** access to God.
 - 2) Ephesians 2:13 – Became **near** by the blood of Christ.
 - 3) Romans 10:8 – Word is **near** you already, as if it were in your heart and mouth.
 - 4) Philippians 4:5 – The Lord is **near**.
- c. Of time: Concerning things imminent, soon to come to pass.
 - 1) Mark 13:28-29 & Luke 21:30-31; Matthew. 24:32-33. Summer and judgment at Jerusalem.
 - 2) Matthew 26:18 – Jesus’ time to die.
 - 3) John 2:13; 6:4; 11:5 – Passover.
 - 4) John 7:2 – Feast of Tabernacles.
 - 5) Hebrews 6:8 – Judgment of fruitless land.

NOTE: (Verb) Matthew 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; Mark 1:5; Luke 10:11 – The kingdom. Cf. Luke 21:20 (desolation); Matthew 26:45-46 (Betrayal and Betrayer); Romans 13:12 (The day); 1 Peter 4:7 (Jewish age).

B. Contrast Between “Sealed” Book and an “Unsealed” Book

1. Daniel told to “. . .*close up and seal the words. . .until that time of the end*” (12:4, 9).
The reason: Prophecy not for now but to be fulfilled hundreds of years in the future. Read Matthew 24:15 and Luke 21:20.
2. John told, “*Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book*” (22:10).
The reason: The time is near, not for the distant future.

C. The Express Statement of the Book

1. A blessing is pronounced upon those who understand and take to heart what is written in the book. It would be impossible for anyone to understand something that talked about the distant future.
2. The book is written between the parenthesis of “The time is near” (1:3; 22:10).

REVELATION IS A “BIBLICAL” BOOK

The book of Revelation is rooted and is in full harmony with the rest of the Bible.

A. The Language of the Book of Revelation Is Deeply Rooted in the Old Testament

Although there is no direct citation or quotation from the Old Testament, out of the 404 verses in the book there are over 350 allusions to Old Testament passages.

B. Some Passages That Are Rooted in the Old Testament

Revelation	Old Testament Reference
Ch. 1 Description of Son of Man	Daniel 7:9ff; 10:5,6 Ezekiel 1:7, 26a; 43:4
Ch. 2 Observe O.T. Expressions as: Tree of Life, Paradise, Balaam, Jezebel, Rod of Iron	
Ch. 3 Book of Life	Exodus 32:33; Ps.69:28; Malachi 3:16; Isa. 22:22
Ch. 4 Throne Set in Heaven The Four Living Creatures	Isa. 6:1; Ezekiel 1:26, 28 Ezekiel 1:10; 10:14; Isaiah 6:1, 10; 10:14
Ch. 5 The Scroll Lion of Judah	Ezekiel 2:9; Zech. 5:1-3 Genesis 44:9; Isa. 11:10
Ch. 6 The Horses and Their Riders	Psa. 45:3,4; Zech. 1:8;6:3
Ch. 7 Sealing of the Righteous	Ezekiel 9
Ch. 8–9 The Trumpets of Judgment	Exodus 7ff – Plagues
Ch. 10 Angels Swearing The Little Book	Daniel 12:7 Ezekiel 2:9; 3:4
Ch. 11 Measuring Reed The Two Witnesses	Ezekiel 40:3; Zech. 2:1ff Zechariah 4:2ff
Ch. 12 The Woman, Child, Dragon, Michael	Genesis 3:15; Psalm 2:9; Daniel 10:13, 21
Ch. 13 The Beast Out of the Sea	Daniel 7; 2:31
Ch. 14 The White Cloud, “Like unto Son of Man” The Wine Press	Daniel 7:13;10:16 Isaiah 63:3
Ch. 15 The Song of Moses	Exodus 15
Ch. 16 Har-Magedon	Judges 5; II Chronicles 35
Ch. 17 The Fall of Babylon Compare also Ezekiel 27; the Fall of Tyre	Isaiah 13-19; 14; 21; 46; 47; 48; Jer. 25; 50; 51; Daniel 2:7; Habakkuk 3
Ch. 20 Invitation to the Birds Gog & Magog The Books of Judgment	Ezekiel 39:16-20 Gen. 10:2; Ezekiel 38,39 Daniel 7-10; 12:1; Psalm 69:28
Ch. 21 The New Heaven and Earth The New Jerusalem	Isaiah 65:17ff; 66:22ff Ezekiel 48:30ff
Ch. 22 The River of Water of Life; The Tree of Life	Gen. 2; Ezekiel 47:1-12

It must be understood that the book of Revelation is rooted in and is in full harmony with the rest of the Bible and must be explained on the basis of the clear teaching of the Bible elsewhere.

CONCLUSION: Revelation is . . . 1) A “**PICTURE**” book, 2) An “**IMMINENT**” book, and 3) A “**BIBLICAL**” book.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON ONE

1. In what kind of language is Revelation written? _____
2. What is the key to understanding the book of Revelation? _____

3. To whom was the book written? _____
When? _____
4. When was the book's fulfillment expected? _____

5. What is the significance of a book sealed and unsealed? _____

6. From where do the primary allusions (symbolic language) come? _____

7. What does the word "*Revelation*" mean? _____

8. What is the meaning of the Greek word ENGUS and how does it affect our interpretation of the book?

9. What is the main emphasis of the book of Revelation?

10. Give four reasons why Revelation is written in apocalyptic language.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____

LESSON TWO

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

The condition of the Christians who first received Revelation was very critical. Christianity had remained for several decades unnoticed by the Roman government. It had been regarded as a part of the Jewish religion, which was a legalized religion of Rome. When it became known that Christianity was not just a new patch on the old garment of Judaism, the Christians found themselves in difficulty with the government as well as with their fellow men.

The message to remain loyal today is a relevant message – the call to choose the eternal rather than the temporal; to resist temptation, to refuse to compromise with pagan secularism, to place the claim of conscience above all demands against it; to cherish the confidence of ultimate victory for the kingdom of God not only in the reign of Domitian but also in every other chaotic period of world history, including the twentieth century.

LESSON TEXT: None

LESSON AIM: To become acquainted with the historical background in which the book is written.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. Understand the interpretive principles used in a study of the book.
 2. Discover who wrote Revelation and why the book was written.
 3. Learn the date in which Revelation was written and the time about which it was written.
 4. Be able to reproduce both the topical outline and the textual outline. (These will be required on the mid-term exam).
-

THE HISTORICAL – BACKGROUND, PROPHETIC – PRINCIPLE APPROACH TO THE BOOK

A. Interpretive Principles Used with this Method

1. The writer wrote primarily for the encouragement and edification of the Christians of his own day.
2. The book is written primarily in symbolic language.
3. The book uses Old Testament terminology with New Testament meaning.
4. One must seek to grasp the visions or series of visions as a whole without pressing the details of the symbolism.
5. Revelation is addressed to a large degree to our imagination. (Romans to the intellect, Psalms to the emotions).

6. When we have found an event or person to which the prophecy is fairly applicable, we can consider it fulfilled in such an event or person, but not thereby exhausted. The book is intended more for the purpose of showing us the forces of good and evil that make history, than for the prediction of future events.

B. The Historical Background

1. The author of Revelation.
 - a. John (the apostle).
 - b. Servant of Jesus Christ.
 - c. Brother to the Christians of Asia Minor.
2. The recipients of Revelations – Christians who were already under persecution. Let's look at the reasons they were to be persecuted.
 - a. **Christianity was an illegal religion.** Rome tolerated the religion of those whom they conquered so long as they did not proselytize. Christians, of course, existed to save others.
 - b. **Christianity was universal.** With the Romans the State was the main thing; with Christians the kingdom of God throughout the world was the principal concern.
 - c. **Christians were accused of all kinds of evil.** Because they held meetings at night and were fond of each other, the Romans figured the meetings were for the gratification of lust. When they heard Christians speak of "eating flesh and drinking blood" they accused them of cannibalism. (Ante-Nicene Fathers)
 - d. **Christians refused to go to war.** Two reasons:
 - 1) A part of the oath and initiation of the soldiers included service to the idols of the State and the wearing of idolatrous insignias on their uniforms.
 - 2) Christ had taken their sword from them and had given them the ways of peace. (Ante-Nicene Fathers)
 - e. **Christians were looked upon as wild fanatics.** Because of their enthusiasm.
 - f. **Christians refused to worship the Emperor.**

NOTE: The policy of the government to exterminate Christianity was alone sufficient menace to have brought despair to the hearts of the baffled churches, but that was not all. While this danger threatened without, another fierce monster stalked within – a pernicious heresy. The heresy of Judaism combined with Gnosticism to produce bewilderment, controversy, and dissension. It also destroyed fellowship and threatened to destroy Christianity. When people were being killed, exiled, and robbed of all their property for refusal to renounce their religion, when evils were threatening to strike a death blow within the church, is there any hope for the future? Revelation is God's answer to this question.

3. The purpose of Revelation in this background
 - a. To show that so great a power as Rome was doomed to be overthrown, that in the end the kingdom of God would triumph and that Christ reigns, and will always reign, supreme.

- b. To present a ringing call to maintain loyalty to the faith at all costs, even in the face of martyrdom.

C. The Prophetic Principle

1. Prophecy is more forth-telling God's judgment than it is foretelling God's action in the future. Read Exodus 4:16 with Exodus 7:1. Also read Micah 3:8.
2. Prophecy is not to be privately interpreted – 2 Peter 1:19-21.
The prophets of the Old Testament, like John, received heavenly visions. Their prophecies interpreting the visions were not productions of their own spirits, but of the Spirit of God.
 - a. Jeremiah 1:11-15. (Read)
 - 1) **The rod of an almond tree** (vs. 1-12). God will perform His word.
 - 2) **The pot** (vs. 13-15). Signifying judgment upon Jerusalem.
 - b. Interpretation is not the prophet's work but God's pronouncement.
 - c. Revelation 1:12, 19-20
 - 1) Candlesticks – The seven candlesticks are (signify) the seven churches
 - 2) Stars – The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches.

NOTE: Interpretation is not John's but Christ's. All signs are to be interpreted by God. Those whose meanings are not revealed in the text will be understood by observing a like vision in Scripture, the meaning of which is known. This employs the principle of interpreting Scripture by Scripture.

CONSIDER

1. The vision of the Seal of God (7:1-4). The twelve tribes of Israel are sealed in their foreheads. Compare Ezekiel 9:1-9. The sealing was not for identification, as in 2 Timothy 2:19, but for protection during God's judgment of evil nations.
2. The vision of the Little Book (10:5-11). John is told to eat the book—sweet to the taste but bitter in the stomach. Compare Ezekiel 2:8 – 3:3, 14. John, like Ezekiel, must preach the message of God's grace in the midst of God's judgment.

D. Rome's Rulers from 27 B.C. to 81 A.D.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Augustus 27 B.C. to 14 A.D. | 6. Galba 68 A.D. |
| 2. Tiberius 14 A.D. to 37 A.D. | 7. Otho 68 A.D. |
| 3. Caligula 37 A.D. to 41 A.D. | 8. Vitellius 69 A.D. |
| 4. Claudius 41 A.D. to 54 A.D. | 9. Vespasian 69 A.D. to 79 A.D. |
| 5. Nero 54 A.D. to 68 A.D. | 10. Titus 79 A.D. to 81 A.D. |

E. Domitian, the 11th Ruler

He puts down three (probably Galba, Otho, Vitellius) to make himself the eighth.

F. Read Revelation 17:9-11

1. “Five are fallen” – These are Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, and Nero.
2. “One is” – This is Vespasian.
3. “One to come” – This is Titus.
4. “The Beast—an eighth” – This is the mad-man Domitian.
5. The **Neroian** persecution is not in view in the book of Revelation – the persecution spoken of is future.
6. The number **eight** in the symbolism of numbers:
 - a. Stands primarily for **renewed activity**.
 - b. Comes to mean even **a claim of deity** after the New Testament.

G. The Date of the Book: About 78 A.D.

1. It was written **during the reign of Vespasian**.
2. This date is based on a comparison of Daniel 7 and Revelation 13 and 17.
3. 95 A.D. is the time **OF WHICH** the book is written.

A TOPICAL AND TEXTUAL OUTLINE OF THE BOOK**A. Topical Outline – like a Three Act Play**

1. Act One – **The Fortunes of the Church**, chapters. 1 – 3.
2. Act Two – **The Outward Struggle Between the Church and Rome**, Chapters 4 – 11.
3. Act Three – **The Inward Struggle Between Christ and The Devil**, Chapters 12 – 22.

B. Textual Outline

1. The Son of Man and the Candlesticks, Chapter 1.
2. The Letters to the Seven Churches, Chapters. 2 – 3.
3. The Throne Scene, Chapter 4.
4. The Sealed Book and the Worthy Lamb, Chapter 5.
5. Opening Six Seals, Chapter 6.
6. Sealed & Victorious Saints, Chapter 7.
7. Seventh Seal and Six Trumpets, Chapters. 8-9.
8. Seven Thunders and Little Book, Chapter 10.
9. The Temple, Two Witnesses, Seventh Trumpet, Chapter 11.
10. The Woman, The Dragon, The Man-Child, Chapter 12.
11. The Two Beasts, Chapter 13.
12. 144,000, Headlines, Judgment, Chapter 14.
13. Seven Bowls of Wrath, Chapters 15 – 16.
14. The Harlot – Introduction, Chapter 17.
15. The Harlot – Fall, Chapter 18.
16. The Rider on the White Horse, Chapter 19.
17. Satan and Evil Falls, Chapter 20.
18. The Victory of the Saints, Chapters 21-22.

(Memorize both these outlines for your test)

C. The Purpose of the Book

To present and maintain the incentive to be “*faithful unto death.*” This is accomplished by presenting:

1. The ultimate triumph of the church:

- a. The great multitude (7:14-15). The multitude is said to be “*coming out of the great tribulation.*” Compare the “*tribulation*” with 1:9. Though the saints have been persecuted unto death, they are never-the-less “*before the throne of God*” (7:15).
- b. Martyrs that live:
 - 1) The souls under the Altar (6:9). “. . . *slain yet cry out.*”
 - 2) The two witnesses (11:3, 7, 11). “. . . *killed yet raised.*”
 - 3) Beheaded souls, “*I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded because of Christ. . . and they lived . . .*” (20:4). Thus, “*Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord*” (14:13).
- c. The Eternal City – The holy city, new Jerusalem, a bride (21:2, 9-10; Ephesians 5:22-23). Standing triumphant on the other side of the conflict.

2. The ultimate defeat of:

- a. Anti-Christian World Forces (17:14; 19:11-16), the battle is not described, yet the adversaries are “. . . *killed with the sword of Him that sat upon the horse.*” The defeat of the opposition is predetermined.
- b. Satan (12:7-12).
 - 1) “*The great dragon was cast down*” (20:10).
 - 2) He is “. . . *cast into the lake of fire and brimstone.*” The defeat of Satan is presented before the final overthrow.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWO

1. To whom is the book of Revelation written? _____

2. By whom is it written? What is the date of the writing? _____

3. List six reasons why the first century Christians were persecuted.
 - 1) _____

 - 2) _____

 - 3) _____

 - 4) _____

 - 5) _____

 - 6) _____

4. Why was the book of Revelation written? _____
This was accomplished by presenting what two great truths?

5. What two heresies threatened the church? _____

6. What is the purpose of fulfilled prophecy? _____

7. Who is the only person who can correctly interpret prophecy?

LESSON THREE

INTRODUCTION (FIRST VISION)

INTRODUCTION



Chapter One is an introduction to the rest of the book. It is written to emphasize that what is to be read is nothing less than the express word of God. It is not only the word of God but it is given just when it is needed for “. . . *the time is at hand.*”

Its three co-authors are claimed to be no less than the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This again underlines the divine origin of the letter. The attributes of these three are characteristics for which the saints will have reason to be thankful in the days ahead. John claims the letter was the direct commission from heaven. He is told explicitly by Jesus to “. . . *write in a book what you see and send it to the seven churches.*”

LESSON TEXT: Revelation 1:1-20; 2 Peter 1:19-21; Daniel 7:13-14.

LESSON AIM: To discover something about the book, its writer, and its Author, the Risen Christ in the midst of the lamp stands.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. Learn the destination, content, source, effect, and judgment of the message about to be received.
 2. Learn who the writer is, examine his right to speak, and see his relationship to the readers.
 3. Get a picture of the risen Christ by learning 12 titles describing Him.
 4. Understand that a blessing is pronounced on all who read, hear and keep the things written in the book of Revelation.
-

WHO ARE THE BLESSED?

1. Those who read, hear and keep the words of this prophecy (1:3).
2. Those who die in the Lord (14:13).
3. Those who watch and keep their garments (16:15).
4. Those called to the marriage supper of the Lamb (19:9).
5. Those who have part in the second resurrection (20:6).
6. Those who keep the sayings of this prophecy (22:7).
7. Those who do His commands (22:14).

THE INTRODUCTION (1:1-8)

A blessing is pronounced upon those who read, hear and keep the things written in this book.

A. Pronouncement of Blessing (vs. 1-3)

1. The nature of the book (v. 1).
 - a. Uncovering – Apocalypse.
 - b. Immediate – Soon to come to pass.
 - c. Symbolic – By the Angel.
2. The source of the book (v. 2).
 - a. Word of God.
 - b. Testimony of Jesus.
3. The outcome of the book (v. 3a). To make one to be a:
 - a. Lector – read aloud.
 - b. Auditor – understand.
 - c. Disciple – treasure and follow.

B. The Message (vs. 4-7)

1. **Destination** of the Message (v. 4a).
 - a. Seven real congregations in seven real cities.
 - b. Typical of all churches in the world. “. . . *hear what the Spirit says to the churches*” (2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22).
2. **Content** of the message (v. 4b). – Blessing comes before visions.
 - a. Grace – The greatness of the undeserved gifts of God to man. Read Romans 3:21-31; Ephesians 2:1-10; Titus 2:11-12; 3:4-7.
 - b. Peace – The harmony which is restored between God and man through Jesus Christ. Read Romans 5:1-5; Ephesians 2:12-22; Romans 8:1-39.
3. **Source** of the message (vs. 4c-5).
 - a. **Eternal God** – “. . . *who is, and was, and is to come*” denotes the self-existence of God. Compare Exodus 3, “*the eternally existing one.*”
 - b. **Seven Spirits** – The Holy Spirit of God.
 - 1) Perhaps, simply indicates perfection.
 - 2) An allusion to Isaiah 11:2 of the seven-fold work of the Spirit – but one Spirit.
 - 3) This book written to the seven churches and the church is the habitation of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16).
 - c. **Jesus Christ.**
 - 1) Faithful witness – the only one on whom we can rely.
 - 2) Firstborn from the dead – “the one who has priority to, and preeminence over creation, not in the sense of being the first to be born” (W.E. Vine, Vol. II, p. 104).
 - 3) Ruler of the kings of the earth – Definite allusion to Psalms 2; 89; 110.

NOTE: How does He rule the nations?

- a) By appointment (Daniel 2:20-21).
- b) Through nations (Isaiah 10:5-7; Jeremiah 5:51; Habakkuk 1).
- c) By four means (Ezekiel 14:21):

– Sword	– Wild beasts
– Famine	– Plague
- d) Through saints’ prayers (1 Timothy 2:1-2).
4. **Effect** of the message (vs. 5-6).

- a. *Love* – Continual action.
 - b. *Freedom from sin* – Past action with continuing result. God's love continues to shine from the cross to a sinful world.
 - c. *Royal service* – Coronation and appointment leads to function.
 - d. *Holy praise* – The purpose of God's eternal plan.
5. **Judgment** of the Message (v. 7).
- a. Visible.
 - b. Sorrowful.
 - c. Certain.

C. An Admonition to Trust God (v. 8)

Five reasons given for this trust. He is:

- 1. **Alpha and Omega** – Absolute Completeness.
- 2. **Lord** – Master of Universe.
- 3. **God** – Creator.
- 4. **Eternal self-existent One**. Who is, who was, who is to come.
- 5. **The Almighty** – The Ruler of all rulers. (The word *Almighty* is from the Greek *PANTOKRATOR* which describes the one who is in dominion over all things, controls all things, and holds all things in his grasp.)

INTRODUCTORY VISION – THE SON OF MAN IN THE MIDST OF THE LAMP-STANDS (1:9-20)

A. Greetings from the Writer (v. 9)

- 1. His right to speak – Brotherhood and fellowship.
- 2. His Depth of concern:
 - a. Tribulation – Pressure. Like grinding wheat or pressing grapes it appears to destroy but actually refines for better use.
 - b. Kingdom – Spiritual realm.
 - c. Patience – Gives courage. The kind that can take the suffering of the moment and transfer it to victory.
- 3. The place of his concern – **In Christ**. He will enable us to endure to the end as long as we depend on him for our strength.
- 4. His location – **On Patmos**. His loyalty to Christ exiled him for punishment.

B. The Power Base of the Writer (vs. 10-11)

- 1. In the Spirit – He was carried out of the world of space and time and carried into the world of eternity and God. Read Ezekiel 3:12; 8:3.
- 2. On the Lord's Day – Not the Old Testament "day of the Lord" but the day belonging to the Lord, or devoted to the Lord. The first day of the week (the first reference in literature to the Lord's Day).

C. The Picture of the Risen Christ (vs. 12-18)

- 1. **His place** (v. 12) – Standing among the churches.
- 2. **His dress** (v.13).
 - a. Long garment – Robe of the king (1 Samuel 18:4; 24:5, 11; Ezekiel 26:16).
 - b. Golden sash – Ephod of the High Priest (Exodus 28:4; 29:5).

3. **His Titles** (vs. 14-18).
 - a. **The Eternal One** (v. 14a) “. . . *head and hair white as wool*” (Daniel 7:9).
 - b. **The Omniscient One** (v. 14b) “. . . *eyes like flaming fire*” (Daniel 10:6; John 2:25).
 - c. **The Judge** (v. 15a) “. . . *feet like bronze glowing in a furnace*” (Ezekiel 1:7).
 - d. **The Word Of Jehovah** (v. 15) “. . . *voice. . . rushing waters*” (Ezekiel 43:2).
 - e. **The Provident One** (v. 16a) “. . . *right hand. . . stars*” (Job 38:31).
 - f. **The Vindicator** (v. 16b) “. . . *mouth . . . two-edged sword*” (Isaiah 11:4; 49:2).
 - g. **The Glorious One** (v. 16c) “. . . *face . . . sun shining . . . strength*” (Judges 5:31).
 - h. **The One To Be Worshipped** (v. 17a) “. . . *fell down at feet . . . dead*” (Ezekiel 1:28; 3:23).
 - i. **The Comforter** (v. 17b) “. . . *fear not . . .*” (Matthew 14:27; 17:6-7).
 - j. **The Omnipresent One** (v. 17c) “. . . *First and Last*” (Isaiah 44:6; 48:12).
 - k. **The Ever-Living One** (v. 18a). “*I am the living one*” (Joshua 3:10; Psalm 42:2; Hebrews 1:10).
 - L. **The Conqueror of Death** (v. 18b). “*I have the keys of death and of Hades*” (Psalm 9:13; 107:18; Isaiah 38:10).

D. Explanation of the Vision (vs. 19-20)

1. Commission to write (v. 19).
2. The mystery of lamp stands and stars (v. 20).
 - a. Outer manifestation – the congregation (appearance).
 - b. Inner manifestation – angel (reality).

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON THREE

1. To whom was the book written? _____

2. Are these seven churches real congregations? _____
3. What is the content of these messages? _____

4. What four means does God use to judge the nations?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
5. What are the five designations given for Jesus?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
6. What are the twelve titles of Jesus?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
 - 6) _____
 - 7) _____
 - 8) _____
 - 9) _____
 - 10) _____
 - 11) _____
 - 12) _____
7. What are the lampstands and stars?

LESSON FOUR

LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES (1)

INTRODUCTION



Chapters 2 and 3 contain the seven letters to the churches in Asia. They all have the same general form. Jesus, the author, describes himself and then proceeds to commend the church in the area or areas where they merit it. There then follows a declaration of the guilt of that church. That is, the specific area of trespass which he feels he must deal with.

There is no doubt that the principles dealt with in these letters are to be remembered by the Church of God of any age. In verse 23 Jesus claims that the judgement on Jezebel and her followers is to be a standing lesson to “*all the churches*.” And if it be true that the Old Testament was written for our learning (Romans 15:4) it cannot be otherwise with these epistles.

These seven letters follow the form of ordinary letters in the first century. Notice the following ingredients in each one.

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Salvation. | 5. Warning. |
| 2. Self-Designation (who is the writer). | 6. Exhortation. |
| 3. Commendation (when there can be one). | 7. Promise. |
| 4. Condemnation (when there must be one). | |

We will follow a set procedure in approaching each letter. We will first discuss the city in which the church was located. Second, we will discuss what Jesus (the Spirit) told each one. Third, we will list lessons we can learn from the letter.

LESSON TEXT: Revelation 2:1-17; Acts 19-20; 1 Timothy 2:1-4;
Numbers 22-25:4; 31:16.

LESSON AIM: To discover the strengths and failings of the first three churches in Revelation chapter two.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. See that the church at Ephesus was loyal in doctrine and practice, but lacking in their love – their motivation was wrong.
 2. See that Smyrna was poor in worldly possessions, yet rich in spiritual character and blessings – they must continue to be faithful unto death.
 3. Learn that many good things are said about Pergamum. They have one major defect that must be solved. They are allowing Christian doctrine to be compromised. It must stop. Only those who repent will be accepted by the Lord.
-

THE EPHESUS CHURCH (2:1-7)

The Ephesian church was loyal in doctrine and practice, but lacking in love.

A. The City – Its Characteristics: the First and Greatest City of Asia Minor

1. The greatest harbor in Asia. Large caravans of camels brought their goods to Ephesus to be shipped to Rome. This made Ephesus the wealthiest city of Asia Minor.
2. Ephesus had three great political distinctions:
 - a. It was a free city – a miniature Rome.
 - b. It was a judicial city.
 - c. It was a “fun” city – the yearly games were held here.
3. Ephesus was the center of the worship of Diana (Artemis).
4. Ephesus’ population (like most great ports) was very mixed. This is probably one reason for it being the center of crime and immorality.
5. The city is in ruins today – nothing on the ancient site.

B. The Church and Jesus’ Message (2:1-7)

1. The church at the first (Acts 19 – 20; Ephesians 1:15).
 - a. One of great faith – enough to burn all their magical books and to buck the tide of public sentiment by refusing to go any longer to the temple of Artemis.
 - b. One of deep love for:
 - 1) God (Acts 19:1-41).
 - 2) Paul (Acts 20:17-38).
 - 3) Each other (Ephesians 1:15).
 - 4) The lost – Proven by their growth in numbers and spirit (Ephesians 4:1-16).
2. The church in Revelation.
 - a. The salutation (v. 1a): *The angel*.
 - b. The self-designation (v. 1b): *Him who*. . .
 - 1) “. . . holds the seven stars” – In control of their spirits.
 - 2) “. . . walks among . . . lamp-stands” – In control of their world.
 - c. The commendation (vs. 2-3,6): Five in number.
 - 1) An active church – “*I know your deeds.*”
 - 2) A toiling church – “*I know your hard work.*”
 - 3) A persistent church – “*I know your perseverance.*”
 - 4) An intolerant church – “*Cannot tolerate wicked men, . . . tried those who claim to be apostles, . . . hate the practices of the Nicolaitans.*”
 - 5) A consistent church – “*Persevered, endured hardship for my name, . . . not grown weary.*”
 - d. The condemnation (v. 4): “*You have left your first love.*”
 - 1) Read again Acts 20:36-38; Ephesians 1:15.
 - 2) They were not doctrinally wrong, but the spark was gone!
 - e. The warning (v. 5): Revival or Removal. The advice:
 - 1) Remember – when love was afire.
 - 2) Repent – of allowing the world to cool your ardor.
 - 3) Repeat – the things that love caused and that caused love.

**THE HONEYMOON
IS OVER**

- f. The exhortation (v. 7a): Listen (pay heed) to the Spirit.
- g. The promise (v. 7b): Eternal life in God's garden.
 - 1) *To him that overcometh* – we overcome by keeping his works unto the end, thus, death (cf. 2:26).
 - 2) *Tree of life* – offers eternal life (cf. Genesis 3:22).

THE SMYRNA CHURCH (2:8-11)

The persecuted saints in Smyrna were encouraged to be faithful unto death.

A. The City – Its Characteristics

- 1. A center of **emperor worship**. Emperor worship, normally, was not a demand for exclusive religious faith but was simply a test of political loyalty. But, to the Christian, there was only one Lord, Jesus Christ.
- 2. A center of **Jewish people** and influence. They were so militant against Christianity that they put Polycarp to death on the Sabbath and gathered the sticks to burn him. All of this was in total violation of their law.

B. The Church and Jesus' Message (2:8-11)

- 1. The salutation (v. 8a). "*The angel of the church.*"
- 2. The self-designation (v. 8b). "*Him who . . .*"
 - a. "*. . . is the first and last.*" Always present.
 - b. "*. . . died and lived again.*" Un-threatened by anything.
- 3. Commendation (vs. 9-10a). You are rich! In spite of:
 - a. Afflictions.
 - b. Poverty.
 - c. Slander.
 - d. Coming persecution.
 - e. Coming imprisonment.
 - f. Certain death (martyrdom).

**SUFFERING
SAINTS**

NOTE: He adds a postscript that makes everything all right – "*but thou art rich.*" Word means plutocrat (filthy rich).

- 4. Condemnation – None.
- 5. Warning (v. 10a). Continue to "*. . . be faithful unto death*" – *PROS* – leading toward or in view of (death). Thus, it is faithfulness that leads to death.
- 6. Exhortation (v. 11a). Continue to listen to the Spirit.
- 7. Promise (vs. 10b, 11b).
 - a. The **crown of life** (v. 10b). Victory with Jesus. The *STEPHANOS*:
 - 1) The victor's crown, a symbol of triumph in the games or some such contest; hence, by metonymy, a reward or prize.
 - 2) A token of public honor for distinguished service, military prowess, etc., or of nuptial joy, or festal gladness, especially at the parousia of kings. (Vine, Vol. 1, p. 258).
 - b. **Eternal life** (v. 11b). Victory over death. "*. . . overcometh . . . not hurt of second death*" – again, *overcometh* means to keep his works unto the end, thus, death (2:26). Why will he not be hurt of the second death? Because he has taken part in the first resurrection (20:6). You die like Jesus on the cross, but you will live and reign with Christ.

THE PERGAMUM CHURCH (2:12-17)

The church in Pergamum was guilty of and warned against tolerating the doctrine of compromise.

**SATAN
PLACE**

A. The City: Its Characteristics

1. The capitol city of the Roman province and, therefore, a center of emperor worship. Satan's power!
2. The intellectual center of the province. Satan's mind!
3. The medical center of the province. They worshiped the God of healing whose symbol was a serpent wrapped around a cross. Satan's sign!

B. The Church and Jesus' Message (vs. 12-17)

1. The salutation (v. 12a): "*The angel of the church.*"
2. The self-designation (v. 12b): "*Him who has . . . the sharp double-edged sword.*" **The Fearsome Warrior.** What is "the sharp double-edged sword?" cf. 1:16; 19:11-16.
 - a. It is used to judge and make war. This is not for salvation, thus not the gospel.
 - b. We know what the sword is in Ephesians 6:17 and Hebrews 4:12, because they tell what it is.
 - c. John, in like manner, tells what it is, thus, when we see the sword in Revelation we are going to look for judgment.
3. Commendation (v. 13). In spite of living where Satan has his throne.
 - a. "*You remain true to my name*" – **Loyalty!**
 - b. "*You did not renounce your faith in me*" – **Faithfulness!**
 - c. "*You suffered until death*" – **Endurance!**

NOTE: Definition of **martyr or witness**. Greek: *MARTUS* – a witness. "One who avers, or can aver, what he himself has seen or heard or knows by any other means" (Thayer, p. 392a).

In an ethical sense, those are called *martures easou*, who, after his example have proved the strength and genuineness of their faith in Christ by undergoing a violent death (Acts 22:20; Revelation 2:23; 17:6) Thayer, p. 392b.

4. Condemnation (v. 14). **Tolerant of compromise.**
 - a. The teaching of Balaam (Read Numbers 25:1-4 and 31:16).
 - 1) Eat food sacrificed to idols.
 - 2) Commit sexual immorality.
 - b. The teaching of the Nicolaitans. Another sect, probably Gentiles, who also taught compromise in order to further material safety.
5. Warning (v. 16). **Repent or face Jesus and His sword.**
6. Exhortation (v. 17a). **Listen to the Spirit.**
7. Promise (v. 17b).
 - a. *Hidden manna* – that is Christ himself (John. 6:3, 38), that spiritual sustenance which the world cannot understand. **All needs supplied from above.**

- b. *White stone* – Pergamum engaged in the mining of white stone and the use of it as a commercial product. The use of a piece of this stone with a name on it was varied. Here are four:
- 1) Given to a man who was tried and acquitted.
 - 2) Given to a man freed of slavery and made a citizen.
 - 3) Given to a winner of a contest to show he had overcome opposition.
 - 4) Given to warriors coming back from victory. Put all these together and you see the Christian.
 - a) **Acquittal** from accusation.
 - b) **Freedom** from all slavery.
 - c) **Acceptance** by ruler.

REMEMBER!
REPENT!
RETURN!

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FOUR

1. In its beginning for what two great attributes was the church at Ephesus noted?
1) _____
2) _____
2. For what five things is the church at Ephesus commended?
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
3. What warning did Ephesus receive? _____
Advice? _____
1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____
4. List two characteristics of the city of Smyrna.
1) _____
2) _____
5. Smyrna was rich in spite of what six conditions or things?
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____
6. What was the condemnation for Smyrna? _____
7. List three characteristics of the city of Pergamum.
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
8. List the three-fold commendation for the church at Pergamum.
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
9. For what were they condemned? _____
10. What two sects were part of the problem in Pergamum?
1) _____
2) _____

LESSON FIVE

LETTERS TO SEVEN CHURCHES (2)

INTRODUCTION

We have heard Jesus tell the church at Ephesus that they are a great bunch of people but they have lost the spark in their life. We have heard Jesus tell the church at Smyrna that other people may not think much of them and they may be poor and in tribulation, but he counts them rich. He has told the church at Pergamum that they are doing well in holding out where Satan lives, but they are not doing well in the fact that they are tolerating the compromising teaching of Balaam and the Nicolaitans within their midst. Now he writes to the churches of Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea with like warnings and commendations.

LESSON TEXT: Revelation 2:18 – 3:22

LESSON AIM: To gain wisdom by examining the strengths and failings of the last four churches discussed in chapters two and three.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. Become aware of the danger of tolerating wrong deeds and wrong teaching in the church – example: Thyatira.
 2. Learn that blood-washed people can become lethargic and drift into a state of lostness – example: Sardis.
 3. Understand that faithfulness in word and deed brings reward and opportunity, and open doors – example: Philadelphia.
 4. See that self-deception and self-satisfaction will cause one to be repulsive to and repulsed by Christ – example: Laodicea.
-

THE THYATIRA CHURCH (2:18-29)

The church in Thyatira was guilty of and warned against tolerating the woman Jezebel and her teaching.

A. The City – Its Characteristics

1. Gateway to Pergamum, thus on the trade route.
2. Dealt especially in a royal purple dye and in purple cloth.
3. Noted for its trade guilds (union). Each trade had its own guild; each guild its own god. To get ahead in any business you had to be a part of one or more guilds and, therefore, be a polytheistic idolater.

**JEZEBEL
JUNCTION**

B. The Church and Jesus' Message (2:18-29)

1. Salutation (v. 18a). "*The angel of the church.*"
2. Self-designation (v. 18b). "*These things saith the . . .*"

- a. “*Son of God*” – **The Infallible One.**
- b. “*Who has eyes like blazing fire*” – **The Omniscient One.**
- c. “*And feet like burnished bronze*” – **The Omnipotent Judge.**
3. Commendation (v. 19). “*I know. . .*”
 - a. “*Your deeds*” – It was a **working church.**
 - b. “*Your love*” – It was a **caring church.**
 - c. “*Your faith*” – It was a **daring church.**
 - d. “*Your service*” – It was a **ministering church.**
 - e. “*Your perseverance*” – It was a **steadfast church.**
 - f. “*You are doing more now than you did at first*” – It was a **growing church.**
4. Condemnation (vs. 20-23). Tolerant of evil in your midst.
 - a. Notice this is the second church in a row condemned for tolerance, while Ephesus praised for intolerance.
 - b. For background on Jezebel, read 1 Kings 16:29-33; 21:7-16, esp. 25-26; 2 Kings 9:7.
 - c. Maybe Jezebel’s “*teaching*” would go something like this:
 “In order to conquer Satan, you must know him. You will never be able to conquer sin unless you become thoroughly acquainted with it by experience. Hence, by all means attend the guild-feasts and commit fornication . . . still remain a Christian . . . rather, become even a better Christian.”
5. Warning (vs. 24-25). Repent of tolerance and be faithful.
 - a. Do not hold to her teaching.
 - b. Do not learn Satan’s *deep secrets*.
 - c. Wait for me – *hold on to what you have*.
6. Promise (vs. 26-28). (Notice that the exhortation and promise swap places).
 - a. Authority over the nations (vs. 26-27). Joint-rulership with God.
 - b. The Morning Star (v. 28). New day dawning and Jesus (See 22:16).
7. Exhortation (v. 29). **Keep listening to God.**

THE SARDIS CHURCH (3:1-6)

The church in Sardis had a name that they were alive, but they were dead.

A. The City – Its Characteristics

1. Located on a nearly inaccessible hill, thus the people were proud, arrogant and overconfident. (Compare Obadiah 1-4).
2. A great commercial center. Everybody had plenty. In fact, they had too much. (Compare Deuteronomy 32:15-18).
3. A center of immorality, even recognized as such by the heathen.
4. They worshiped the goddess of frenzy, **Cybele**.

B. The Church and Jesus’ Message (3:1-6)

1. Salutation (v. 1a). – “*The Angel of the church. . .*”
2. Self-designation (v. 1b). – “*He who holds. . .*”
 - a. *The seven spirits of God*. **Eternal help.**
 - b. *The seven stars*. **Controls destiny.**
3. Commendation – None.

**TOMBSTONE
TERRITORY**

4. Condemnation (v. 1c).
 - a. Their false reputation: Alive.
 - b. The reality: Dead.
5. Warning (vs. 2-3).
 - a. Wake up!
 - b. Establish the little good remaining!
 - c. Remember what you received in the past.
 - d. Repent.
 - e. I am coming to judge the church.

NOTE: There are a few living ones among the dead.

6. Promise (vs. 4-5).
 - a. To the living remnant (v. 4).
 - 1) White robes – **purity**.
 - 2) Recognition – **worthiness**.
 - b. To those who overcome (v. 5).
 - 1) White robes – **purity**.
 - 2) Name in book – **eternal life**.
 - 3) Acknowledge to God and angels – **honor**.
7. Exhortation (v. 6). **Keep on listening to God.**

THE PHILADELPHIA CHURCH (3:7-13)

The church in Philadelphia though persecuted will be protected in the hour of trial.

A. The City – Its Characteristics

1. A poor, unnoted city.
2. Built to spread the Greek culture into that area.
3. Built on an earthquake fault.
 - a. It was declared a disaster area again and again.
 - b. It became dependent upon government aid to exist.
4. It was out-of-the-way, off the trade routes.

**CHURCH OF THE
OPEN DOOR**

B. The Church and Jesus' Message (3:7-13)

1. Salutation (v. 7a). *"The Angel of the church. . ."*
2. Self-Designation (v. 7b). *"Words of him who . . ."*
 - a. *"Is holy and true."* His character.
 - b. *"Holds the key of David."* His royalty.
 - c. *"Opens and shuts."* (irrevocably) His finality.
3. Commendation (vs. 8-11).
 - a. They **are working** – *"I know your deeds!"*
 - b. They have **kept his word**, though strength was little.
 - c. They have **not denied his name**. Therefore, He had opened a door for them.
 - d. They were **persecuted** (v. 9).
 - e. They were **protected** (v. 10).
 - f. They were **crowned** (v. 11).

4. Condemnation, none.
5. Warning, none.
6. Promise (v. 12).
 - a. Eternal life – “. . . *be made a pillar in the temple of my God.*”
 - b. Honor – “. . . *will write upon him the name . . .*”
 - 1) *Of God,*
 - 2) *Of the Church,* (the new Jerusalem – the city of God)
 - 3) *Of Jesus.*
7. Exhortation (v. 13). **Keep on listening to God.**

THE LAODICEA CHURCH (3:14-22)

The church in Laodicea was plagued by worldliness which resulted in their lukewarm attitude.

A. The City – Its Characteristics

1. On same earthquake fault as Philadelphia, but always refused aid.
2. A health resort with lukewarm mineral (sulfurous) water.
3. A medical center, treating especially the eye.
4. A clothing and fashion center.
5. A center of banking and finance.

**THE SICK
SOCIETY**

B. The Church and Jesus' Message (3:14-22)

1. Salutation (v. 14a). – “*The angel of the church.*”
2. Self-designation (v. 14b).
 - a. **The Amen** – establishing last word.
 - b. **The faithful and true witness.**
 - c. **The ruler of God's creation** – Jesus rules, Caesar is ruled by Him.
3. Commendation (v. 15a). “*I know your deeds.*”
4. Condemnation (vs. 15b-17).
 - a. Lukewarm church members (vs. 15b-16). They make Jesus sick!
 - b. Prideful worldlings (v. 17).

Basis of their lukewarmness.

 - 1) Boast: “*Do not need a thing!*”
 - 2) Realities: “*Wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and miserable.*”
5. Warning (vs. 18-20).
 - a. Come buy from me (v. 18).
 - 1) Refined gold, so you will be rich.
 - 2) White clothes, so you will be covered.
 - 3) Eye salve, so you can see.
 - b. Come receive my love (v. 19).
 - 1) Accept rebuke and discipline.
 - 2) Repent of worldly pride.
 - c. Let me in to become your host (v. 20).
6. Promise (v. 21). Co-rulership with Jesus and God.
7. Exhortation (v. 22). **Listen to God through the Spirit.**

FINAL NOTE ON THE SEVEN LETTERS

The three tools Satan uses to attack the church are introduced here to be discussed later. They are as follows.

A. Anti-Christian Persecution (Sea-Beast in 13:1-10)

1. Rome (2:10, 13).
2. Jews (2:9; 3:9). Although they didn't have much power, they stirred the Romans to action.

B. Anti-Christian Religion (Earth-Beast in 13:11-18; 2:13)**C. Anti-Christian Seduction – Worldliness (The Harlot in Ch. 17)**

(Cf. 2:14-15, 20; 3:17-18. cf. 1 John 2:15-17).

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FIVE

1. List two characteristics of the city of Thyatira.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
2. List six commendations of the church in Thyatira.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
 - 6) _____
3. For what was the church in Thyatira condemned? _____

4. What was the warning given to the church in Thyatira? _____

5. Give the commendation, condemnation, and warning to the church at Sardis.
Commendation _____
Condemnation _____
Warning _____

6. List the three tools Satan uses to attack the church introduced here to be discussed later.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
7. List four characteristics of the city of Laodicea.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
8. What was the boast of the church in Laodicea? The reality? _____

9. What was the real problem of the church in Laodicea? _____

LESSON SIX

THE MAGNIFICENT THRONE

INTRODUCTION

Chapter four conveys to the church the assurance that He who is the ultimate source of all existence is on her side. Chapter five says that she may depend upon Christ and His redeeming work. The two chapters together are a cry to the church from her glorified head, before she enters into the tribulation that awaits her. “*Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust in me also*” (John 14:1)

God is ruling, not man! This is what the Christians needed to know, because it sure didn’t look that way to their human eyes. Now, the curtains will be lifted and John will begin to see things from heaven’s point of view. In rapid succession visions will be presented to assure the persecuted Christians that the cause of Christ is not a lost one. Christ has never promised an easy time, so the struggle will perhaps be long and bitter; but, when the curtain falls at last, complete victory will be demonstrated.

Our kingdom is not of this world, but we do still dwell on earth. The child of God will not be spared the horrors of God’s four sore judgments: war, famine, wild beasts, and plague. But these will be used by God both to vindicate His name and avenge His children. Remember this two-fold result as we study God’s judgments.

LESSON TEXT: Revelation 4:1-11; Ezekiel 1, 10; Isaiah 6.

LESSON AIM: To learn that the throne with its occupant scene is given to encourage Christians who are under great persecution.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. View the glory of God as he sits on the glorious throne – that He who sits on the throne is the judge who bestows mercy.
 2. See 24 elders, four living creatures, and seven Spirits surrounding the throne and learn who they are or represent.
 3. Learn that the One on the throne rules in spite of how circumstances appear and no matter who else *seems* to rule.
-

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE THRONE AND ITS OCCUPANT (4:1-3)

The One sitting on the throne is a pure, precious judge who bestows mercy.

NOTE: The meaning of *after these things I saw* does not mean that these things came after those things. It simply means that this seeing came after that seeing. This begins the **second vision** section of the book.

1. First vision (1:9-20) – **Son of Man in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.**
2. Second vision (chapters 4-11) – **The Lamb and the Book.**

A. John and the Voice (vs. 1-2a)

1. John in the flesh is on Patmos.
2. John in the Spirit is before the throne (v. 2a).

B. God and the Throne (vs. 2b-3)

1. The throne – occupies the center of our vision throughout this whole chapter (“Throne” is used 10 times in chapter 4).
2. The throne occupant – is graphically described.
 - a. He is likened to a *Jasper Stone*. This stone is said to be clear as a crystal and most precious. This discusses the “*purity*” and “*costliness*” of the one sitting on the throne (Revelation 21:11).
 - b. He is likened to a *Sardius Stone* – a blood red stone. This depicts the “**Judgment**” of the throne-occupant.
3. An **emerald-colored rainbow** – undoubtedly refers to the sureness of the **covenant of peace** made by the throne-occupant with His obedient people. Thus in the midst of judgment you have *a covenant of mercy*. (Compare Genesis 9:12-17). The green of the emerald also could point to the **peaceful thought of green pastures** (compare Psalms 23:2). **The picture is, THE STORM IS OVER! DON'T WORRY! GOD RULES!**

THE SCENE AROUND THE THRONE (4:4-8)

Everything before and around the throne is to give glory to the throne occupant.

A. Twenty-four Elders Seated on Twenty-four Thrones (v. 4)

1. These are the overcomers from chapters 2 and 3.
 - a. They sit on *thrones* – overcomers are promised a throne (cf. 3:21) – **Rulership**.
 - b. They are arrayed in *white robes* – overcomers promised white garments (cf. 3:5) – **Purity**.
 - c. They wear *crowns of gold* – overcomers promised a crown of life (cf. 2:10; 2 Timothy 4:8) – **Victory**.
 - d. They are *where* the over-comers were promised to be – (cf. 2:7; 3:12, 21) – **Before the Throne**.
2. They are the **representatives** for the redeemed persecuted on earth. They have won. They are crowned. They are before the throne.
3. Two possible reasons for “twenty-four” elders.
 - a. There were 24 courses of priests in the temple (1 Chronicles 23:6-23). These 24 would then be representative of all those saints who have passed from **life to greater life**, from **service to greater service**, from an **earthly temple duty to a heavenly temple duty**.
 - b. There were twelve rulers in the Old Covenant people (tribes of Israel) and twelve rulers in the New Covenant people (apostles of Jesus). Put together then, these 24 would represent **the redeemed of both covenants**.

B. Decrees from the Throne (v. 5a)

Lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder.

1. This indicates **the presence and power of God**. Read Exodus 19:16ff; Psalm 29:1.
2. More often it indicates **the manifestation of divine wrath proceeding from heaven**. Read Revelation 8:5; 1 Samuel 2:10; 7:10; Psalms 18:13-14; Job 37:4.

C. The Holy Spirit (v. 5b)

1. Lamps are very suggestive of the Spirit's work in bringing the light of God into the world made dark by Satan and sin. His first work in bringing order to the chaos of the original creation was to bring light. *Let there be light!* (Genesis 1:3).
2. Why are there seven lamps representing the seven Spirits of God? The Bible claims clearly there is "One Spirit" (Ephesians 4:4). There seems to be two possibilities.
 - a. The number seven denotes perfection. So, seven would indicate the perfect Spirit of God.
 - b. In Isaiah 11:2 the Spirit (singular) breaks down into seven manifestations – **wisdom, understanding, counsel, power, knowledge, reverence, judgment**.

D. The Sea of Glass (v. 6a)

Here are two possible interpretations

1. John was separated from his brethren by the Aegean Sea, a clear, "glassy" sea. God's throne is so holy that there is a sea—a separating sea—between Him and the most holy of his creations, his redeemed children.
2. The word sea can easily be translated laver or basin. In the tabernacle and temple the laver was used by the priests to wash themselves before entering the Holy Place to serve Jehovah. So, the 24 elders (priests) have washed their garments and made them white in the blood of the Lamb to qualify them to serve God (Read chapter 7:9-17).

E. The Four Living Creatures (vs. 6b-9)

1. These verses should be compared with Ezekiel chapters 1 and 10.
 - a. These beings are called living ones (Ezekiel 1:5; Revelation 4:6).
 - b. The number is the same – four (Ezekiel 1:5; Revelation 4:6).
 - c. Their faces are compared to that of man, lion, ox and eagle (Ezekiel 1:10; Revelation 4:7).
 - d. They are associated with the throne (Ezekiel 1:26; Revelation 4:6).
 - e. Fire moves to and fro among them (Ezekiel 1:13; Revelation 4:5).
 - f. They are said to be studded all over with eyes (Ezekiel 1:18, 21; 10; 12; Revelation 4:8).
 - g. In both cases, a rainbow encircles the scene (Ezekiel 1:28; Revelation 4:3).
2. We are told, Ezekiel 10:20, that these living creatures are the Cherubim—angelic forces of the highest order that guard the holy things of God (Genesis 3:24; Exodus 25:20) and bring Him and his judgment to earth (2 Samuel 22:8-16; Psalm 80:1; 99:1).

3. Description of the four creatures.
 - a. The first is like a **lion** – symbol of *power or strength*. NOTE: An angelic quality (Psalm 103:20-21).
 - b. The second is like an **ox** – symbol of *service* NOTE: An angelic attribute (Psalm 103:20-21; Hebrews 1:14).
 - c. The third is like a **man** – Symbol of *intelligence*. NOTE: An angelic quality (Luke 12:18; 15:10; 1 Peter 1:12; Ephesians 3:10-11).
 - d. The fourth is like an **eagle** – Symbol of *swiftness* NOTE: An angelic quality (Daniel 9:21).
 - e. Each have *six wings* – this is rooted in Isaiah 6:2. “*Above it stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.*”
 - (1) Two to cover their face – **reverence**?
 - (2) Two to cover their feet – **humility**?
 - (3) Two to fly with – **service**?
 - f. Notice the eyes – “. . . *covered with eyes all around even under their wings.*”
 - g. Hear their song – “*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*” They never stop praising and thanking God.

THE CLIMAX (vs. 9-11) – PRAISE TO THE THRONE-OCCUPANT

God is worshiped and acknowledged as the one from whom victory comes.

A. Glory, Honor, Thanks from Angels (v. 9)

1. Because He reigns.
2. Because He is eternal.

B. Worship from the Redeemed (vs. 10-11)

1. Because He is eternal.
2. Because He created all things and sustains all things. Read Psalm 148.

THINGS TO WATCH FOR

1. Chapter four ends with all eyes toward the throne and the one sitting thereon.
2. The song in verse 11 is *the song of creation*.
3. The significance of “. . . *because of thy will they were and were created.*”

Lesson –

***Caesar May Appear to Be on the Throne That Controls Their Destiny –
But, Not So, God Rules on His Throne, the Entire Universal Creation!***

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SIX

1. Where is the first vision of the book located and what is it?

 The second Vision? _____
2. To what two stones is the throne occupant likened? _____
3. To what does the emerald green rainbow refer? _____

4. List the entities around the throne.

5. What four reasons can be given to show who the twenty-four elders might be?
 1) _____
 2) _____
 3) _____
 4) _____
6. Give two possible reasons for twenty-four elders.
 1) _____
 2) _____
7. What two things could lightnings, rumblings, and thunder indicate?
 1) _____
 2) _____
8. Two possible meanings of the *sea of glass* are:
 1) _____
 2) _____
9. Describe the four living creatures and what they symbolize.
 The first: _____
 Symbol: _____
 The second: _____
 Symbol: _____
 The third: _____
 Symbol: _____
 The fourth: _____
 Symbol: _____
10. Where are all eyes focused at the end of chapter four? _____

LESSON SEVEN

THE SEALED BOOK AND THE WORTHY LAMB

INTRODUCTION

The same general purpose is served by this chapter as by chapter 4 – Honor must be given to the one on the throne who protects His persecuted children. Another ingredient is added, however. A Lamb that comes to honor and serve the one on the throne is honored equally with Him. The emphasis changes from God the Creator to Christ the Redeemer.

Creation is an important thing for us to remember because it gives us confidence in the power of the one who is in control. But redemption, perhaps, is even a more important thing to remember because it gives us confidence that we are a part of that power. That power not only works with us, but we work with that power, that that power not only dwells within us but that power can be manifested through us. Now the scene shifts in chapter 4 from the throne, first of all to a book, and then to a lamb who is able to open that book.

LESSON TEXT: Revelation 5:1-14; (all the scripture references in the outline)

LESSON AIM: To gain encouragement by learning or being reminded that our Savior (the Lamb) holds the destiny of every believer in His powerful yet loving hands.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. Learn of a sealed book which is the book of the destiny of mankind and especially of the persecuted children of God.
 2. Gain insight into the majesty of the Lamb by looking at His five-fold description.
 3. Learn that the Godhood of Jesus is vividly manifested by the worship granted Him by all that surround the throne.
-

THE SEALED BOOK (4:1-5)

The description of the book with seven seals and the reason for John's sadness.

A. The Book Itself (v. 1)

1. The focus of attention shifts from the One on the throne to a book (actually a scroll) in His right hand. Two things about the scroll:
 - a. The scroll could not be read because it was rolled up and sealed (like a Roman Will) with seven seals.

- b. It was written on both sides, indicating it was full of meaning and importance.
- 2. The scroll is the book of the destiny of mankind; but, particularly, of the persecuted children of God. In it could be found three things:
 - a. The fate of the suffering saints.
 - b. The final end of Rome's move against the church.
 - c. A forecast of the outcome of the continuing struggle between Christ and Satan.

B. The Futile Search (vs. 2-3)

No angel, prophet or saint in the present or past, on earth or in Heaven could be found that was worthy even to touch the book, much less to open it and reveal its contents to others.

C. The Sorrowful Response (v. 4)

"I wept and wept." I wept much. John's remorse is understandable.

- 1. Perhaps, he felt that he was not going to learn what he had come to be shown.
- 2. Perhaps he felt this was associated with the book of life or the names of those who would be saved.
- 3. Perhaps it was not so much that he would not know what was coming in the future as that the plans of God would not be put into effect.
- 4. At least, he knew that the matter could not progress until one worthy could be found.

D. The Cheering Answer (v. 5)

Do not weep! See!

- 1. **The Lion of the tribe of Judah.** Read Genesis 49:8-12. The image of the lion speaks of **dignity, sovereignty, courage, and victory**. Read also Numbers 24:8-9; Psalms 7:1-2; Micah 5:8-9.
- 2. **The Root of David.** Read Isaiah 11:1, 10.
 - a. It is the humanity of Jesus that is being stressed when we read of His descent from David. Compare Romans 1:3; Matthew 1:1.
 - b. But, the thing stressed here is not that He sprang from David, but that David grew out of Him. Compare Matthew 22:41-46.
 - c. Both of these characteristics are found in Revelation 22:6, where Jesus is called *the root and offspring of David*.
- 3. **The triumphant One.** The next verse will tell how He won – by dying on the cross! When death was challenged and defeated, Jesus became worthy to open the book.

THE WORTHY LAMB (4:6-7)

The Lion of Judah, who is the slain Lamb, is worthy to open the book.

A. The Victor Described (v. 6)

- 1. **A slaughtered Lamb.** Mark the some 28 times Jesus is called *the Lamb* in this book. Look at a few.
 - a. God's wrath is *the wrath of the Lamb* (6:16).

- b. Cleansing is by *the blood of the Lamb* (7:14).
- c. The church is *the bride of the Lamb* (19:7; 21:9).
- 2. ***Yet, a living Lamb.*** He has the marks of sacrificial death still on him (John 20:20, 25, 27), but he is not dead. He is standing and quite alive (Revelation 1:18). “*Look, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*” (John 1:29).
- 3. ***An accepted Lamb.*** He is said to stand *in the center of the throne*. He is even different from the “Seven Spirits” who are “before” the throne. He is at the “center” of the center of the universe.
- 4. ***A powerful Lamb.*** *He had seven horns* speaks of **perfection of power**. We have here a Lamb who has just come from a head-to-head conflict with the power that the saints now must face. He won! ***So can they!***
- 5. ***An all-knowing Lamb.*** “. . . and seven eyes . . . the seven spirits.” Read 2 Chronicles 16:9, “*The eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.*” In these seven eyes we have the thought of vigilance on Jesus’ part.

B. The Book Taken (v. 7)

When he comes onto the stage, there is no struggle between him and the Father. They are united in purpose and action. The Son takes the book from the Father’s hand in order to carry on the revelation of the things to come to pass that had been promised John.

THE WORSHIP OF THE LAMB (4:8-14)

The Lamb was worshiped by the hosts of heaven and every created thing when He had taken the book.

A. The Elders and the Living Creatures (vs. 8-10)

- 1. Their attitude (v. 8).
 - a. Reverence – “*Fell down before the Lamb.*”
 - b. Praise – “*Each one had a harp.*”
 - c. Dependence “. . . golden bowls full of incense. . . the prayers of the saints.”
- 2. Their concept of the Lamb (vs. 9- 10), ***You are worthy:***
 - a. “*To take the book and open its seals.*”
 - b. “*Because you were slain.*”
 - c. “*Because you purchased men.*”
 - 1) For God.
 - 2) From every place and kind.
 - d. “*Because you made them a kingdom and priests.*”
 - 1) To serve God.
 - 2) To reign on earth.

B. Innumerable Angels (vs. 11-12)

- 1. In numbers – over 100 million.
- 2. In location – around the throne.
- 3. In loud voice – *Worthy is the Lamb.*

- a. To receive power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory and praise.
- b. **Because he was slain.**

C. All Creation (vs. 13-14)

- 1. Praise to God and the Lamb.
- 2. *So be it. Worship Them.*

NOTE: The stage has now been set for the first great dramatic movement of the book. The Father is still on the throne, the secret of the saint's future is known to Him and secure with Him, Jesus has been judged worthy to reveal the secrets concerning the critical situation of the brethren in John's day.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- 1. John is getting the privilege here of seeing the other end of the journey he saw start in Acts 1.
- 2. The new song – *the song of redemption*. The Lamb (Christ) is worthy because of:
 - a. His death – *He was slain*.
 - b. What His death did – “. . . *purchased unto God with His blood of every. . .*”
 - 1) *Tribe* – every ethnic group.
 - 2) *Tongue* – every language group.
 - 3) *People* – every racial group.
 - 4) *Nation* – every national group.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SEVEN

1. List five things which help describe the scroll in the hand of God.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____

2. Who was the only one on earth or in heaven worthy to open the book?

3. Give five phrases which describe the victorious Lamb.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____

4. Who worshiped the Lamb in vs. 8-14?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____

5. The Lamb, according to the text, purchased with His blood men out of what four groups?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____

LESSON EIGHT

OPENING THE FIRST SIX SEALS

INTRODUCTION

We are turning from chapter 5 to chapter 6. In chapter 4 we saw the great throne scene of God and saw that He is in control of all that happened on heaven and on earth. In chapter 5 we saw that the Redeemer, the slain Lamb, was going to open the seven sealed books and reveal step by step what was going to happen to the church in the immediate future.

The dramatic movement of chapter six has to do with what happens as the Lamb opens the scroll, seal by seal. The opening of the first four seals follows a set pattern. As each seal is opened in its turn, a voice calls “Come” and a horse and rider appear. This is certainly no ordinary scroll. John does not read or hear its contents; he sees its contents in a series of visions.

LESSON TEXT: Revelation 6:1-17 and other scriptures listed in the outline.

LESSON AIM: To understand that in these six seals God reveals the different ways war is waged against the saints by Satan. But he cannot win. God delivers His people, judges their enemies, and vindicates His righteousness.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. See four seals – each seal will contain a picture of a horse and rider and learn the meaning behind each picture.
 2. See a fifth seal which pictures souls under the altar crying out for vindication of their cause.
 3. See a sixth seal by which God reveals an announcement of coming judgment – that judgment is pictured in past judgments in the Old Testament.
-

THE WHITE HORSE AND ITS RIDER (6:1-2). THE FIRST SEAL

This seal reveals Christ, riding a white horse, the conquering warrior.

A. The Command (v. 1) – *Come* – from a voice of thunder.

B. The Horse (v. 2a)

– *White*, purity, holiness, victory (There is only one other white horse in the book which is singled out. It is the horse on which Jesus rides in 19:11.) The color white is used 16 times in the book. The other 15 are way beyond dispute applying to something holy and pure.

C. The Rider (v. 2b) – Warrior

1. **He has a bow.** Read Psalms 45:2-7. Here we see the Messiah conquering His enemies on behalf of truth, humility and righteousness, as He shoots arrows from his bow with His mighty right hand. Compare Hebrews 3:8-13; Psalm 7:10-13.
2. **He wears a crown.** Not the crown of royalty as in 19:12, but the crown of a victor, a conqueror. His character and nature is stressed in chapter 19, but in this passage his overcoming work is stressed.
3. **He rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest.** Already a winner, He will win in the future (Chapter 19).

NOTE: The picture is plain. Here is the image of a Parthian warrior. Coins depicting Parthian victors are common—astride a horse, with a crown and bow. Jesus is here depicted as the enemy of Rome. In the battle of Carrhae (53 A.D.) 20,000 Romans died and 10,000 were taken captive by the Parthians. Rome never forgot the Parthian enemy.

THE RED HORSE AND ITS RIDER (6:3-4). THE SECOND SEAL

This seal reveals the enemy, the persecutor, riding a red horse.

A. The command (v. 3) – *Come*

B. The Horse (v. 4a) – *Red* – danger, blood, war. Compare 12:3; 17:3.

C. The Rider (v. 4b) – War

1. Given power to take peace from the earth.
2. Given power to make men slay each other.
3. Given a great sword.

NOTE: This is a picture of wanton bloodshed. War has been a part of man's experience since Cain killed Abel, so this image could speak to believers in every age, reminding them that God is ultimately in control, even of man's warlike nature and action.

THE BLACK HORSE AND ITS RIDER (6:5-6). THE THIRD SEAL

This seal pictures economic discrimination in a time of plenty.

A. The Command (v. 5a) – *Come*.

B. The Horse (v. 5b) – *Black* – mourning, distress.

C. The Rider (vs. 5c-6) – Famine and economic hardship.

1. A balance with which to weigh food. See Ezekiel 4:10, 16.
2. A quart of wheat for a days wage.
A quart would equal support for a man of moderate appetite for one day.
3. Three quarts of barley for a day's wage. Barley is a coarser grain normally reserved for animal food.

4. Oil and wine still available to the rich. The work of the black horse is limited. This is a *seal*! Not a *bowl*! (The seals are not final – the bowls are final.)

THE PALE HORSE AND ITS RIDER (6:7-8). THE FOURTH SEAL

This seal reveals Death riding a pale horse followed by Hades.

A. The Command (v. 7) – *Come*.

B. The Horse (v. 8a) – *Pale* – Yellowish-green (Death’s pallid look).

C. The Rider (v. 8b) – Death.

1. His footman – Hades, the abode of disembodied spirits. (Both death and hades are regarded in this book as defeated enemies. This being true, they would have to submit to any service the Lamb would lay on them.)
2. His Power – **Sword, famine, plague, wild beasts**. Compare Ezekiel 14:12-23 (These picture God’s four sore judgments).

NOTE: Conquering tyrants who bring the world war, famine, and pestilence are certainly nothing new. Suffering people from the days of the Roman Empire can receive encouragement in two facts: (1) The Lamb opens the seals, and (2) Death is only the fourth seal of seven (There is life beyond death. See the next seal).

THE SOULS UNDER THE ALTAR (6:9-11). THE FIFTH SEAL

This seal pictures souls under the altar crying for vindication of their cause.

A. Description (v. 9) – *Slain*.

B. Location – *Under the altar* – (cf. 8:5; 14:18; 16:7)

1. Souls/slain – When the Old Testament priests presented animal sacrifice, the blood was poured out at the base of the brazen altar (Leviticus 4:7-8, 25, 30). In Old Testament imagery, blood represents life (Leviticus 17:11). So, here in Revelation, the souls of the martyrs “under the altar” indicates that their lives were given sacrificially to the glory of God. Compare Philippians 2:17; 2 Timothy 4:6.
2. Basis of their sacrificial death – Word of God and testimony of Jesus Christ. The word martyr simply means a witness. But these saints have died for their witness.

C. The Important Question (v. 10) – *How long?*

1. A call for retribution, not vengeance or vindictiveness. Compare Paul’s statement about Alexander the Coppersmith (2 Timothy 4:14).
2. The great question, however, was not whether their enemies would be judged, but when? This has been the cry of God’s suffering people throughout the ages (Psalms 74:9-11; 79:5; 94:1-3; Habakkuk 1:2).

D. The Comforting Answer (v. 11) – Wait

1. Reward – White Robe. They are the overcomers (3:4; 19:8).
2. Rest – Vindication is coming.
3. Rely – Persecution not over, others will die also.

CONSIDER

1. The fifth seal: *Souls under the altar crying ‘how long.’*
2. Their cry for vindication – shows our:
 - a. Death to be unjust and wrong.
 - b. Cause to be just and right.
3. God’s answer – *I will, but wait awhile.*
4. While waiting, they will continue to cry out (Luke 18:7).

NOTE:

1. The enemy was **given** a position of power over the saints until God was through with him. Compare Isaiah 33:1; Daniel 11:36, 45.
2. The servants of Jesus **have a course to fulfill**. We don’t live for nothing! There are two important days in a man’s life. The first, the day he was born and the second, the day he learns why he was born. Christians have a course to fulfill. It is almost too good to be true! God made clear to these martyrs that their sacrifice was an appointment, not an accident; and that others would join them. ***Even in the death of His people, God is in control*** (Psalms 116:15); so there is nothing to fear.

THE DAY OF JEHOVAH (6:12-17). THE SIXTH SEAL

This seal reveals an announcement of judgment in time.

A. Description of the Coming Judgement (vs. 12-14)

Compare Joel 1:15; 2:1-2, 10-11, 28-32; Zephaniah 1:14-15; Isaiah 13:6-11; 34:1-4; Jeremiah 4:23-25.

1. **Earthquake**. See Isaiah 29:6. Coming judgment on Jerusalem.
2. **Sun became black**. See Isaiah 13:10 – Coming Judgment upon Babylon. Isaiah 34:4 – Coming judgment upon Edom.
3. **Moon turned red**. See Joel 2:31. Coming Judgment upon Israel.
4. **Stars Fall**. Judgment upon earth, as late figs. See Isaiah 34:4 – Edom.
4. **Sky receded**. Like a scroll, rolling up. See Isaiah 34:4 – Judgment upon Edom.
5. **Every mountain and island removed**. See Jeremiah 4:24 – Judgment upon Judah. Ezekiel 38:20 – Judgment upon Gog. Nehemiah 1:5 – Judgment upon Nineveh.

CONSIDER

1. The *Day of Jehovah* in every prophetic passage is imminent (close at hand).
2. The language of Revelation 6:12-17 is the language of judgment on wicked nations in the Old Testament – not just to the end of time.

NOTE: All of this language denotes in God’s mind the certainty of coming judgment upon those who have opposed Him and His people.

B. The Fear of Those to Be Judged (vs. 15-16)

1. Every class of mankind was involved and tried to hide from the wrath of God.
2. Even being buried beneath mountains of rock preferable to facing God and the Lamb's wrath. Compare Isaiah 2:10-11, 19-22.

C. The Great Question (v. 17)

Who can stand? Compare Joel 2:22; Nahum 1:6; Malachi 3:2. Chapter 7 will answer this great question.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON EIGHT

1. What do the first four seals reveal when opened? _____

2. List the horse color, its rider and what each of the pictures represent.

3. What picture do we see as the 5th seal is opened?

4. When compared to Old Testament sacrifices, what would souls under the alter indicate?

5. **True or False:** The souls under the alter were crying out for vengeance for their wrongful death.
6. Richard speaks of two important days in a man's life. What are these days?

7. List 5 phrases used to describe the **Day of Jehovah** in 12-14.
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
8. With what important question does chapter six close? _____

LESSON NINE

THE CHURCH MILITANT AND TRIUMPHANT

INTRODUCTION

Chapter seven seems to be an interlude to answer the question left hanging at the close of chapter six – “*For the great day of their (God and the lamb) wrath is come, and who can stand?*”

What caused that question? Look at what John has seen so far in chapters four through six. God is on the throne at the very center of the universe. He is not only aware of all that is going on; He is taking active control of ultimate destiny. He holds the book of the future in His right hand. The slain Lamb, Jesus Christ, takes the future in His hand. He will loose the seals, revealing the outcome of the persecuted church’s struggle with the seemingly invincible enemy. He is declared worthy to do that by virtue of His death and resurrection in rapid songs of praise by the redeemed, by the cherubim, by innumerable angels, and by all created beings. Jesus opens the first six seals. He is seen as the conquering warrior – Rome’s worst enemy. In quick succession war, famine, and death invade the Christian experience. In heaven, before the throne of God, martyred saints cry to God for Him to vindicate His name by bringing retribution on the pervert who killed them. They are told to enjoy their rest until more of their brethren go through the crucible. The sixth seal reveals that the day of the Lord is at hand. It will be for Rome, as it had been for Assyria, Babylon, Edom, and many others before Rome, a day of total blackness, dismay, disorder, and destruction. Man will desire any alternative in comparison to what awaits them. Riches, military might, social position, political power and alliance are all unable to deliver them.

In view of all this, the question now demands answer, “Who can stand?” What becomes of the Christian while all this dreadful, inescapable, inevitable judgment is going on? Do they escape or are they destroyed also? This interlude, chapter seven, will show the forces of destruction held under restraint until the saints are sealed for eternal glory and against destruction.

LESSON TEXT: Revelation 7:1-14

LESSON AIM: To gain the assurance that the sealed servants of God are never eternally affected by the judgments of God.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. See 144,000 servants of God and learn that these are the church of God on earth.
 2. Find out who and what the innumerable host is and how they offer assurance to other Christians.
-

THE SEALED 144,000 (7:1-8)

The sealed servants of God on earth are protected against judgment.

A. Four Angels Holding Back the Four Winds (vs. 1-3)

1. Angels are, in this book, always associated with the forces of nature.
 - a. The wind (Revelation 7:1).
 - b. Fire (Revelation 14:18).
 - c. Water (Revelation 16:5).
2. The “winds” are often used to indicate the activity of God. Check this out in a concordance. Read especially Isaiah 57:13 and Jeremiah 18:17 when God uses the wind as a symbol of His actions against His enemies, the nations that afflict the righteous. Read also Psalm 104:4 quoted in Hebrews 1:7. Then, read John 3:7-8.
3. *The four corners of the earth* – Indicating again the universal nature of the judgment announced already to be at hand by the sixth seal. This phrase is no more unscientific here than in Isaiah 11:2 or the local newspaper.
4. *“To prevent any wind from blowing on the land, or the sea, or on any tree.”* Without the restraining influence of God in these four messengers of His, this judgment on all the earth would have already been accomplished.
5. *“Do not harm . . . until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of God.”*
 - a. This clearly indicates that God is in total control of worldly affairs, and, therefore, that his people have absolutely nothing to fear.
 - b. This also shows, beyond doubt, that this judgment and the 144,000 that will be sealed are on earth, not in Heaven.
 - c. Note that a fifth angel, from the east (i.e. the sun rising), comes to further the work of the first four.
 - 1) The *sun* symbolizes the attributes and goodness of God. Check for yourself. Read such passages as Psalm 84:11 (God is a *sun and shield*) Malachi 4:2 (Jesus is *the sun of righteousness*), Revelation 22:16; 16:12.
 - 2) *Light* is a good thing (Genesis 1:3). Christ is the *true light*. God is *light*. This angel from the east brings good news. The angel comes from where light originates. The judgment in the preceding chapter promised the blacking-out of the sun – this angel comes from *the rising of the sun* and is the bearer of a glad message for those who will go through gloom.
 - 3) This angel also calls for a delay. Here, as in Ezekiel 9, **all** the righteous are marked or sealed. The vision is very specific. The tribulation cannot come till **all** the servants of God are sealed!
 - d. What is the *seal of the living God*?
 - 1) It cannot be the Holy Spirit. All servants of God have the Holy Spirit within them, Galatians 4:6; Romans 8:9, and many others. These are sealed, because they are already servants (v. 3).
 - 2) It is nothing tangible. It is simply part of the vision. In ancient times, as today, people put marks on things that belong exclusively to them. God, by marking his servants with this seal, says, *“These, my People, will be protected. They are exempt from harm. Don’t touch them.”*
 - 3) Read Ezekiel 9. The righteous are marked. Were they literally marked? Why would we have to have something tangible here?

Here, as in Ezekiel 9, the seal is neither the Holy Spirit or a literal mark, but a token of assurance given in a picture.

B. Does this Sealing Assure the Saints of Physical Preservation

No! Many of them died in God's judgment on Rome, but, since they were sealed, they would go to their owner.

C. The Sealing Accomplished (vs 4-8)

1. The number of the sealed – "144,000." The number **12** is ever associated with the people of God – **12** Patriarchs, **12** Apostles, **12** tribes, **12** gates, **12** foundations. To raise a number to a higher power is to emphasize its inner quality. "Twelve" speaks of the completeness of God's people. All of God's saints who are to undergo this period of trial are assured of God's protection. 12x12x1000 simply underscores this assurance. 144,000 means "All of my people are under my protection and care." "... *Not a pebble will fall to the ground*" (Amos 9:9).
2. The identity of the sealed – All God's servants on earth. Some would restrict this group to Jewish Christians. Several things mitigate against that view.
 - a. There is nowhere else in this book that such a distinction is drawn.
 - b. It is the custom of the writer to use Old Testament names with New Testament meaning.
 - 1) **The temple** becomes the church.
 - 2) **The Lamb** becomes Jesus.
 - 3) **The altar** becomes worship.
 - 4) **The incense** becomes prayer.
 - 5) **The tribes of Israel**, then, would become members of the New Testament kingdom.
 - c. The listing of the Tribes in this chapter is different than found anywhere else.
 - d. The seal is placed on their foreheads and in chapter 22:4 all believers are so marked.
 - e. We will find this same number in chapter 14 where it is undoubtedly all of God's servants.

NOTE: We are not suggesting that "Israel" in the rest of the New Testament does not refer to fleshly Israelites. We believe it does. But, in this highly figurative book, it shouldn't surprise us that it is used figuratively.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

1. The *Christian* will be able to stand – the Christian will not be judged (condemned) and therefore will be able to stand (cf. John 5:24).
2. The sealed ones:
 - a. These are not sealed in order to be Christians.
 - b. These are Christians sealed in order to escape the judgment (Ezekiel 9:1-6; 2 Timothy 2:19).
3. Chapter seven has two paragraphs:
 - a. Verses 1-8 – *the church militant*.
 - b. Verses 9-16 – *the church triumphant*.

- c. The point of these two paragraphs is one – the faithful Christian stands in the midst of judgment.

THE INNUMERABLE MULTITUDE (7:9-14)

Although the Christian may be killed when God's judgment comes, he escapes the judgment and stands victorious before the throne.

A. This Entire Vision Is Based in the Old Testament Feast of Tabernacles

This feast had the following characteristics:

1. It was the last, the highest, and the most joyful feast of the year.
2. All the labors of the year were past. All the crops, grain, wine, oil, were gathered.
3. It was preceded by the Day of Atonement. Sin had been carried away into the wilderness.
4. The feelings of Israel were of the most triumphant kind.
5. The "booths" which represented freedom from bondage, were made from the branches of their most prized and most fruit-bearing trees.
6. Their songs were only those of thanksgiving.
7. A priest would draw water from the pool of Siloam and, in the presence of all, pour it on the altar. The people would wave small palm branches (cf. Revelation 7:9) and fill the temple with joyful singing.
8. The temple would be glowing all that night with many lights.

B. The Vision of the Great Multitude

1. Their number (v. 9) – *No man could count.*
2. Their origin (v. 9) – *From every nation, tribe, people, and language.* Compare Revelation 5:9-10; 10:11; 13:7; 17:5.
3. Their position (v. 9) – *Standing before the throne . . . in front of the Lamb.*
4. Their appearance (v. 9) – *Wearing white robes – overcomers* – cf. 3:4-5, 18. *Holding palm branches* – Joy in work done.
5. Their song (v. 10) – *Salvation belongs to God. . . and the Lamb.* cf. John 12:12-13.

NOTE: Heavenly response (vs. 11-12) – Worship and "Amen"

6. Their identity (vs. 13-14) – *Have come out of great tribulation* – Died, cf. John 16:33.
7. Their state (vs. 15-17):
 - a. They are before the throne.
 - b. They serve in the temple.
 - c. They serve day and night.
 - d. They live in God's tent.
 - e. They have no need which is not filled.
 - f. They have no discomfort.
 - g. They are led by the Lamb.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

1. This multitude consist of those who are coming out of the great tribulation.
 - a. The tribulation is *on earth* in *Jesus*. (cf. Revelation 1:9).
 - b. There are only two ways out of the great tribulation:
 - 1) Get out of Jesus.
 - 2) Or, get out of the earth.

2. The *requirement* for leaving this world with a white robe is to *walk in the light* (1 John 1:7).
3. *Day and night* (v. 15) indicates that this is during the period called time because eternity is one day (cf. 2 Peter 3:18).

CONCLUSION:

What we saw in chapter 7: A message of comfort to the servants in the face of the coming storm. God's people are sealed against punishment and will be ultimately victorious and joyfully delivered from all tribulation. They joyfully worship at a great Feast of Tabernacles and then become a flock of well-shepherded sheep. Assurance is the key throughout this chapter.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON NINE

1. What is the significance of the *four Angels* holding back the *four winds*?

2. Who is to be sealed in verses 4-8? For what purpose are they sealed?

3. **True** or **False**: The protection discussed in this chapter indicates that the servants of God will not be hurt physically.
4. The number of the sealed is _____. This number represents _____.
5. The two tribes of Israel that are omitted from the listing in verses 5-8 are _____ and _____; the two that are listed in their place are _____ and _____.
6. What is the one point that we should get from a study of this context?

7. In verse 9 the scene shifts from earth to _____ where John sees a _____ standing before the throne.
8. The vision in verses 9-14 is based on what Old Testament Feast? _____
9. What does the vision of the *great multitude* signify? _____

LESSON TEN

THE FIRST FOUR TRUMPETS

INTRODUCTION



he importance of the seventh seal is seen in that both the Seven Trumpets (effecting 1/3 of all creation) and the Seven Bowls (effecting all of creation) are part and parcel of the seventh seal.

The seventh seal contains the seven trumpets. Seals were for concealing. Tearing them off was to reveal. Trumpets speak of warning judgments. The judgments, being only partial, call for the ungodly to pay attention and repent of their wickedness.

The trumpets remind us of the plagues that God brought on Egypt. The oppressor is being punished—brought to his knees. As it was in the days of Moses, so it is in the day of John. The ungodly is badly hurt; but, as it turns out, not hurt sufficiently to turn him from iniquity. But these chapters (8-9) do tell the saints of their ultimate victory.

LESSON TEXT: Revelation 8:1-13

LESSON AIM: Understanding that judgment falling on an ungodly world should draw them to repentance and remind the saints that God has all authority and is in control.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. See a seventh seal opened which reveals seven angels before the throne who are given seven trumpets.
 2. Learn that the first four trumpets picture natural calamities. 1st, land disaster, – 2nd, maritime disaster, – 3rd, land/water disaster, – 4th, heavenly disaster.
 3. See that these judgments affect one-third of the earth on which they come.
-

PREPARATION (8:1-6). OPENING THE SEVENTH SEAL

The seventh seal pictures seven angels before the throne who are given seven trumpets.

A. A Period of Silence (v. 1)

In a world and a book filled with sounds (trumpets, running rivers, thunders, music), no one sound would be as remarkable as silence itself. This is what marks the opening of the seventh seal and the trumpets of chapters 8 and 9 – a period of silence of about half an hour in heaven. What was its purpose? Read Zephaniah 1:7, 14-18; Zechariah 2:13; Habakkuk 2:20.

1. To gain attention.
2. The calm before the storm.
3. All delay is over, judgment is here.
4. Heaven's angels are awestruck to silence by the terror of God.

B. Supplication of the Saints (vs. 2-5)

We will discuss verse 2 at verse 6.

1. The awesome silence was followed by the actions of a special angel at the golden altar in heaven (See Revelation 9:13; 14:18; 16:7). In the tabernacle and temple, the golden altar stood before the veil and was used for burning incense (Exodus 30:1-10). Burning incense on this altar was a picture of prayer ascending to God (Psalms 141:1-2).
2. The "prayers of the saints" are not the prayers of a special group in heaven but of all God's people, saints – set apart for God – through faith in Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 1:1; 9:1, 12; 13:13).
3. On the Great Day of Atonement, the high priest would put incense on the coals in the censer and, with the blood of the sacrifice, enter the Holy of Holies (Leviticus 16:11-14). But in this scene, the angel puts the incense on the altar and then causes the coals from the altar to be cast to the earth! The parallel in Ezekiel 10 indicates that this symbolized God's judgment. A storm is about to begin! A storm for which saints on earth have prayed! True prayer is serious business, so we had better not move the altar too far from the throne!
4. With each announcement of judgment to come from the throne, a little more is added—probably for emphasis.
 - a. Lightning, rumblings, thunder, earthquake (8:5).
 - b. Lightning, rumblings, thunder, earthquake, **hailstorm** (11:19).
 - c. Lightning, rumblings, thunder, earthquake, hailstone **each stone weighing about a hundred pounds** (16:18-21).

DESOLATION (8:6-13). THE FIRST FOUR TRUMPETS

The first four trumpets represent natural calamities.

For the biblical background on trumpets, see Numbers 10. Compare Joel 2:1, 15; Nehemiah 4:18; Jeremiah 4:5, 19; 6:1-5; Hosea 5:8-9; 8:1; Amos 3:6.

A. On the Earth (v. 7)

1. Hail and fire, mingled with blood – Read Exodus 9:24.
2. One-third of trees and green things devoured – Food is attacked.
3. The gods of the oppressor is exposed, as was Egypt's gods.

B. In the Seas (vs. 8-9) – Three-fold judgment

1. One-third of sea water became blood – Read Exodus 7:19-21.
2. One-third of sea-creatures died.
3. One-third of ships destroyed.

C. In the Fresh Waters (vs. 10-11)

1. A great star.
 - a. Sometimes, notable individuals (Isaiah 14:12).
 - b. Sometimes, people of God (Daniel 8:10; 12:3 with Genesis 15:5).

- c. Sometimes, part of picture of divine visitation (Revelation 6:13; Matthew 24:29). So to be understood here – it is a mark of divine punishment. Men may order men, but God orders the very stars of heaven to do his will.
 - d. A bitter star.
 - e. Wormwood, undrinkable and poisonous. Read Jeremiah 9:15 (poisonous water); 23:15; Lamentations 3:15, 19; Amos 5:7; Deuteronomy 29:18; Proverbs 5:4.
2. A destructive star.
- a. One-third of water made bitter.
 - b. Many people died from the water.

D. In the Heavens (v. 12) – Compare Exodus 10:21-23

- 1. This would bring unthinkable disasters upon the entire universe, if literally fulfilled. With one third less sunlight on the earth, there would be one third less energy available to support the life systems of man and nature.
- 2. For some Old Testament background, read Isaiah 34:4-5; Joel 2:10.

E. The Eagle of Warning (v. 13)

- 1. The eagle is not a noble bird, but a bird of prey. The same word is found in Matthew 24:28. See the lonely but fierce predator which swoops on its victims. See it solitary in the sky and hear the awe-inspiring, spine-chilling word it has to say: **WOE!, WOE!, WOE!**
- 2. The people warned: “*The inhabitants of the earth.*” This expression, used in Revelation, speaks of the wicked. It stands in opposition to those who “ *dwell in heaven*” (Revelation 13:6). The phrase is found in 3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 11:10 (twice); 12:12; 13:8, 12, 14 (twice); 14:6; 17:18. Check these yourself and see if each does not have an evil import. The saints, even though they live on the earth, are seen as dwellers in heaven (Revelation 12:12; 13:6).

CONCLUSION

What have we seen in this chapter?

- 1. Judgment falling on an ungodly world which should draw them to repentance. Their whole world is being hit.
- 2. The saints are being reminded by God that He has all authority and is in control.
- 3. The remaining three trumpets are going to be much more severe than the first four – **WOE, WOE, WOE!**

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TEN

1. From what part of the heavenly picture does judgment descend?

2. These judgments are in response to what event in heaven?

3. What is pictured or symbolized by the smoke and incense from the altar?

4. What four areas of the planet and universe are used to show the extent of this judgment scene?

5. What kind of calamities are pictured in these judgements?

6. The warning given in v. 13 is to "*the inhabitants of the earth.*" To whom does this phrase have reference? _____

LESSON ELEVEN

TRUMPETS FIVE AND SIX

INTRODUCTION

The seventh seal contained seven trumpets. These trumpets represent the judgments God will use to try to call Rome, His people and his people's enemy, to repentance. Chapter 8 reveals the fact that God uses natural calamities to achieve His purpose.

Trumpet One:	Land Disaster
Trumpet Two:	Maritime Disaster
Trumpet Three:	Land-Water Disaster
Trumpet Four:	Cosmic Disaster

What we have seen in chapter eight is judgment falling on an ungodly world which should draw them to repentance. Their whole world is being hit. Their home is no longer a home. It is a palace of horrors! God is bringing to the mind of the saints His authority and control. The plagues are being recalled.

Now in chapter 9 we are going to see two of the instruments of punishment used by the Lord. Internal corruption and external invasion.

LESSON TEXT: Revelation 9:1-19

LESSON AIM: To gain understanding that judgment is not meant simply to punish but to urge the ungodly to repentance and the godly to stand.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. See a fifth trumpet which contains hellish locusts and represents internal decay as a result of false doctrine.
2. Learn of a sixth trumpet which turns loose the hellish army (external enemies). However, this army, as are all armies, is under the ultimate control of our Lord.
3. Learn that there is an *incorrigible rest* who will not (or can not) repent no matter what influence God brings upon them.

THE HELLISH LOCUSTS – FIFTH TRUMPET – INTERNAL DECAY (9:1-12)

The fifth trumpet represents internal decay as a result of false doctrine.

A. The Horde of Locusts (vs. 1-10)

1. The star (vs. 1-2). Satan:
 - a. *Fallen*, not *falling* from the sky – Read Luke 10:18.

- b. *Given key to the shaft of the abyss* – Read Luke 8:30-31; Revelation 11:7; 17:8; 20:1, 3. Contrast Revelation 1:18.
- 2. *Darkened the sun and the sky* – Read Joel 2:2, 10. Contrast Revelation 1:18; 22:16.
 - a. The Locusts (vs. 3-10). Read Exodus 10:1-20; Book of Joel.
 - b. Their source (v. 3).
From the smoke from the abyss. From Hell comes the deception of Satan, from deception comes the weakening influence of internal corruption.
 - c. Their limitation (vs. 4-5).
 - 1) Not to hurt earth only the ungodly.
 - 2) Torture for five months as scorpions do.
 - d. Their effect (v. 6). Cause men to seek death but not find it.
 - e. Their description (vs. 7-9).
 - 1) Horses prepared for battle – Armed.
 - 2) Crowns of gold – Victory.
 - 3) Human-like faces – Intelligence and/or beauty.
 - 4) Woman-like hair – Strength and glory.
 - 5) Teeth of lions – Power.
 - 6) Breastplate of iron – Protection.
 - 7) Sound of wings – Great number.
 - 8) Tails like scorpions – Tormenting power.

B. Their Head (v. 11)

- 1. Authority – The abyss.
- 2. Character – destroyer. Read Job 26:6; 28:2; 31:12; Psalm 88:11. We will see more on this later in chapters 12, 19, 20.

NOTE: Let's analyze the picture:

- a. The star (angel-king) is Satan.
- b. He loosens smoke from the abyss – False doctrine that holds man in darkness (2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:1-4; Colossians 1:12-13).
- c. Locusts come out of the smoke – when man swallows the lies of false doctrine, hurting or weakening those who do not have the protecting seal.
- d. Rome fell for the Devil's lies and thus fell into internal decay.
- e. Remember, this is one of God's trumpets. God uses even the work of Satan to punish and warn the wicked.
- f. God has shown us two instruments He uses to cut down our enemies: **Natural Calamities** and **Internal decay**. The third instrument follows in the next vision. Most nations weaken internally, but it is external forces that bring about their final destruction. Thus the Sixth Trumpet.

THE HELLISH ARMY – SIXTH TRUMPET – EXTERNAL ENEMIES (9:13-19)

The sixth trumpet represents external enemies – God's judgment because of idolatry (v. 20) and religious and social corruption (v. 21).

NOTE: Moral and spiritual blindness tear a nation down and wars exhaust her altogether. It is said by some that war made Rome. But, the Romans, in general,

had no love for war. When Augustus closed the temple of Janus in 29 B.C., signaling the return of peace after three severe *civil wars* – the populace was ecstatic with joy. War torments all sensitive souls.

A. The Voice from the Altar (vs. 13-14)

1. The altar (v. 13).
 - a. That's where the prayers went up from and the martyrs that were under it. We are reminded that these judgments are in response to the cries and prayers of the saints – dead and living.
 - b. The *horns* of anything are the strong parts of it.
2. The charge (v. 14). "*Loose the angels.*" Read 7:1-3 again.
 - a. These stand for the armies who are appointed to attack Rome—those whom God calls to do His bidding.
 - b. The "**Euphrates**" stands for the threat of military might—Read Isaiah 8:7-8.

B. The Amazing Host (vs. 15-19)

1. Their appointment (v. 15a). The saints are assured that these armies are totally under the control of God. **The angels stand for the armies. They move only when God says move. They have their place in the divine program. The saints need to know this! We today need to know this! The Lord is Lord!**
2. Their assignment (v. 15b). *To kill the third part of men.*
3. Their number (v. 16). 200 million horsemen – Why such a large number?
 - a. To scare the life out of the enemy!
 - b. To make the saints rejoice that their Father has such an army at His disposal.
 - c. To stress the staggering control possessed by God.
4. Their description (vs. 17-19).
 - a. Armored – red, blue, yellow breastplates.
 - b. Devouring – head like lions.
 - c. Totally destructive – fire, smoke, sulfur (brimstone – Genesis 19:24-28; Psalm 11:6; Job 18:15).
 - d. Effective – killed 1/3 of mankind.
 - e. Powerful – mouth to destroy – tails that kill.

THE INCORRIGIBLE REST (9:20-21)

A. This Is Really Scary—they Did Not (rather could not) Repent

Such hardness of heart is awe-inspiring. We should be forewarned that our opponents are bent upon evil.

B. Their List of Sins Is Impressive

1. The work of their hands – oppression of the righteous.
2. The worship of demons and idols.
3. Murders.
4. Magic acts.
5. Sexual immorality.
6. Thefts.

CONCLUSION

What have we seen in chapter nine? We have seen two of the instruments of punishment used by the Lord. **Internal corruption** and **external invasion**. These have been used against the oppressor – those who are not sealed on their foreheads. They did not incite the enemy to repent. How are they stopped? That's the question in the midst of awe-stricken saints.

No! More! Warning!

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON ELEVEN

1. What does the fifth trumpet represent? _____
 What is the picture? _____

2. What other Old Testament Book tells of this means of judgment?

3. Is this judgment final or is it a call to repentance? Please Explain.

4. What does the sixth trumpet represent? _____

5. Of what is fire and brimstone symbolic? Explain. _____

6. What is the purpose of the sixth trumpet? _____

7. For what two reasons is Rome said to be judged?
 1) _____
 2) _____

LESSON TWELVE

NO MORE WARNING

INTRODUCTION

Review Of Chapters 4-9:

1. Chapter 4: The throne scene. God controls all things at all times.
 2. Chapter 5: The slain Lamb comes to serve and worship the one who sits on the throne. The Lamb takes the book of destiny and is given equal honor by all creation and the host of heaven.
 3. Chapter 6: Opening of the first six seals. These seals depict the destiny the church is to face. It also reveals the destiny that Rome (the enemy) must face.
 - a. Jesus the conquering warrior.
 - b. War.
 - c. Famine and economic depression.
 - d. Death.
 - e. Soul of martyrs under the altar pleading for judgment and justice.
 - f. Judgment is imminent. God's servants sealed for protection from the judgment.
 4. Chapter 7: God's servants victorious over the judgment.
 5. Chapters 8-9: Depict the warning judgments on the oppressor. Though they were warnings, they are severe. The oppressor should have repented but didn't. He only blasphemed and hardened his heart further just like Pharaoh in the book of Exodus. Such steadfast wickedness is a fearful thing to behold. It produces fear in the heart of the timid. Very little, in this life, is as scary to see as incarnate hatred and spite clawing for victory, even though it knows it is a loser. We need assurance in the face of this kind of undying malice.
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LESSON TEXT: Revelation 10:1 – 11:2

LESSON AIM: To see that the world cannot touch what is holy unto God. God knows and protects His people. God's preached word and His people will be victorious.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. Learn of the Strong Angel and the Seven Thunders and their significance.
 2. See the significance of the bitter/sweet book and its message.
 3. See the meaning of the third vision – the Temple and the City as it is measured and set apart from all else.
-

Preview Of Chapters 10–13

When we get to chapter thirteen we will better understand the reason for this horrifying strength of purpose for wickedness. Two beasts, empowered with the dragon's authority, become a fierce pair and formidable foe. And the fiery dragon becomes an even more horrifying sight.

But before we are faced with these two beasts who are empowered by the dragon himself, we have the account in chapters 10-12 which are well placed. They are designed to comfort us. They come immediately after the manifestation of the ungodly brute strength of Satan and immediately before the terrible trio. That trio is the Roman power, religion and seduction. In chapter ten, strong angels will assure us of victory. In chapter eleven, a city is besieged, yet protected. Witnesses in sackcloth are still the victors! In chapter twelve, a new baby is victorious over the devil. A woman is protected and the rest of her seed are victorious as well.

We are told:

1. God's invincible power is on our side.
2. Our city will be besieged, but our sanctuary will remain.
3. Though seemingly killed our witness will be victorious.
4. God will come in judgement on all our enemies.
5. Jesus pictured as a helpless baby will be victorious.
6. The church (the woman) will be protected during this time.
7. Her seed (battered and persecuted Christians) will be victorious.

THE STRONG ANGEL AND THE SEVEN THUNDERS (10:1-7)

The significance of these unrecorded thunders is – No More Warning!

STUDY NOTES

Outline of the Interlude: *four words of comfort* (Revelation 10:1 – 11:14) – There are four pictures:

1. The seven unrecorded thunders (10:1-7).
– Significance: *No more warning!*
2. The bitter-sweet booklet (10:8-11).
– Significance: *John must continue to preach a sorrowful message.*
3. Measuring the temple (11:1-2).
– Significance: *God knows and protects His people.*
4. The two witnesses (11:3-13).
– Significance: *Gospel preaching, though seemingly put down, will ultimately triumph.*

A. The Description of the Angel (vs. 1-4)

1. Mighty.
2. Coming down from heaven.
3. Garment: A cloud.
4. Crown: A rainbow.
5. Face: Like the sun.
6. Legs: Pillars of fire.
7. Hands: Holding a little scroll (to be discussed in Verses 8-11).
8. Feet: Astride sea and land.
9. Voice: Like a lion.

NOTE: He caused seven thunders to speak (thunders also warn). But, Heaven said, “Seal them up.” **NO! MORE! WARNING!**

B. Heaven's Prohibition (vs. 5-7)

1. Angel's authority is God Himself.
2. Explanation of the thunders: “*No more delay!*”
3. The seventh trumpet will be the end of all things.

THE STRONG ANGEL AND JOHN (10:8-11) – SECOND VISION

The significance of this little book is that John must continue to preach a sorrowful message.

STUDY NOTES

1. The word *book* in verse 8 is literally *booklet* (small book).
2. The bitter sweetness of the book in every occasion it is mentioned (Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and here) was made so by the idolatry of a people.
3. The *bitterness* is in the *delivery* – the *sweetness* is in the *reception*.

A. The Instruction (v. 8)

1. *Take the book and go!*
2. Signifies the preaching of the Gospel.

B. The Little Book (vs. 8-10)

1. Open – easy to understand.
2. Bitter, sweet – Read Ezekiel 2:8-3:14.

***THE CHURCH WILL
BE SUSTAINED BY
THE LORD!***

C. The Explanation (v. 11)

1. Must continue to preach.
2. Message will be sorrowful.
3. Message will be universal.
4. The key word is TELL. “*Go TELL!*”

THE TEMPLE AND THE CITY (11:1-2) – THIRD VISION

The significance of measuring the temple is that God knows and protects His people.

A. The Standard (v. 1). A Reed, like a Measuring Rod

Read Ezekiel 40:3-5; 42:20. The measurement is to make a distinction between the holy and the common (unholy).

1. Whatever is measured is set apart – sanctified – made holy (Ezekiel 42:20).
2. The idea of protection is implied in this passage because God regards the measured portion as belonging to Him.

B. The Things to Be Measured (v. 1)

1. *Temple* – There is only one temple of God, the **church** (1 Corinthians 3:16-17; Ephesians 2:19-22; Revelation 21).
 - a. It is not ***HIERON*** = The temple as a whole.
 - b. It is ***NAOS*** = The Holy of Holies (Sanctuary).
2. *Altar* – The worship of the priests of God. Compare 1 Peter 2:5, 9; Hebrews 13:15-16.
3. *The worshipers there* – The priests – See point above.

C. The Things Left Unmeasured (v. 2)

God is saying, though the city of God will undergo abuse from the profaning forces of Rome, yet they cannot get to her heart. He will permit the suffering but will not permit the annihilation; the inner sanctuary will be kept by Him.

NOTE: What is this time period of 42 months, 1260 days, 3 ½ years. (Hebrew lunar calendar had 360 days).

1. The period of the beast’s authority (13:5). A broken period of time.

2. The period of the holy city being trodden underfoot (11:2).
3. The period during which the witnesses prophesy (11:3).
4. The period the woman is in the wilderness (12:6, 14).
5. The period the *little horn* persecutes the church (Daniel 7:25).

NOTE: What is the over-all thrust of 11:1-2? The city of God (the church) will undergo persecution from Rome. Despite this the church will all the while be sustained by the Lord.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWELVE

1. What is the significance of the seven unrecorded thunders? _____
2. Give the nine-fold description of the angel in verses 1-4.

1) _____	6) _____
2) _____	7) _____
3) _____	8) _____
4) _____	9) _____
5) _____	
3. What will the seventh trumpet say or signify? _____
4. What is John instructed to do with the little bitter/sweet book? _____
5. Explain why the book when eaten is both sweet and bitter. _____

6. What is the symbolic (significance) use of measuring? _____

7. What three things are to be measured?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
8. What is the time period of 42 months, 1260 days, 3 ½ years?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
9. What is the over-all thrust of 11:1-2?

LESSON THIRTEEN

FOURTH VISION: TWO WITNESSES

INTRODUCTION

In this lesson we will complete our study of chapters ten and eleven. There are four visions to comfort John and the persecuted Christians in the Roman Empire in the first century. Then there will be the blowing of the seventh trumpet. The first picture back in chapter 10 was the vision of the seven thunders. Let's list the three previous visions in outline form and see their meaning to the first century Christian.

The Three Previous Visions:

1. The little book and seven thunders.
 - a. Seven thunders sound that cannot be recorded.
 - b. Judgment will come without further warning or delay.
 2. The eating of the little book.
 - a. It is sweet when eaten, but bitter in the stomach.
 - b. Gospel sweet in reception, but bitter when preached.
 3. The measuring of the temple.
 - a. Sanctuary, altar and the people are measured.
 - b. Measuring separates and protects the holy from the unholy.
-

LESSON TEXT: Revelation 11:3-19

LESSON AIM: To understand that the preaching of the word will ultimately triumph and accomplish what God intended.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. See the fourth vision and its revelation of two strong and powerful witnesses.
 2. Hear the sounding of the seventh trumpet and learn that it represents the fall of the enemy. This is a loud judgment depicted later on as seven bowls of wrath.
-

THE FOURTH VISION – TWO STRONG AND POWERFUL WITNESSES (11:3-13)

The significance of the two witnesses is that gospel preaching, though seemingly put down, will ultimately triumph.

A. The Witnesses and Their Conflict (11:3-13)

1. The power of their witness (vs. 3-6).
 - a. Their work is to prophesy (v. 3). The source of their power, the Spirit of God (cf. Zechariah 14).

- 1) The work of prophecy is not predicting the future.
- 2) The work of prophecy was to speak God's Word to the people of that day, God's message for that time.
- b. The length of time. Prophecy for 1260 days.
 - 1) 42 months or 3 ½ years.
 - 2) Short period of time – Not forever.
- c. Their demeanor. Prophecy in sack cloth (an expression of mourning).
2. Their identity (v. 4). *The Church of God*.
 - a. Two olive trees – Read Zechariah 4:12-14.
 - 1) Prophet and Priest. Zerubbabel and Joshua.
 - 2) It is the church who is God's priests and prophets (1 Peter 2:5, 9; Revelation 1:5). The church takes the message of God to mankind.
 - b. Two candlesticks – Read chapters 2 and 3 (The church).
 - 1) The powerful (cannot be defeated) church.
 - 2) The confirmed church by the witness of the Godhead.
3. Their ability (vs. 5-6) Their power is that of Elijah's and Moses'.
 - a. Fire to devour their enemies (Elijah on Mount Carmel).
 - b. Shut the sky and there was no rain (Elijah and Ahab).
 - c. Turn water to blood (Moses in Egypt).
 - d. Strike the earth with plagues (Moses in Egypt).

NOTE: Whatever the church needs to be victorious in any circumstance will be supplied. Whatever they need they get! ***WHATEVER IT TAKES!***

B. The Human Response to Their Witness (vs. 7-10)

1. Their success (v. 7a). *Finished their testimony*. Nobody can stop these two witnesses until they are done, until they are finished.
 - a. Their seeming defeat (v. 7b-10). We don't have the ability to see things as they really are. As you view it with the human eye, the church of Jesus Christ has lost.
 - b. They are attacked, overpowered, killed.
 - c. Their bodies lie exposed for ridicule (3 ½ days).
2. The city has three names.
 - a. **Sodom** – The world's seduction.
 - b. **Egypt** – The world's persecuting power.
 - c. **Jerusalem** – The world's religion.
 - 1) These are the **three** tools Satan uses to try to destroy the church of the living God.
 - 2) The power of Rome – ***persecution***, The religion of Rome – ***emperor worship***.
 - d. Why did the enemy rejoice over the death of these witnesses?
 - 1) Because these witnesses had tormented them.
 - 2) The preaching of the Gospel torments the wicked.
 - 3) Whenever and wherever God's people live uprightly and preach the gospel the wicked are tormented and they hate it.
 - 4) If our life and Gospel do not offend the wicked then something is very wrong.
 - 5) Dark hates the light. That is an eternal truth.

C. The Divine Vindication (vs. 11-13)

1. The witnesses are resurrected, terrifying their enemies (v. 11).
 - a. They are divinely vindicated.
 - b. Here is the Christian's victory.
 - c. Christianity may seem dead but it rises again and again from the ashes of seeming defeat to defeat all foes.
 - d. It is terrifying to see one you killed rise up to defeat you.
2. The witnesses are carried to Heaven while enemies watch (v. 12).
 - a. They are victorious over their enemies.
 - b. They utterly destroy their enemies.
 - 1) It is not literal – It is only a picture – A picture of what?
 - 2) The victory of the church of God, the victory of the witnesses.
3. An earthquake destroys many of their enemies (v. 13).
 - a. The destruction of the earthquake symbolizes judgment.
 - b. There is an important lesson to be learned.
 - 1) Keep on preaching the gospel! Keep on telling! Keep on witnessing the power of God!
 - 2) What appears to be defeat is not real – It only appears to be defeat – Be faithful! Don't give up!
 - 3) The witness of God will win – Just Be Patient!
 - 4) The second Woe is past!

CONCLUSION

Now I am ready for the seventh trumpet no matter what it is, because I have been told that God is in control. I have been told that seven thunders will finally come in their judgment upon Rome.

I have been told that there is a book, a little book, that contains what is going to happen to the saints of God. I have been told that no matter how bad it appears, though the holy city is trodden underfoot, they can't get to the sanctuary, they can't get to where the people of God really live. I have been told that no matter how much it looks like gospel preaching is not winning, it is winning. The witness of God will ultimately be triumphant! So I am ready for the seventh trumpet to blow!

THE SEVENTH TRUMPET (11:14-19)

The sounding of the seventh trumpet represents the fall of the enemy. This is a loud judgment depicted later on as seven bowls of wrath.

A. Preparation (v. 14)

1. A judgment so bad it causes the wicked to cry out Woe! Woe!
 - a. This will later be depicted as seven bowls of wrath.
 - b. The seventh seal contains seven trumpets and the seventh trumpet will contain seven bowls. So it is Seven, Seven, Seven.
2. God's judgment is going to be **absolute**, **total** and **irrevocable**.

B. The Seventh Trumpet is Blown (vs. 15-18)

1. God is **SEEN** to rule (v. 15).
2. God is **SAID** to rule (vs. 16-18; Daniel 7:27).
 - a. Over the nations (vs. 17-18a).

- b. Over His people (v. 18b; Isaiah 26:9). When God comes in judgment, he not only comes in judgment **on the enemy**, He comes in judgment **for his people**.
 - 1) His servants the prophets (They speak for God).
 - 2) The saints (They are separated).
 - 3) Those who reverence His name (Hold God in reverence).
 - 4) Therefore, God honors them.

C. The Temple in Heaven (v. 19)

- 1. Opened to show the Ark of **HIS** Covenant – He is faithful.
- 2. Opened to show that **HIS** judgment is holy – He is holy.
 - a. Lightning, thunder and voices proceeded from the throne of God (Revelation 4:5).
 - b. Fire from the altar cast to the earth and there were noises, thunder, lightning and an earthquake (Revelation 8:5).
 - c. In Revelation 11:13, there is added, *A great earthquake*.

D. Now a Pause – an Interlude

- 1. God said, “I will judge the enemy and I will do it now.”
- 2. What is the basis of that judgment?
 - a. The proven, sacrificed, resurrected, ascended Messiah.
 - b. The faithful, persecuted, victorious church.
 - c. All of which have been viciously attacked by the devil.
 - 1) The victorious are those who serve God.
 - 2) The defeated and destroyed are those who serve the devil.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

- 1. The song of the great voices in heaven: *song of victory of the kingdom. The Kingdom of God Wins!*
- 2. The song of the twenty-four elders: *song of praise of God judging*.
- 3. The use of *KAI* (and) in verse 18 in determining whether the *dead* refers to:
 - a. Those dead in sin, or
 - b. Those dead underneath the altar.
- 4. Judgment in time punishes some and rewards others.
- 5. God comes to save and to destroy:
 - a. To reward (save):
 - 1) The prophets.
 - 2) The saints.
 - 3) Those that fear Jehovah’s name.
 - b. To destroy those that destroy the earth. The enemy’s fall comes because of:
 - 1) Their character (vs. 16-18; 18:23-24).
 - 2) God’s covenant (v. 19) – there is a God in heaven that keeps covenant (2 Timothy 2:11-12).
- 6. A reminder: Each time judgment is discussed, something is added:
 - a. 4:5 – *lightnings, voices, thunders*.
 - b. 8:5 – *lightnings, voices, thunders, earthquakes*.
 - c. 11:19 – *lightnings, voices, thunders, earthquakes, great hail*.
 - d. 16:8-21 – *lightnings, voices, thunders, earthquakes, great hail about the weight of a talent*.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON THIRTEEN

1. What is the significance of the picture of the two witnesses?

2. What is the significance of there being *two* witnesses? How long did they prophesy? With what would that number compare?

3. Why were they clothed in sackcloth? How long did they seem to be defeated?

4. What is the source of the witnesses' power? The nature of their power?

5. Name four Old Testament personalities that can be seen as examples of this power.
 - 1)_____
 - 2)_____
 - 3)_____
 - 4)_____
6. What was the world's response to the preaching of the two witnesses? What was the reason for that response?

7. The great city where the witnesses' bodies lay in the street is spiritually called by what three names? What would these names represent?

8. What does the seventh trumpet represent? _____

9. What does the earthquake of verse thirteen represent? What is it's message?

10. Explain how the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of the Lord if God has always ruled the world.

LESSON FOURTEEN

THE GREAT BATTLE

INTRODUCTION



he section beginning with chapter 12 was anticipated in the episode of the little scroll in chapter 10. Go back and read 10:9-11.

The dramatic events of chapters 12-22 constitute the message of severe judgment which John was obliged to preach to the nations. The final and complete desolation of the oppressor signified by the seventh trumpet is going to be revealed.

We have seen the outward struggle of the church with anti-Christian forces which resulted in victory for Christ and His followers. This same theme is continued but now we see, with greater clarity, that the conflict between the church and the world really is only the outward manifestation of the age-long and age-lasting war between Christ (the man-child) and Satan (the red dragon).

The “seer” was able to see for just a little while what was going on behind the scenery of life. He was able to see causes and results we only guess at and suppose. Despite the battles and powers, the hardships and the losses, God in Christ, with the people of God, will win in the end.

LESSON TEXT: Revelation 12:1-13

LESSON AIM: To comprehend that despite the battles and powers, the hardships and the losses, God in Christ, with the people of God, will win in the end.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. Find out the identity of the dragon, woman and the man-child.
 2. Get a panoramic view of the conflict between the dragon, the woman, and the man-child. He is expelled from heaven and cast down to earth.
 3. See that the dragon, being defeated, will turn his wrath toward the rest of the woman’s seed and they will be persecuted for a short time.
-

This section starts here in chapter 12 and continues all the way through chapter 22 verse 5. Let’s notice this scene as if it were a drama, a play, a divine play in three parts, three acts. Let us notice the first act of the drama on earth.

THE FIRST ACT OF THE DRAMA – ON EARTH (12:1-6)

The identity of the woman, the dragon, and the man-child revealed.

A. The Pregnant Woman (vs. 1-2)

1. **Her clothing (v. 1).** Light from head to foot: *Clothed with the sun. Crown of 12 stars on her head. Moon under her feet.*
She is heaven's bride. Old testament saints were called the bride of Christ, laboring to bring forth a son. In the New Testament, the church of Jesus Christ is called the bride of Jesus, the bride of God. Read John 1:1-5; 1 John 1:1-7.
2. **Her condition (v. 2).**
 - a. *Pregnant.* She has been so from Genesis 3:15.
 - b. *About to give birth.* The long awaited, greatly anticipated moment is about to occur. Read Isaiah 50:1; 54:1; Hosea 2; Micah 4:9-13.

NOTE: This is God's covenant people, laboring to bring forth the Messiah. But she is the people God views as being victorious, hence the victory wreath of twelve stars. Although she is mentioned first and is mentioned again in this text where she plays a prominent part, she is not the central figure.

B. The Blood-Red Dragon (vs. 3-4)

1. Description (v. 3).
 - a. Enormous – The power he possesses.
 - 1) Blood-Red, the ferocity with which he destroys men.
 - 2) *"He was a murderer from the beginning"* (John 8:44).
 - b. Seven heads.
Possesses everything to enable him to execute his plans.
 - c. Ten horns.
 - 1) He rules over all the worldly kingdoms – Read John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 2 Corinthians 4:4.
 - 2) Ten is the number for worldly completion, as seven is the number for divine completion.
 - d. Seven crowns.
 - 1) Ruling crowns, not the victory crown of the woman in verse one. Her's is the crown of victory that will never know disgrace. His is only the works of royalty, that may be worn, as they will be worn, in defeat.
 - 2) The devil's diadem will go down in total and absolute defeat.
 - e. The destructive tail.
Like the tail of the locusts of the fifth trumpet and the horses of the sixth trumpet that is the instrument with which he destroys.

NOTE: Again a *third* part. Read Daniel 8:10. This is one powerful enemy!

2. The dragon's function (v. 4).
 - a. Position.
In front of woman. Again Genesis 3:15 and onward.
 - b. Purpose.

“... so that he may devour her child, the moment it was born.” What a coward! Not only to attack a very pregnant woman but an absolutely defenseless baby.

NOTE: Satan has always been trying to destroy the woman’s *seed* (Genesis 3:15). Throughout Old Testament history, Satan tried to prevent the birth of the Redeemer. There was always a *dragon* standing by. Pharaoh is called a monster, a “*dragon*” in Ezekiel 29:3. Nebuchadnezzar is called a devouring serpent, a *dragon* in Jeremiah 51:34. At one critical moment, the *seed-line* is limited to one little boy (2 Kings 11:1-3). When Jesus was born, Satan used king Herod to try to destroy Him (Matthew 2). Satan thought he had succeeded when he used Judas to betray the Lord and hand Him over to be crucified. But the cross was actually Satan’s defeat! Notice Revelation 12:11.

C. The Man-Child (v. 5) – The central figure of the vision!

1. Description.
 - a. A real man.
A son, a male child. Read John 16:23. In the original language she forgets her anguish in the joy that a *man* is born into the world.
 - b. Truly God.
He “... *rules the nations with a rod of iron.*” Read Psalms 2:6-9; Number 24:1a, 17; Hebrews 1:15; Revelation 19:15.
2. Destiny. *God and His throne.*

NOTE: The defenseless woman is protected and cared for by God in the desert for 1,260 days – Read Genesis 16:7-13; 21:8-21. This was not the first woman God cared for in a desert.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

1. The designation of the woman, dragon, and man-child.
 - a. The Dragon – *the devil* (v. 9).
 - b. The man-child – *Jesus* (Psalm 2:9; Revelation 2:27).
 - c. The woman – *God’s covenant people*.
 - 1) Pregnant: God’s covenant people before the coming of Jesus – Israel in the Old Testament (cf. Micah 4:8 – 5:5).
 - 2) Delivered: God’s covenant people after the coming of Jesus – church in the New Testament.
2. The woman became pregnant in Genesis 3:15.
3. The Bible is a story called *saved by one*:
 - a. It *announces* the story of salvation by one in *Genesis 3:15*.
 - b. It *develops* the story of salvation by one in *Old Testament figures, types, and shadows*.
 - c. It *fulfills* the story of salvation by one on *the cross of Christ*.
 - d. It *carries out* the story of salvation by one through the *body of Christ*.
4. The story of the struggle sandwiched between verses 4 and 5 is in the Gospels.
5. Jesus was tested in three arenas:
 - a. Temptation and He came out victorious.
 - b. Religious turmoil and He came out victorious.

- c. Political persecution and He came out victorious.

Satan is not the all-powerful one in these areas!

6. The woman flees to the wilderness to be nourished 1,260 days. This is the third time this period is mentioned:
 - a. 11:2 – period of persecution.
 - b. 11:3 – period while the gospel is being preached.
 - c. 12:6 – period the woman protected.

SPECIAL NOTE: The devil loses in his attempt to devour that man-child. **That is defeat #1 in this chapter!**

ACT TWO OF THE DRAMA – WAR IN HEAVEN (12:7-12)

The dragon is defeated, cast down to the earth and has but a short time to express his wrath.

A. The Conflict (vs. 7-9)

1. The sides drawn (v. 7).
Michael and his angels (Read Jude 9; Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1) against the dragon and his angels (Read Matthew 25:41; 2 Peter 2:4)
2. The victory declared (vs. 8-9).
 - a. He was not strong enough and lost (All his heads, horns, and crowns were insufficient. His tail could not touch Michael and his angels).
 - b. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels, with him. Note the five-fold description of our enemy:
 - 1) Dragon – he is a devourer.
 - 2) Serpent – he is a trickster.
 - 3) Devil – he is an accuser.
 - 4) Satan – he is an adversary.
 - 5) Deceiver – he is a liar.

SPECIAL NOTE: The devil loses to Michael – **This is defeat #2.**

B. The Heavenly Chorus (vs. 10-12)

1. The judicial declaration (v. 10).
God's activity – "*The salvation and power of our Lord has come.*"
Satan's Activity – Unceasing accusation of the brethren.
2. The overcoming described (v. 11).
What is necessary in overcoming?
 - a. The blood of the Lamb – Read: 1 Peter 1:18-20; Revelation 1:5; Acts 22:16; Romans 6:3-5; 1 John 1:6-7.
 - b. The word of our testimony – They were telling others about the Lamb. Read 2 Timothy 2:2; Romans 1:14-17.
 - c. Love not your life – even unto death. Read: Romans 12:1-2; Luke 9:23; 14:25-27.
3. Response demanded (v. 12).
 - a. By the Heaven-dwellers – Rejoice because the devil has lost! (Expelled from heaven)
 - b. By the Earth-dwellers – Mourn. Reason for mourning.

- 1) The devil is come down (on the earth) to live among you.
- 2) The devil is mad.
- 3) The devil knows his time is short.

SPECIAL NOTE: The devil was unable to defeat the brothers. **That was defeat #3 in this chapter.**

ACT THREE OF THIS DRAMA – RENEWED CONFLICT ON EARTH (12:13 – 13:1)

The dragon persecutes the woman but she is protected and nourished for three and a half years.

A. The Attempt on the Woman (vs. 13-16)

1. The dragon's pursuit (v. 13).
2. The woman's protection (v. 14).
 - a. The two wings of a great eagle – Read Exodus 19:4-6; Isaiah 40:31. Her strength is the strength of God.
 - b. Her place prepared in the desert. Read Revelation 12:6 (nourishment); 12:14 (out of harm's reach = protection).
 - c. Three and a half times (years). Read 1 Kings 12:1-19:21.
 - 1) Of persecution – 1 Kings 18:10-13.
 - 2) Of protection – 1 Kings 18:25, 30.

NOTE: The meaning of *time, times and half a time* – it is a period of protection and nourishment. The woman is flown out of the persecution over into a place of nourishment for three and a half years.

3. The dragon's weapon (v. 15). A river to sweep the woman away. Notice the following Old Testament passages concerning the use of river.
 - a. Psalms 18:4 – A symbol of ungodliness.
 - b. Psalms 124:4-5 – A symbol of destruction by ungodly men.
 - c. Isaiah 8:5-8 – A symbol of destruction by Assyria.
 - d. Isaiah 57:19-20 – A symbol of wickedness.
4. The help (v. 16) – “*The earth . . . swallowed up the river.*” Mankind follows the devil's dictates, thereby helping the saints to see him for the liar and destroyer he is.

SPECIAL NOTE: The dragon fails in his attack upon the woman. **That's defeat #4 in this one chapter.** Why would we fear or serve a four-time loser?

B. His Plans for Future Attack (12:17–13:1a)

1. Dragon is furious at the woman (v. 17a).
2. He plans war against her offspring (v. 17b). Who are these offspring?
 - a. Those who are obedient to God.
 - b. Those who hold to the testimony of Jesus – i.e. the overcomers of verse 11. He is going to fight those who are already declared victorious over him. What a loser!

3. The source of Satan's first help (13:1a). "*The Sea*" Compare Revelation 17:1, 15. The "*sea*" represents the **wicked world**.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

The following things are seen from Chapter 12:

1. The dragon stands in front of the pregnant woman to devour her child – there is the Old Testament.
2. The woman delivers the child – there are the Gospels.
3. The child caught up unto God and unto His throne – there is the Ascension.
4. A warfare in heaven – the consequence – the devil was cast out of Heaven.
5. The devil tries to attack the church – there is the book of Acts.
6. The devil was unsuccessful.
7. He turns to make war with the rest of the woman's seed.

NOTE: The warfare still goes on but the warfare discussed in this book will be the one that takes place between the rest of the woman's seed and the two helpers of Satan mentioned in chapter 13.

**DEFEATED
BUT...HE
REFUSES TO
SURRENDER!**

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FOURTEEN

1. What is symbolized by the dragon's seven heads and ten horns?

2. Describe the different kinds of crowns worn by the woman and the dragon.

3. What does each of the following symbolize?
 1) Dragon – _____
 2) Woman – _____
 3) Man-child – _____

4. Where is the struggle between the woman and dragon recorded?

5. Where is the struggle between the man-child and dragon recorded?

6. Who is the rest of the woman's seed against whom the dragon wars against?

7. What primary tool does the dragon use against the rest of her seed?

8. What is the meaning of *time, times and half a time*? Give a reason for your answer.

9. List seven things we have seen in chapter 12.
 1) _____
 2) _____
 3) _____
 4) _____
 5) _____
 6) _____
 7) _____

LESSON FIFTEEN

THE FORCES OF EVIL

INTRODUCTION



Because Revelation is a picture book it is important that we keep a running summary of the pictures in our mind so we can see where this lesson fits into the book as a whole. Let us start back in chapter four:

Chapter 4.

The great throne scene with the Eternal sitting on the throne. The lesson is the simple fact that God rules the world.

Chapter 5.

The slain Lamb comes to serve the one sitting on the throne and is Himself served and worshiped before the chapter ends. The lesson is that the Lamb is worthy because the future of the church is in His hands.

Chapter 6.

The first six seals are opened. They reveal that, 1) Jesus is conqueror; 2) The devil will empower somebody to make war against God's people; 3) The devil will use economic discrimination and famine to afflict God's people with hunger; 4) Physical death will be used by the devil against God's people; But death and hades cannot affect the sealed servants of God; 5) The souls of saints slain for the word of God cry from under the altar. They ask, "How long before God judges His enemies on the earth?" 6) In the language of the Old Testament it is announced that Judgment will come quickly. It will be terrible and mankind will attempt to flee from it but cannot. They would prefer to be buried by the mountains than face the wrath of Jesus. Therefore, the great question is asked, "**WHO CAN STAND?**"

Chapter 7.

In chapter six the question is asked, "*Who can stand?*" This chapter answers that question. Only the Saint (Christian) can stand in the day of God's judgment. Before the judgment began the Christian was sealed with the seal of the living God upon his forehead. That seal is the sign that he belongs to God. Anything that belongs to God cannot be harmed. He stands before the throne of God victorious with no need for tears or sorrow because he is being led by the Good Shepherd, Jesus.

Chapters 8-9.

Here the seventh seal is opened and brings forth the seven trumpets. These trumpets bring forth the downfall of the Roman Empire through natural calamities, internal decay and external forces.

Chapter 10.

Here we are told that the sealed servants of God will continue to find the Gospel sweet because of the salvation it brings them. But it will bring sorrow when it is preached to those who hate and refuse it.

Chapter 11.

The temple is measured. The holy is separated and protected from the unholy. The sanctuary is protected but the outer court is given to the Gentiles. The holy city is trodden under foot and God's people are persecuted. Even though they are

persecuted, God's people are not annihilated and the sanctuary (heart and core of the church) is not trodden under foot. Then two witnesses are introduced. Here is the strong Gospel testimony that is successful and victorious. It does what God sent it to do. Then there is SEEMING defeat. The two witnesses are overcome and killed. They are not allowed a burial. Their bodies lay in the street to be ridiculed by their enemies. The city where they are mocked is called Egypt – symbolic of persecution, Sodom – symbolic of immorality, Jerusalem – symbolic of false religion. Then the seventh trumpet sounds and God says, "*Now is time for judgment, I will destroy Rome.*"

Chapter 12.

In chapter twelve we saw the dragon standing in front of the pregnant woman to devour her child. That is the Old Testament story of the devil's attempt to destroy the seed of woman (Genesis 3:15). The woman has the child – that is the Gospel account as Jesus is born into the world, lives His sinless life and makes the perfect sacrifice for our sin. He is then caught up to God and to His throne – that is the bodily ascension of Christ into heaven. Now that the devil can no longer attack Jesus, he turns and makes war against the church as a whole (the woman). But she is carried away into the wilderness where she is protected – that is the book of Acts and the epistles of the New Testament. The devil is so furious he turns his attack toward the rest of her seed. The rest of her seed are those "*Who keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus.*" They are individual Christians in every subsequent age – that is chapter thirteen through chapter twenty-two of this book.

Chapter twelve brought us from creation to the present time. That is from the sin of Adam and Eve, and the announcement of the seed to come who would bruise the devil's head, till now as we are about to discuss the present enemy who is trying to attack the seed of the woman. That seed is no other than New Testament Christians. That is the subject of chapter thirteen.

LESSON TEXT: Revelation 13:1-18

LESSON AIM: To get a clear view of the devil's great power to defeat Christians through persecution and false worship (deception).

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. Meet the *Sea Beast* and see that he is representative of the persecuting power of any civil government (esp. Rome at the time of this writing).
2. Meet the *Earth Beast* and learn that he is representative of the anti-Christian religion of Rome and is designed to deceive God's people into false worship.
3. See that the dragon marshals these twin enemies, the sea beast which is Rome in his **military armor**, and the earth best which is Rome in his **priestly robe**, for the purpose of destroying the church of God.

THE FIRST HELPER OF SATAN IS THE *SEA BEAST* – THE CIVIL PERSECUTING POWER OF ROME (13:1-10)

Today any civil power that tries to harm or hinder the work of the Lord or tries to kill the people of God.

A. The Description of the Beast (vs. 1-3)

1. **Origin:** *Out of the sea.* Isaiah 17:12; Revelation 17:1, 15.
2. **Nature:** *Beast.* The original word carries the idea of a *brutal, savage, ferocious beast* (Thayer, page 290).
3. **Power:** *Ten horns.* Total power and might. Deuteronomy 33:17; 2 Samuel 2:1; 1 Kings 22:11; Luke 1:69.
4. **Authority:** *Seven heads.* Perfect authority. Genesis 3:15; Ephesians 5:22-31; Colossians 1:18. Remember this is power that is **given** to him (vs. 5, 7). (Compare Romans 13:1-7; John 19:8-11).
5. **Reign:** *Seven Crowns* (diadems). The original word signifies kingly nature, rule or reign (Vine, Vol. 1, page 308).
6. **Opposes God:** *Names of blasphemy.* Also see vs. 5-6.
7. **Fearsome:** *Leopard.* Sudden, swift, cruel. *Bear.* Slow, relentless, crushing.
8. **Satanic:** *Dragon gave him power, a throne and authority.* He is the devil's vice-regent.
9. **Hard to kill:** *Fatal wound . . . but healed.*
10. **World-wide:** *Whole world astonished and followed the beast.*

B. The Power of the Beast (vs. 4-8)

1. Worshiped equally with the dragon (v. 4a).
2. Thought to be unique and indestructible (v. 4b).
3. Thought to be superior to God (vs. 5-6).
4. Seemed to be victorious over saints (v. 7a).
5. Ruled over entire earth (v. 7b).
6. All but the saints submitted to him (v. 8).

C. The Destiny of the Beast (vs. 9-10)

1. Need to continue to listen to God (v. 9). "*He who has an ear, let him hear.*"
2. Simple conclusion: Since the enemy is for making others captive and killing them with the sword, he must go captive and die by the sword.
3. The saints need:
 - a. Patient endurance under trials.
 - b. Faithfulness to God and His purpose.

NOTE: A comparison of Daniel 7 and revelation 13 makes it plain that this beast is the Roman empire, embodying the other three beasts which preceded it (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece). We will discuss this in full when it comes back up in Revelation 17:8-14.

THE SECOND HELPER OF SATAN IS THE *EARTH BEAST* – ANTI-CHRISTIAN RELIGION (OF ROME) (13:16-18)

THINGS TO LOOK FOR –

1. The devil is going to use these two beasts in his attack on the rest of the woman's seed.
2. The power of the earth beast: gets his power from the sea beast.
3. The function of the earth beast: to get those who dwell on the earth to worship the sea beast, thus emperor worship (anti-Christian religion).
4. The method used by the earth beast to get people to worship the sea beast:
 - a. Did great signs.
 - b. Made an image to the beast.
 - c. Gave breath (life) to emperor worship.
5. The *marking* of those belonging to the sea beast.
6. The *number of man* (666) – 666 speaks of failure, thus this is man's religion.

A. The Description of the Beast (vs. 11-12)

1. Origin: *The earth*. Human origin. It is not divine. Therefore, the *heaven dwellers* have nothing to fear!
2. Nature: *Two horns like a lamb*. He is a hypocrite, putting on an innocent, even religious, appearance.
3. Character: *Spoke like a dragon*. If the religious lie did not take you in, his power threatened you with death.
4. Function: *Made all on earth worship the first beast*. The first beast was Rome, the military-civil power (Rome/Egypt). The second beast is Rome, the religious pervert (Rome/Jerusalem).

B. The Powers of the Beast (vs. 13-15)

1. **Deception:** By reasons of the *great and miraculous signs* done in everyone's view. We do not have to believe those were actual miracles, but if they were they were *lying wonders* (Acts 8; 2 Thessalonians 2:5-12).

NOTE: The record left about these Romish priests make it clear that they were professional con men. They could perform all kinds of tricks and were experts at ventriloquism. We do not need to accept their miracles as real anymore than we accept the resurrection of the first beast as real.

2. **Enforcement:** His power was used to force all the world to bow down before Caesar.
3. **Enrollment:** He forced everyone to wear the name and/or number of the beast in order to function within the empire (Leviticus 7:22ff).

C. The True Nature of the Beast (v. 16)

To anyone with any insight, he is not God! He is only man! Three time loser! Six Sixty Six.

CONCLUSION

The Lord and the church have their work cut out for them. Their enemies are powerful! The dragon (Satan) marshals twin enemies: 1) The sea beast is Rome in his MILITARY ARMOR and, 2) The earth beast wears PRIESTLY GARB. Is the slain Lamb any match for this unholy trio?

The pressure is on. Some will die! There will be economic pressure during which the Lamb expects His followers to stay faithful to Him. There is the temptation for the saint to be deceived by the second lamb . . . “After all, what harm is a little pinch of incense?” We need further comfort! Read the next chapter.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FIFTEEN

1. What power does the earth-beast represent?

2. What other beast do we meet in this lesson and what does it represent?

3. What is the intent of the earth-beast?

4. What three methods did the earth-beast use to deceive people?

- 1)

- 2)

- 3)

5. Who was marked to protect them from the beast?

6. What is man's number and of what is it symbolic?

7. What is the beast's number and what does it symbolize?

LESSON SIXTEEN

THE LAMB & THE 144,000

INTRODUCTION

The two witnesses were killed in the streets. Satan is attacking the woman and her offspring. Two beasts have come from the sea and the land to aid the dragon in his assault on the people of God. How can any of this be taken as an encouragement to any one who chooses to follow the Lamb?

But look at the other side of the picture. The two witnesses are resurrected and ascend to Heaven. The attacks of Satan are thwarted each time – the woman is spared and the baby is safe. Heaven was secure.

What of the beasts and their threats to kill anyone who will not worship the image of the beast? What if you cannot buy or sell? What do you do when evil runs rampant?

Again, look at the other side of the picture. Here things look brighter. The Lamb is not being washed away. He is not being overwhelmed. Instead, He is standing victorious on Mt. Zion. The 144,000, the redeemed, are not defeated. They are singing the new song of victory over all trials. Three angels announce the gospel, the fall of Babylon, and the fate of emperor-worshipers is compared with the blessings of those who die in the Lord.

The coming judgment is pictured as a harvest, the ingathering of wheat and grapes – one to life, the other to death. Any suffering, any trial now is small in light of the coming glory with God. In Romans 8:18, we are told, *“The sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed to usward.”* That is exactly the picture chapter fourteen is going to portray.

LESSON TEXT: Revelation 14:1-5

LESSON AIM: To understand that any trial now is small in light of the coming glory with God.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. See the Lamb and the 144,000 and learn that these are the church on earth – a militant church.
 2. Learn that they stand victorious now as they stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion. They have the name of Jesus and Jehovah on their foreheads.
 3. Learn that the spiritual meaning of the word Zion has reference to the place where God dwells – the Church.
-

THE LAMB AND THE 144,000 (14:1-5)

The 144,000 represent the church who stand with the Lamb.

A. Their Place (v. 1a)

1. With the Lamb – The victorious one of chapter five onward.
 - a. He rides forth conquering all who oppose Him.
 - b. The 144,000 are with Him. They, also, are victorious conquerors.
2. On Mt. Zion – What a place in God’s word!
 - a. Origin in history – 2 Samuel 5:6-10; 6:12-13; 1 Kings 8:1.
 - b. Symbolic of Jerusalem – Psalms 2:5-5; 15:1; 48:1-2; 132:13-14.
 - c. Prophetic of Church – Zechariah 8:1-3; Daniel 2:24-35; Isaiah 2:2-4; Hebrews 12:22-23.
 - d. God still lives there – Psalm 110:1-2; Hebrews 12:22-23; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 2:21-22.

B. Their Name (v. 1b) – Jesus and Jehovah – On Their Foreheads

1. Not a mark – But a name.
2. Not property – But sons.

C. Their Song (vs. 2-3)

1. Loud: *Rushing waters. Loud peals of thunder.*
2. Melodious: *Harpers harping.*
3. New: Only 144,00 know it.
4. Heavenly: *Before God . . . four living creatures . . . elders*
5. Spiritual: *Only the redeemed could understand song.*

D. Their Description (vs. 4-5)

1. Redeemed (purchased).

1 Peter 1:18-19 – “*But you were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*”

Revelation 5:9-10 – “*And with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.*”

Acts 20:28 – “. . . *to feed the church of the Lord which He purchased with His own blood.*”
2. Pure, virgins.

2 Corinthians 11:2 – “. . . *so that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ.*”

Ephesians 5:25-26 – The church is pictured as the bride of Christ, without spot and without blemish.
3. Followers of the Lamb.

1 Peter 2:20-21 – “*To this you were called, because Christ also suffered for you leaving you an example that you should follow in His steps.*”
4. Firstfruits for God.

James 1:18 – “. . . *that we might be a kind of first fruits of all He created.*”

Hebrews 12:22-23 – “*We will come to the church of the firstborn ones who are enrolled in heaven.*”
5. Without blemish.

Ephesians 5:27 – “. . . *to present her to Himself a radiant church without*

stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.” Colossians 1:21-23 – “. . . to present you holy in His sight without blemish, free from accusation . . .”

Note: From Revelation 7:1-8.

6. Sealed servants on earth – Ephesians 1:13-14; 2 Corinthians 1:21-23.

Therefore: The church of the Lamb.

THE IDENTITY OF THE 144,000

They are the sealed servants of God on earth. They are the church, the bride of Christ, the body of Jesus, those who follow the Lamb. They are all those who believe in Jesus, who are sorrowful for their sins, who by their immersion in water have been added to the body of Christ and who are now walking in the light of God’s word. They are those who have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus. They are those who like pure virgins have kept themselves holy unto one husband, who is Jesus. They follow the Lamb wherever He goes. They are the first fruits who belong to God and are offered unto God. They are without spot or blemish. They are the sealed, protected, holy servants of God on earth. They stand with Him on Mt. Zion.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SIXTEEN

1. Who is standing on Mount Zion and who is standing with Him?

2. Describe the use of *Zion* from its first mention in the Old Testament to its symbolic meaning by the end of the Old Testament.

3. List six things which describe the 144,000.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6) _____

4. What names are written on the foreheads of the 144,00?

5. Give five things given which describe the song of the 144,000.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6. Describe the importance of a seal.

LESSON SEVENTEEN

FOUR HEADLINE BANNERS

INTRODUCTION

We are in the middle of chapter fourteen. Last time, in 14:1-5, we studied the first five verses that talked about the 144,000. We saw them to be the redeemed of God on earth who kept themselves pure by following the Lamb. They offered themselves as the firstfruits unto God who were without blemish. They were the sealed servants of God serving Him on earth. They represent all the servants of God on earth at any time. They dwell with God in His holy mountain, Zion.

Now in 14:6-13, we find four announcements or headline banners. These headline banners are like the headlines of a newspaper. They announce or declare the things that are to come.

LESSON TEXT: Revelation 14:6-20

LESSON AIM: To see the two-fold character of God's judgment and its effect on the life of the Christian.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. Understand that four headline banners announce the judgment and destruction of Babylon and the blessedness of saints who die in the judgment.
 2. Learn that judgment can be seen from two different viewpoints – the saint's viewpoint and the wicked's viewpoint.
-

FOUR HEADLINE BANNERS (14:6-13)

Here are four previews of coming attractions.

A. First Banner – “*Judgment Is Come*” (vs. 6-7)

1. “*Fear God and give Him glory for the hour of His judgment is come.*”
2. This story will be told (and we will discuss it) in chapters 15-16.

B. Second Banner – “*Babylon Is Fallen*” (v. 8)

1. She is a known, evil, destructive, immoral, adulteress who is fallen.
2. This story will be told (and we will discuss it) in chapters 17-18.

C. Third Banner – “*All Emperor Worshipers Judged*,” Escape God's Wrath (vs. 9-12)

1. The way to escape God's wrath is to not be with the ones judged.
2. The story (and our discussion) is in chapters 19-20.

NOTE: We need to learn who God's enemies are and get away from them to escape the wrath of God.

D. Fourth Banner – “*The Dead Saints Are Blessed*” (v. 13)

1. Here is the destiny of the saints. Death is defeated by eternal life.
2. The story (and our discussion) will be in chapters 21-22.

NOTE:

1. Notice two things about this Babylon in verse 8. She is:
 - a. A fornicating woman.
 - b. A fallen woman.
2. The fact of never-ending punishment awaiting those who persecute the church and hate the Lord serves as an incentive for us to continue (see v. 12).
3. Dead saints rest (v. 13) – others have no rest day and night (v. 11).
Death, in the seven seals, was but the fourth seal, not the seventh, not the last seal. Death is not the end for the man of God or the woman of God. To die is to go to a better place. Death is not really a blessing, death's an enemy, but it is an enemy that has been defeated and that enemy ushers us into a much better place.

JUDGMENT FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE COIN (14:14-20)

This judgment as viewed by the righteous and by the unrighteous.

A. Judgment from the Saint's Viewpoint (vs. 14-16)

Wheat gathered into garner.

NOTE: Wheat is moving toward its intended end when it is gathered into the garner. And so judgment from the saints' viewpoint is to be moved toward the intended end. The intended end of the saint is to be face to face with the eternal God in a body eternal and immortal just like Jesus.

1. Done by God (v. 14. Only deity rides on the clouds! Psalm 18:7ff; Isaiah 19:1; Psalm 104:30. The cloud is white! Purity, Majesty, Victory The reaper is Jesus! Over-comer, King, Judge.
2. Done on time (vs. 15-16). The original language says *the harvest is dry*. Read John 4:35; Matthew 3:11-12; 13:20; Amos 9:9-10. The righteous are God's wheat.
 - a. What is judgment from the saint's point of view? It is wheat that is gathered into God's granary.
 - b. Judgment brings the Christian to his intended end. To be in the presence of God.

B. Judgment from the Wicked's Viewpoint (vs. 17-20)

Grapes trodden in the winepress of the wrath of God.

1. Done by an angel from God (v. 17).
2. Helped by an angel over fire (v. 18a). – Fire equals destruction. Check concordance! (Who came *from the altar*, 6:9; 8:3-5; 9:13; 11:1; 16:7).

NOTE: Fire is always a symbol of destruction. You will find out, starting with the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and continuing to this very verse, fire is always a symbol of God's judgment upon the wicked.

3. It comes because iniquity is full – *Fully ripe* (mature). Read Genesis 15:16; 49:10-12; Isaiah 63:1ff; Joel 3:12; Lamentations 1:15. Coming to judge and avenge.
4. It is done in God's wrathful wine press – Read Isaiah 63:1ff; Exodus 15:3; 1 Samuel 16:18; 1 Samuel 17:33. Destroys His enemies.
5. It is done outside God's city – Compare Hebrews 13:12-13.
6. It sheds enormous amount of blood.
 - a. Depth – Up to the horse's mouth (4 to 5 feet).
 - b. Length – 1600 furlongs (200 miles).
7. This is God's wrathful judgment.
 - a. God's judgment is full.
 - b. God's kingdom, not Rome, continues even today.

NOTE: Not all the blood of all the people on earth could supply such a pool.

CONCLUSION

1. Rome was a vast and powerful empire! From the hindsight of history, we know that its glory has faded. Only the ruins remain. The glory that was Rome has perished.
2. Why did Rome fall? It fell because of her horrible sins against the church. It persecuted the church of the Living God and tried to destroy the faith of the saints. Rome set itself to destroy the church and was destroyed for her trouble.
3. ***BUT THE LAMB TRIUMPHS!*** And all who stand with Him through the difficult times will also stand with Him in the day of His triumph! Follow Christ, maintain spiritual purity, allow no lie or denial of the lamb to pass your lips, you will stand in His triumph over Satan and his hosts.

This Is The Patience And Faith Of The Saints!

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SEVENTEEN

1. List all four headline banners and the corresponding chapters where they will later be discussed.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

2. According to verses 6 & 7, to whom is our worship to be directed?

3. What two things are stated about Babylon in verse eight?

1) _____
2) _____

4. What meaning does the word “rest” have to the saints? To the beast worshipers?

5. What is the stated reason for putting in the sickle of judgment?

6. What are the measured dimensions of the blood that flows from the winepress of God’s Wrath? _____

LESSON EIGHTEEN

GOD'S JUDGMENT ANNOUNCED

INTRODUCTION

Before the seals were opened in chapter six, we had a vision of heaven (chapters four and five) assuring the brothers that the throne of the universe was not in Rome. God and the Lamb were working out their plan. Then the seals were removed.

Before the trumpets were blown in chapters eight and nine, we were shown a silent period in heaven and the angels offering up the prayers of the saints with incense – the symbol of acceptable prayer. It was then we were informed that what was going to happen on earth was the work of God in answer to the prayers of the saints for justice – in answer to God's own demands made in holiness. Then the trumpets sounded.

Here again we have a scene in heaven before the bowls are poured out. The victors over the beast are there to see it. We are told the angels of the plagues are being briefed by God for their coming mission. They are given the bowls by the cherubim who ever hover around the throne of God and speak of His holiness. This will be God's work! There's nothing accidental here. There is no fate or luck! Here is deliberate and holy judgment poured out on the kingdom of Rome – the current manifestation of the devil's moral and spiritual lunacy. The warnings are over – they have been ignored. The bowls speak of the full wrath of God.

When the trumpets were blown (chapters 8-11), mercy was mixed with His wrath, they affected only a third part and were given that man might repent. Now the narrow line that separates God's mercy and wrath has been crossed and His wrath will not be mixed with mercy.

LESSON TEXT: Revelation 15:1 – 16:21

LESSON AIM: To learn that in the midst of judgments (wars and natural calamities) God is at work for the welfare of the faithful saint.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. Hear the announcement of God's judgment and see that it is *complete, purposeful, everlasting, and cannot be mediated*.
 2. See that the bowls of wrath complete the judgment that the trumpets began.
 3. Learn that the great day of God is the day of final destruction upon some governmental power and is referred to as Armageddon.
-

ANNOUNCEMENT OF JUDGMENT (15:1-8)

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

1. Chapters 15-16 are parallel to Chapters 8-11.
 - a. Chapters 8-11 were the seven trumpets – destroyed one-third part.
 - b. Chapters 15-16 are the seven bowls of wrath – destroys two-thirds part.
 - 1) Chapter 15 introduces.
 - 2) Chapter 16 fulfills.
2. Seven angels with seven plagues (v. 1).

A. Judgment is Complete (v. 1)

B. Judgment is Purposeful (vs. 2-4)

1. On behalf of persecuted saints (vs. 2-3).
The judgments to come:
 - a. Are the works and ways of God, hence God's judgment (v. 3).
 - b. Cause fear and glory (v. 4a).
 - c. Prove the holiness of God (v. 4b).
 - d. The result: "*For all the nations shall come and worship before thee*" (v. 4c).
2. The background of the judgment.
 - a. *Sea of glass mixed with fire*. God is still transcendent.
 - b. *Standing beside the sea*. They still are not on God's side of the sea. Even from those God is transcendent, those who overcome the beast can draw near to God.
 - c. *Harps of God*. Symbolic of praise to God (Psalms 33:2; 99:1-5).
 - d. *Song of Moses . . . Lamb*. Read Exodus 15:1ff. Praises God's 1) works, 2) ways, 3) name, 4), deeds. (Compare Isaiah 26:9).

C. Judgment is Everlasting (vs. 5-7) – Character of the Judgment

1. Judgment's origin (v. 5). The sanctuary, the holy of holies in heaven. This judgment comes, not from the altar (as in 8:3-5), but from the very throne of God.
2. Judgment's ministers (vs. 6-7a). *Seven Angels*. . . *Seven Plagues*. . . *Seven Bowls*.
Dress of the angels that of priests (Exodus 28:4).
3. Judgment's nature (v. 7b).
 - a. Full.
 - b. Wrathful.
 - c. Eternal.

NOTE:

1. It is *God's* judgment.
2. It is *unmitigated* in its character.
3. It is *everlasting* in its extent.
4. It is *irrevocable*.

D. No Mediation (v. 8)

1. *Filled with smoke.* Three times in the Old Testament God filled something with smoke:
 - a. Exodus 19:18 – mountain.
 - b. Exodus 40:34 – tabernacle.
 - c. I Kings 8:10-11 – temple.
God is in residence.
2. *No one can enter.* There will be no mediating of this judgment. God has finally shut up the bowels of His mercy toward Rome.

EXECUTION OF JUDGMENT (16:1-21)

The seven bowls of wrath complete the judgment that the seven trumpets began.

A. The Command (v. 1). *Go, pour out.* Has to be God's own voice. No one else allowed in Temple (15:8).

B. The First Bowl (v. 2). *On the Land – Sores on wicked.*

C. The Second Bowl (v. 3). *On the Sea – Blood and death.*

D. The Third Bowl (vs. 4-7). *On the Rivers – Blood.*

1. The angel's praise (vs. 5-6).
2. The altar's praise (v. 7).

E. The Fourth Bowl (vs. 8-9). *On the Sun.*

1. Scorched the wicked.
2. Wicked would not repent.

NOTE: These four bowls parallel to the first four trumpets in chapter eight, but now the destruction is complete, not partial. **Trumpets warn. Bowls destroy.**

F. The Fifth Bowl (vs. 10-11). *On Rome's Throne – Complete collapse due to internal decay.* Notice the results:

1. Wicked kingdom (Rome) darkened.
2. Wicked endure great pain.
3. Wicked curse God because of pain.
4. Wicked refuse to repent.

G. The Sixth Bowl (vs. 12-16). *On the Euphrates. Complete destruction by invading armies.*

1. The river is dried up. This symbolizes the work of God in putting down military might and empowering the weak. Read Exodus 14:21-22; Joshua 3:15-17; 2 Kings 2:7-14; Isaiah 11:15-16; 51:10.
2. The river is dried up to make ready for the kings. . .from the east. The battle will be described in Revelation 19:11-21.

3. Evil spirits are allowed to gather the wicked kings for THE battle of THE great day of God.
4. A warning is given to the righteous to stay alert and faithful.
5. The battle is in a place called Armageddon. This is Meggido!
 - a. Judges 5:19: God's people won against overwhelming odds.
 - b. 2 Kings 23:28-29: God's enemies totally defeated.
 - c. 2 Kings 23:28-29: Josiah rebelled against God and died.

H. The Seventh Bowl (vs. 17-21). *Into the air* – Final judgment on Rome!

1. God's "*at last*." It is done (v. 17).
2. No judgment ever like it before (v. 18). (GREAT EARTHQUAKE)
3. Babylon drinks an unmixed cup of wrath (v. 19). (GREAT HAIL-STONES)
4. Islands and mountains dissolved (v. 20). Read Micah 1:2-4; Nahum 1:5; Psalms 97:4, 5; 18:7-15.
5. 100 pound hailstones – No water in the oceans, no water in the rivers or springs, no mountains or islands, boils on every living thing, the sun boiling their brains and now 100 pound hailstones. And what is their response? Repentance? No way! ***THEY BLASPHEME GOD!!!***

CONCLUSION

The word is "*It is done!*" God has buried Rome and her allies. Some of the elements of the bowls are yet to be developed in the book, but they are all introduced. The city fell under the seventh bowl, but that fall will be described in Chs. 17-18. The battle of Armageddon is previewed here, but it will be defeated "*in the air*," but his defeat will be developed in chapter 20.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON EIGHTEEN

1. What is pictured in the bowls of wrath and what could have prevented the pouring out of these bowls?

2. Chapter fifteen emphasizes the place from where judgment comes. Where is that place and what does this signify?

3. What does *fire* symbolize? _____

4. List three times in the Old Testament where God filled something with smoke. State the event under consideration in each passage.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

5. In 15:8, what is the significance of the temple being filled with smoke?

6. List the seven bowls of wrath and tell where each was poured and what each affected.

1) _____ - _____

2) _____ - _____

3) _____ - _____

4) _____ - _____

5) _____ - _____

6) _____ - _____

7) _____ - _____

7. To what does the phrase "*The great day of God,*" refer?

LESSON NINETEEN

THE GREAT HARLOT

INTRODUCTION

With the pouring out of the seven bowls of wrath, divine judgment has been pictured against Rome. That judgment began as a general one (in the first four bowls) but the final three bowls were intended to call particular attention to God's judgment against the capital city of Rome itself.

What happens next is like zooming in on a scene to catch the details of some part of it. Chapters 17 and 18 show the fall of Rome under the symbolism of a great harlot being punished for her immoralities. Chapter 19:1-10 will show the rejoicing of the saints at her fall. And Revelation 19:11 – 20:10 pictures the final fall of the dragon (Satan), the beast (military and civil power), and the false prophet (anti-Christian religion) who have withstood God throughout this book.

LESSON TEXT: Revelation 17:1 – 18:24

LESSON AIM: Be able to see God's jealous protection of those who are His and the danger of opposing God or His people.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. Meet a great harlot and find out she represents Rome who is the object of coming judgment.
 2. See that the beast is Domitian and what is represented by his seven heads, ten horns and the woman.
 3. See and (rejoice at) the harlot's fall and see the effect her fall has on both the righteous and the wicked.
-

DESCRIPTION OF THE HARLOT (17:1-6)

Commercial, worldly-successful power (of Rome).

Introductory Note – The Woman Is Rome

1. Sits on seven hills (17:9).
2. Rules the earth (17:18).
3. Persecutes saints (17:6; 18:20, 24).
4. Leading commercial city of the day (18:3, 11ff, 13-19).
5. Supported by the military might of Rome (17:3, 17).
6. Destroyed by her own military power (17:16-17).

A. The Object of Coming Judgment (vs. 1-2)

1. The Great Prostitute (Isaiah 23:16-17).
2. Sits on many waters (Jeremiah 51:13).

3. The world's party girl. Cf. 14:8.

NOTE: The harlot's effect on the world (vs. 1-2). The whole world is:

1. Ruled by her – *She sits upon many waters* (cf. v. 15).
2. Pleasured by her – *They commit fornication with her*.
3. Served by her – *With the wine of her fornications*.

B. The Queen of Wickedness (vs. 3-6)

1. **Sitting on the sea-beast** (v. 3). Supported by all of Rome's military might.
2. **Regally robed** (v. 4a). She is a well-dressed prostitute!
3. **Royally drunk** (v. 4b). This is what she offers the nations – Cf. 14:8. Read Jeremiah 51:7.
4. **Abominably named** (v. 5). *“This title was written on her forehead: MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.”*

STUDY NOTES:

1. The mystery of the woman explained: the great city that hath a kingdom – hence *Rome*.
 - a. Rome – The killer of Christians, **the persecutor** (13:1-10).
 - b. Rome – The deceiver of the world, **the false prophet** (13:11-17).
 - c. Rome – The harlot (the seducer), **worldliness** (17:1-18).
2. The three helpers of Satan then are:
 - a. **Persecution.**
 - b. **False religion.**
 - c. **Worldliness.**

EXPLANATION OF THE BEAST SHE RIDES UPON (17:7-14)

A. The Beast's Three-Fold History (vs. 7-8)

He “. . . *who was, is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss to go into perdition.*”

1. **Was** – Probably in Nero's time.
2. **Is not** – During Vespasian's and Titus' rule.
3. **Will come up out of the abyss** – In Domitian's reign.

NOTE: He will arise only so God can make his fall more graphic! The saints are not awed by this beast's resurrection. They know God's purpose in it all.

B. The Meaning of the “Seven Heads” (vs. 9-11)

The seven heads or hills (definitely proving it to be Rome) are clearly said to be seven kings. Read Daniel 7:7, 8, 19-23. Notice the Roman kings.

<u>In Daniel</u>	<u>In Revelation</u>
1. Augustus (1)	1. Augustus
2. Tiberius (2)	2. Tiberius
3. Caligula (3)	3. Caligula
4. Claudius (4)	4. Claudius
5. Nero (5)	5. Nero

NOTE: These would be the five kings that are fallen (v. 10)

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 6. Galba* | 6. Vespasian – the one that is (v.10) |
| 7. Otho* | 7. Titus – the one to come (v.10) |
| 8. Vitellius* | 8. Domitian |
| 9. Vespasian (6) | |
| 10. Titus (7) | |
| 11. Domitian | |

NOTE: The beast then is Domitian who will renew the persecution of the saints, but remember he is only allowed by God to do this, so that his fall will prove once and for all that heaven rules, not Rome.

C. The Explanation of the Ten Horns (vs. 12-14)

The Client, Vassal Kings of Rome.

1. They are sub-rulers, not independent (v. 12). “*Receive authority. . .with the beast.*” They are Domitian’s vassals.
2. They voluntarily submit to Rome (v. 13).
3. They make war with the lamb but lose (v. 14).

The three-fold description of those that are with Jesus:

- a. They are *called* people – called by the gospel.
- b. They are *chosen* people – chosen by God’s foreknowledge and foreordination.
- c. They are *faithful* people – faithful to God’s will.

THE DESTINY OF THE HARLOT (17:15-18)

A. The Waters (v. 15). Wicked world

B. Her Fate (vs. 16-17). Cooked and eaten by . . .

1. The Beast – Civil, military might.
2. The Ten Horns – The client kingdoms.

C. Her Judge – God (v. 17a)

D. Her Identity – Rome (v. 18). “*The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth.*”

THE ANGEL’S VOICE AGAINST THE HARLOT (18:1-3)

A. The Angel (vs. 1-2a)

1. Great authority.
2. Great splendor.
3. Great voice.

B. The Fall and its Certainty (v. 2b)

1. *It is fallen* – not *will fall*. Only God can speak of the future as having already occurred (Romans 4:17).

2. *A home for demons. . . evil spirits . . . unclean and detestable bird.*
Read Isaiah 13:17-22.

C. The Fall and its Reason (v. 3)

1. Her adulteries – Read Nahum 3:4; Isaiah 10:12-14.
2. Her merchandising – Read Ezekiel 27:9-25.

THE APPEAL (18:4-5)

Read Jeremiah 50:8; 51:6, 9, 45; Isaiah 52:11.

A. Come Out (2 Corinthians 6:17–7:7)

B. So That: You will have . . .

1. No share in her sins (Ephesians 5:11).
2. No reception of her plagues.

C. For – Her Sins and Crimes (Galatians 6:7; Hosea 10:12-13)

THE HARLOT'S JUDGMENT (18:6-24)

The harlot's fall is announced and the people of God are called to come out of her.

A. The Nature of Her Judgment (vs. 6-23a). Her fall is . . .

1. Due to her deeds (vs. 6-7a).
2. Due to her arrogance (vs. 7b-8). Read Isaiah 47:8ff; Zephaniah 2:15.
3. Thorough and complete (vs. 9-19).
 - a. No help from her lover – King (vs. 9-10).
 - b. No help from her lover – Merchants (vs. 11-13a).
 - c. No help from her lover – Mariners (vs. 17b-19).
4. A cause for righteous rejoicing (v. 20).
5. Final (vs. 21-23). Read Jeremiah. 51:63. Never:
 - a. Found again (v. 21).
 - b. Music heard again (v. 22a).
 - c. Workman found (v. 22b).
 - d. Lamp shine again (v. 23a).
 - e. Voice of bridegroom and bride heard (v. 23b).

B. Its Reason (vs. 23b-24). Sorcery and the blood of the saints.

1. Her wantonness – *Merchant's great men.*
2. Her deceptions – *Nations were led astray.*
3. Her persecution – *The blood of the prophets and the saints.*

CONCLUSION

We have seen a prostitute in death throes. We've been told heaven is responsible for it. She stands as a burning warning to all nations and at all times.

LET MY PEOPLE ALONE OR SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES!!!

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON NINETEEN

1. From 17:1-2, explain the effect the harlot had on the world.

2. From where did the harlot get her power? Explain your answer.

3. Explain "*The beast was, is not and is about to come up.*" Be specific.

4. List the five kings that are fallen.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

5. In 18:3, what is the reason for the harlot's fall?

6. Why should the righteous rejoice over the harlot's fall?

7. List six things that would be "*no more at all*" when the harlot falls.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6) _____

LESSON TWENTY

THE BOWLS OF WRATH

INTRODUCTION

Although Babylon has fallen, we know it only from the witnesses of her fall (the kings, merchants, and mariners). This is something to sing about and so this chapter speaks of four songs (Hallelujahs) and an invitation to a marriage supper. The bride has not only survived but also surpassed the great prostitute.

The prostitute is gone! The battle (Armageddon we talked about in chapter 16) will now be fought. The battle is between two armies: the Lamb and His holy army (the 144,000) against the unholy trio, the dragon (Satan), the beast (civil power of Rome), and the false prophet, (anti-God religion). This also includes their allies (Gog and Magog – all the people of the world that are against God, chapter 20). The battle belongs to the Lamb! Rome (and Satan, too) will go down in fire, blood and smoke.

LESSON TEXT: Revelation 19:1-21

LESSON AIM: To be filled with wonder and awe at the majesty and power of God so that we will be compelled to sing “*Praise the Lord.*”

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. Understand the reason why heaven rejoices because the harlot is dead.
 2. See the picture of Jesus Christ, the victorious warrior, who, in righteousness judges and makes war against His enemies.
 3. Find that the sea beast, earth beast and all who follow them are marked out for destruction.
-

Let us talk a bit about this battle of Armageddon so when we fight it we will not have to discuss it at that point. Armageddon is Meggido, a constant battleground in the Old Testament. In Judges 5, Barak, Deborah’s general, went down into that valley greatly outnumbered by the Canaanites and God gave them victory by causing the river to overflow. Chariots are hard to drive in the mud. In Judges chapter 7, Gideon took an army into the valley of Megiddo without a single weapon and defeated the Midianite hoards. In 2 Kings 23, Josiah in his one rebellion against God met the messenger of God, Pharaoh Neco, in that valley and died. In 1 Samuel 31, Saul, who had become the enemy of God, met his death there. Megiddo was viewed by Napoleon as the greatest battlefield, the most natural battlefield in all the world. And a past general writing about all of the great battles of the world said, “More blood had been shed and more people killed in the valley of Megiddo than any other battlefield in the world.” It is the place where God in one decisive battle fights for His people, greatly outnumbered and disadvantaged against a more powerful enemy.

The enemy is destroyed and God's people are victorious. That's what Megiddo is biblically. The enemy of God met his total and final defeat in Megiddo. The enemy never gets over Megiddo. We will see the battle of Armageddon. But before the battle is fought all of heaven and earth sings, "Praise the Lord!" when the prostitute falls.

THE SONGS (19:1-10). The "Hallelujah Chorus"

Heaven rejoices because the harlot is dead and the Bride is ready.

A. The Heaven-Dwellers (vs. 1-3)

Read 7:9; 14:1; 15:2. The whole ransomed church of God is included in this group. **Notice the first verse** and its content.

1. Message (v. 1a). Praise the Lord! *Hallelujah!*
2. Reasons (vs. 1b-2).
 - a. God's estate – *Salvation, Glory, Power.*
 - b. God's action – *Judgment, true and just.*
 - c. God's vengeance – *He has avenged on her the blood of His servants.*
3. **Then, the second verse** – Amen! The prostitute is gone forever. The wicked city that has so polluted the earth is gone forever!

NOTE: To get a picture of *smoke going up forever and ever*, read Isaiah 34:10; Revelation 14:10-11.

B. The 24 Elders and the Four Living Creatures (v. 4)

Remember these are the servants nearest the throne, chapter four.

1. Their activity – *Fell down and worshiped.*
2. The words: *Amen* – Agreement with the first two verses. *Hallelujah!* Praise God!

NOTE: God's demand (v. 5). *I want my servants, all of them, to praise me!*

C. The Great Multitude (vs. 6-8)

1. Their voice (v. 6a).
 - a. *Roar of rushing waters.* Read Ezekiel 43:2; Revelation 1:15; 14:2.
 - b. *Loud peals of thunder.* Read Exodus 19:16; Isaiah 29:4-6.

NOTE: All creation now loudly speaks for God and about God.

2. Their message (v. 6b). Praise the Lord – *Hallelujah!*

NOTE: The basis of this praise – *The Lord God almighty reigns.*

3. Their offer (v. 7a). Come to the feast – *The wedding of the Lamb.*
4. Their description of the Bride (vs. 7b-8). *Fine linen, bright and clean.*

NOTE: The "*fine linen*" stands for "*the righteous acts of the saints.*" This is not the imputed righteousness of Christ, as in Romans 4, but the good and benevolent deeds of the saints, as in James 1:27.

D. The Angel (vs. 9-10)

1. The angel's commission (v. 9a). *Write.*
2. The angel's message (v. 9b).
 - a. The beatitude – *Blessed are those invited to the feast.*
 - b. The assurance – *These are the true words of God.*

NOTE: Once before John had heard probably the same voice say, “*Blessed are the dead who died in the Lord.*” Then we believed it. Now we see it. The clouds are dispelled; the veil is torn asunder; we enter the palace of the great King. There is music and festivity and joy. There is neither sin nor sorrow, no privilege abused, no cloud on any countenance, no burden upon any heart, no shadow from the future to darken the rapture of the present. Here is life and life abundantly. The bride has made herself ready! Let the festivities begin!

3. The angel's rebuke (v. 10). *See thou do it not!* John wanted to worship the angel. Notice:
 - a. John's understandable awe.
 - b. The angel's humble refusal.
 - c. The angel's urgent advice.
 - d. The angel's anxious fellowship.

THE BATTLE (19:11-21)**A. The Rider on the White Horse (vs. 11-16)**

In chapter 4 there was a door opened in heaven – now in 19:11 John sees heaven opened.

The description of the rider:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Faithful and true (v. 11a). | 6. Eternal judge (v. 13a). |
| 2. Just warrior (v. 11b). | 7. Eternal word (v. 13b). |
| 3. Fiery eyes (v. 12a). | 8. Valiant leader (v. 14). |
| 4. Ruler of many (v. 12b). | 9. Judge of all (v. 15). |
| 5. Uniquely named (v. 12c). | 10. King of kings (v. 16). |

NOTE: Read again Revelation 1:12-18; 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14. This rider is the same Lord that was introduced in the beginning. We now learn that he not only controls the destiny of the churches but also the destiny of all its enemies.

CONSIDER

1. The name of the rider of the white horse: *Faithful and True.*
2. The rider comes in righteousness *to judge and make war.*
 - a. We have seen Jesus in the book of Revelation as the *Lion of Judah* and the *Lamb of God.*
 - b. Now we see Him as a *Victorious Warrior.*
3. The description of the rider (vs. 12-16).
 - a. His eyes are a flame of fire – sees on the inside.
 - b. Many *diadems* on His head – ruling crown.
 - c. Name written that no one knows but He Himself – that states His uniqueness.
 - d. Arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood – He has been on the horse before.

- e. His name is called *THE WORD OF GOD* – name used for Jesus (cf. John 1:1, 14; 1 John 1:1f).
 - f. The righteous followed Him on white horses.
 - g. Out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword (sword of justice).
 - h. Shall rule with a rod of iron.
 - i. He treads the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of God.
 - j. Name on His garment and thigh *KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS*.
4. The invitation to the great supper of God (vs. 17-18). Symbolic of a thorough judgment – the birds have plenty to eat.

B. The Supper of God (vs. 17-18)

Read Ezekiel 39:17-20. Compare Job 15:23; Proverbs 30:17; Matthew 24:28; Luke 17:37.

- 1. This is the opposite of the “*marriage supper*.” Here the wicked are the food to be eaten by the birds of heaven.
- 2. Notice the menu.
 - a. Kings, generals, mighty men.
 - b. Horses and their riders.
 - c. All people: free and slave, small and great.

NOTE: We are given a choice: Eat at the marriage feast or be eaten at God’s great supper.

C. The Judgment of the Two Beasts (vs. 19-21)

- 1. The alliance (v. 19). Read again 16:12-15.
- 2. The fire (v. 20).
 Note on punishment by “*fire*.” This is the third use of this figure in the book. See 14:10-11; 19:3. Read Jude 7 and Isaiah 39:8-10. The picture? Utter defeat and age-lasting judgment by God. God’s object is to tell us that these foes will be destroyed forever, and that the world will be wholly and forever purged of them. No further information is required to comfort us. Praise God!
- 3. The rest (v. 21). The allies of the enemies are killed and the birds eat their flesh. More will be said about them in the next chapter.

CONSIDER

- 1. The enemies gather to war against the rider of the white horse and His army (v. 19).
- 2. The downfall of the two beasts (v. 20).
 - a. The sea beast.
 - b. The earth beast (false prophet).
- 3. The downfall of the rest of the beast’s army (v. 21).
- 4. The word *sword* in verse 21 is the word *RHOMPHIA* which is never used for the word of God.

Eat the Marriage Feast or Be Eaten at God’s Great Supper!

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWENTY

1. What does the word *hallelujah* mean? _____
2. In 10:1-10, how many times is God praised? _____
3. What two reasons are given for this praise?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
4. What are the names given to the rider on the white horse?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
5. What does this rider do? Is He just in doing so? Explain.

6. Who gathers together to war against the rider on the white horse?

7. What kind of sword is described in verse 21? What is the Greek word?

8. Describe in your own words the rider of the white horse.

9. Has this rider ever been on the horse before? How do you know?

10. What happens to the two beasts?

LESSON TWENTY ONE

THE BINDING OF SATAN

INTRODUCTION

Rome, in all its symbolic manifestations, has been downed. The devil, because he is incarnated in Rome, is utterly and totally defeated. In the fall of Rome, the devil has not been hindered but thoroughly stopped. In the fall of Rome, the saints are perfectly triumphant. The brethren have not merely won over Rome, they have annihilated her. These two concepts are symbolized in the 1000 year period.

But, the devil will manifest himself again – sometime, somewhere – before the church goes to a better place. This will be symbolized by the little season of loosing. When the 1000 years have ended, the devil is let loose to take another shot at Christ and the church. This time he will use, not Rome – she is gone; but “*Gog and Magog*” which stand for anyone, anytime, who would be Satan’s tool against the saints.

The state of those who belong to Christ is set forth as reigning from thrones for the 1000 year period. But what of the dead who died in service to the enemy. Their state is set forth in a 1000 year death, and then a resurrection to a lake of fire. It won’t hurt us to list some of the main images and phrases occurring in this chapter.

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. A 1000 year binding. | 7. An invasion of a holy city. |
| 2. A 1000 year reigning. | 8. A second resurrection. |
| 3. A first resurrection. | 9. A second death. |
| 4. A 1000 year death. | 10. A judgment scene. |
| 5. A little season of Satanic freedom. | 11. A lake of fire. |
| 6. A Gog-Magog host. | |

LESSON TEXT: Revelation 20:1-15

LESSON AIM: To learn of the destiny of Satan, his followers and the saints of God during a 1,000 year period and following this 1,000 year period.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. Gain the concept of the devil’s impotent character by looking at the destruction he and his workers suffer.
 2. See that the overcoming saints are on thrones because of their message and because of their faithfulness.
 3. Learn that Satan’s power to deceive nations is put on hold but in some future time he will be loosed again (for a short time).
 4. Discover that only those whose names are not in the book of life will face the Judge and judgment.
-

THE BINDING OF SATAN (20:1-3)

Satan is *completely* bound but not *permanently* bound.

A. The Binding Itself (vs. 1-2)

1. Satan, who had the key of the abyss in chapter 9, is now a defeated foe. This angel “*comes down from heaven.*” Would not this clearly show the scene has an earthly viewpoint, that is that John is on earth when he sees it.
2. The devil is bound with a great chain for 1000 years (vs. 1-2). What is the picture? What truth does it have to tell? Here it is:
 - a. The devil is totally, perfectly, and flawlessly defeated and bound.
 - b. This is in reference to his use of Rome against the saints.
3. For some information on the 1000 years, consider the following.
 - a. “*Years*” can be understood to convey the thought of “*totality*” and/or “*perfection.*” Read Ezekiel 39:9, 12.
 - b. “*1000*” is used biblically to signify “*totality*” or “*perfection.*”
 - 1) Psalms 50:10 (. . . *the cattle on a thousand hills are mine*).
 - 2) Deuteronomy 7:9 (*keeps covenant . . . a thousand generations*).
 - 3) Exodus 20:6; 1 Chronicles 16:15; Psalms 105:8.

B. The Outcome of the Binding (v. 3)

1. The bound devil is locked and sealed in the abyss until the 1000 years are over (v. 3).
2. Why? **To keep him from deceiving the nations any more.** In the defeat of Rome, those who wished to see could see that, the God of the saints had defeated Satan and was truly king. Rome was no longer to be feared.

THE THRONES OF THE RIGHTEOUS (20:4-6)

The saints receive the kingdom when the eighth horn is judged.

A. Who They Are (v. 4a)

Saints? Of course. Read 2:26-27; 3:21. Here are the overcomers.

1. Martyred Saints “*Beheaded.*”
 - a. Because of their message *Testimony of Jesus . . . word of God.*
 - b. Because of their faithfulness *worshiped not . . . received not.*
2. Given authority to judge.

B. What They Are Doing

1. Sitting upon thrones – Read Daniel 7:9; Revelation 4:4.
2. Enjoying life – *They came to life.*

NOTE: John does not see “*souls*” resurrected. He sees people resurrected. “*I saw the souls of those and . . . they came to life.*”

3. Reigning with Christ (v. 4b). Read Revelation 3:21; 22:5.

NOTE: The parenthesis of v. 5a tells of the condition of the *rest of the dead*, i.e. those who worshiped the beast. They are said *not to live*, that is to *be dead*, for the 1000 year period. They died with the one they worshiped (19:21).

C. Benefitting from the First Resurrection (vs. 5b-6) “Blessed and Holy”

1. Not hurt or controlled by second death. Read Revelation 20:14.
2. Serves as priests. Read 1 Peter 2:5; Revelation 1:6; 5:10.
3. Share God’s rule for 1000 years. Notice v. 4; 22:5; 5:9-10.

NOTE: The main lesson of this paragraph is simple. The dead in Christ share in the victory just as surely as do the living! This is the message.

THE DEVIL’S FUTURE ATTACK (20:7-10)

Gog and Magog is said to be the future enemy.

A. The Devil Was Completely Bound, but Not Permanently Bound (v. 7)**B. Satan’s Work (v. 8)**

1. To deceive the nations again.
2. To gather new helpers to attack the saints – “*Gog and Magog*.”
Who is Gog and Magog? Read Ezekiel 38 and 39. A survey of Ezekiel’s message might be useful here.
 - a. In chapters 1-24, there was a single message: ***Jerusalem must fall!***
 - b. In chapters 25-32, he says only one thing: ***Foreign nations must fall***
 - c. In chapters 34-38, there is a single word: ***Jerusalem must be comforted***. They are promised a new king (David), a new country, a new dignity, a new unity. All of this by defeating their enemy, Babylon. But they could reply, “We had all of that before and lost it. What guarantee do we have for the future?” Chapters 38 and 39 answer that question. God raises an army so huge that when defeated they would bury the corpses for seven months. That would make the army number between 400 and 800 million.

NOTE: What is the message? “**The devil cannot gather an army big enough to threaten the city of God.**” Why else does God tell us about David and Goliath?

C. Satan’s Invasion and Total Defeat (vs. 9-10)

1. The army defeated without the saints “*firing a shot*” (v. 9).
2. Satan is judged forever (v. 10). The lake of fire, as we have seen, is a symbol in this book of total and irrevocable defeat. This last effort summarizes all the later attempts (though none in particular). Satan will lose in all his attempts against God’s people. The “*lake of fire*” says he is altogether and forever defeated. No one comes out of the “*lake of fire*” to do anything.

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE (20:11-15)

The followers of Satan are judged according to their works and are destroyed.

A. The Judge (v. 11). Read Daniel 7:9-12.

1. Seated on throne (v. 11a). Remember chapter 4:2-6, 9-10. Read Isaiah 6:1; Ezekiel 1:26-28.
2. All creation fled from His presence (v. 11b). Remember 6:14; 16:20. Read

Jeremiah 4:24; Ezekiel 38:20; Nahum 1:5. All of these passages are records of God sitting in judgment on some wicked nation that had been hurting His people. Would not it mean the same here?

B. The Judged and Their Judgment (vs. 12-15)

1. The judged.
 - a. The dead (vs. 12-13). "*Great and Small.*"
 - b. Death and Hades (v. 14).
 - c. Anyone not in book of life (v. 15).
2. The standard. Books, particularly the Book of Life (v. 12).
Read Exodus 32:32; Deuteronomy 29:20; Daniel 12:1; Malachi 3:16; Luke 10:20; Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 21:27. In the final analysis the question that matters is, "*Is your name written there!*"
3. The judgment – "*Lake of fire.*" Wow! Look who is swimming in the lake: The beast, the false prophet, the dragon and *all* who followed them, everyone whose name is not in God's family book.

CONSIDER

1. The *at hand* judgment of the wicked (vs. 11-15).
 - a. The phrase "*from whose face the earth and the heaven fled*" away is symbolic of the overthrow of the wicked. Examples:
 - 1) Isaiah 34 – Edom.
 - 2) Isaiah 13 – Babylon.
 - 3) Isaiah 40 – Israel.
 - b. The books were opened (cf. Daniel 7:9-11).
 - c. The wicked were judged according to their works.
 - 1) The wicked get what they deserve.
 - 2) The Christians get what Jesus deserves.
 - d. *Death and hades* in verse 14 stand for those that occupy them.
 - e. The question that matters – *Where is your name?*
 - 1) Is your name in the Lamb's book – then peace and security is yours in any judgment.
 - 2) Is your name in the devil's book – then there is no judgment you can withstand.
2. The intent of Chapter 20 is to show the devil's defeat.
 - a. The binding of Satan – That shows his defeat.
 - b. The saints reigning on thrones – That shows his defeat.
 - c. The loosing to be cast into a lake of fire – That shows his coming defeat.
 - d. All of his followers being cast into a lake of fire – That shows his defeat.
3. The symbolism of the book symbolizes Satan's total defeat by Christ and the 144,000.

SUMMARY

1. Why is the devil said to be bound 1000 years? To indicate he is perfectly and totally defeated in his use of Rome against the Lamb and the saints.

2. Why is he loosed a “*short time*?” Because after Rome, there will be others to oppose the church.
3. To whom was judgment given? To those that sat on the thrones and who represented the saints who lived to see Rome go down.
4. What of those who died in faith to Jesus? They are said to be raised to thrones along with their brothers still on earth.
5. Why is the reign said to last 1000 years? To portray its perfectness and completeness.
6. Why is their resurrection called the “*first*?” Because it is to “*life*,” and the “*second*” (vs. 12-13) is to the “*second death*.”
7. Who are the “*rest of the dead*?” Those who died in service to the beast.
8. What do they endure? 1000 years of death while the saints live and reign.
9. What does the second death symbolize? Utter, irrevocable defeat.

NOTE: In every conflict between God’s people and the devil, the outcome is already determined – *VICTORY FOR THE SAINTS!*

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWENTY-ONE

1. Why is the Devil said to be bound for 1,000 years?

2. Why is he loosed a *short time*?

3. To whom was judgment given?

4. What of those who died in faith to Jesus?

5. Why is the reign said to last 1,000 years?

6. Why is their resurrection called the "*first*?"

7. Who are the "*rest of the dead*?"

8. What are they said to endure?

9. What does the second death symbolize?

LESSON TWENTY-TWO

THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM

INTRODUCTION

The church has come through a major crisis. She has defeated her enemy and there follows in these two chapters a description of the triumphant and vindicated family of God. He will talk about the “newness” of her environment. He will talk of her beauty and purity. He will speak of her stability and strength. He will speak of her holiness.

LESSON TEXT: Revelation 21:1 – 22:21

LESSON AIM: To comprehend the safe condition, the indestructible protection, and unlimited provision God provides when the enemy is defeated.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. See a heavenly city whose citizens are a satisfied people, an overcoming people, and an exceedingly happy people.
 2. Learn that the beautiful, glorious, secure, measured, precious, costly, Edenic city is God’s city – the glorious church!
-

THE CITIZENS OF THE CITY(21:1-8)

Perfect fellowship with God is now the condition of the victorious saint.

A. They Are God’s People (vs. 1-5)

1. *New heavens and new earth . . . the first . . . are passed away* (v. 1). This is not a new figure. Read Isaiah 13:6-22; 34:1-17; 65:17-25; 2 Peter 2:2; 3:6; Nahum 1:1-5; Micah 1:3-6. These passages show, we think very clearly, that the *new heavens and new earth* is a new atmosphere, a new state of affairs. In the new heavens and new earth, the oppressor doesn’t exist. It is a new beginning for the people of the Lord. It deals specifically with the removal of a specific oppressor or a radical change of circumstances. Also notice 2 Peter 2:3, 13 where the church looks for the new heaven and earth. This makes it clear the new heavens and earth is not the church, but that for which the church is looking.
2. *The Holy City, the New Jerusalem* (v. 2). Read Hebrews 12:18-29.
3. *Prepared as a bride* (v. 2). Remember 19:7-9. Compare Ephesians 5:22-33.
4. *God dwells in this city with the saints* (v. 3). Read I Corinthians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1; Ephesians 2:20-22; 1 Peter 2:5.

5. *There is only happiness there* (v. 4). Cf. Isaiah 14:3; 25:8; 30:19; 35:19; 65:14, 19.
6. *Everything there is new* (v. 5). The oppressor is gone and the future is secure, come what may!

B. They Are Satisfied People (v. 6)

1. In God's judgment (v. 6). *It is done.*
2. In God's eternal character (v. 6). *Alpha and Omega, beginning and end.*
3. In God's supply (v. 6). *Drink without cost the water of life.*

C. They Are an Overcoming people (vs. 7-8)

1. "Overcoming" is a key phrase in this book. Read Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21, 12:11, and others.
2. Verse 8 describes the opposite of "those who were overcome."
 - a. The cowardly – those who cannot be trusted.
 - b. The unbelieving – those who do not trust.
 - c. The vile – those who are polluted.
 - d. The murderers – those who desire evil for others.
 - e. The sexually immoral – those who look in lust.
 - f. The practitioners of magic – those that follow the occult.
 - g. The idolaters – those who are covetous.
 - h. All liars – those who live by deceit.

NOTE: Those end up in the "lake of fire," the "second death."

THE CHARACTER OF THE CITY (21:9–22:5)

The description of the glory of the Church.

A. It Is a Beautiful, Glorious City (21:9-11)

1. The bride, the wife, *coming down out of heaven* (vs. 9-10).
This city is not earthly. It is heavenly, spiritual (Philippians 3:20-21).
2. It is glorious in appearance (v. 11). Its glory was the very glory of God.
Compare v. 23. Read Isaiah 60:2; Ezekiel 43:2; Revelation 15:8; 22:5.

B. It Is a Secure City (21:12-14)

1. *A Great Wall* – protection.
2. *Twelve Gates* – access and security. Compare 21:15, 25; 22:14.
3. *Twelve Foundations* – permanence. Compare Ephesians 2:20.

C. It Is a Measured City (21:15-17)

1. The city is measured (vs. 15-16). It was 1500 miles long, 1500 miles wide, 1500 miles high. There is room for all.
2. The wall is measured (v. 17). 216 feet wide – it would be impossible to storm.

D. It Is a Precious, Costly City (21:18-21)

1. Wall is jasper, i.e. diamond (v. 18; cf. v. 11).
2. Foundations, each a precious jewel (vs. 19-20).
3. Gates, each one a huge pearl (v. 21).

E. It Is God's City (21:22-27)

Isaiah 60 is the background of this section.

1. No one has any exclusive claim to access to God (v. 22).
2. The Lord is the sole light (vs. 23-24).
3. There is abundant entrance (vs. 25-26).
4. It is completely holy (v. 27).
 - a. Nothing unclean.
 - b. No one unholy.

F. It Is an "Edenic" City (22:1-5)

1. Its provisions (vs. 1-2). Read Ezekiel 47:1-12.
 - a. River of Life. (See Ezekiel 47:1-5).
 - b. Tree of Life.
 - 1) Fruit (Ezekiel 47:6-12a).
 - 2) Healing (Ezekiel 47:12b).
2. Its privileges (vs. 3-5).
 - a. *No more curse* (v. 3a). We will live in the kind of fellowship with God as that before they ate of the accursed tree. Read Isaiah 52:11; Ezekiel 20:34, 41; Leviticus 26:12; Jeremiah 32:28; 2 Samuel 7:14. All quoted in 2 Corinthians 6:16-18.
 - b. *Service to God* (v. 3b). Read Revelation 7:15.
 - c. *Close communion with God* (v. 4). Read Job 42:5; Deuteronomy 34:10; Numbers 12:1-8; Psalms 11:7; 17:5; 140:13; 1 Corinthians 13:8-13. John speaks here of a closeness of communion that would continue to deepen. They even wear His name on their foreheads for all to see (Revelation 7:3; 9:4; 14:1; Ezekiel 9:4).
 - d. *Reign forever with God in light* (v. 5; cf. 3:21; 5:10; 20:4). Live or die, the saints reign. Now and for always, the saints reign! We reign because HE reigns!

THE CHALLENGE OF THE CITY (22:6-21)

The words of this book are true and the book has an immediate fulfillment in view.

A. Keep God's Word (vs. 6-11, 18-19)

1. It is trustworthy and true (v. 6).
2. It bestows blessings (v. 7).
3. It calls for endurance (vs. 8-11).
4. It allows no tampering (vs. 18-19).
5. These words are faithful and true.
 - a. The testimony of the angel (v. 6).

- b. The testimony of John (v. 8).
- c. The testimony of Jesus (v. 16).
- d. The testimony of the Spirit and the Bride (v. 17).

B. Service to the Lord (vs. 12-14)

- 1. Incentive (vs. 12-13). The nearness of Jesus.
 - a. The certainty of reward.
 - b. The eternal nature of God.
- 2. Outcome (v. 14). Eat of the tree – inside the city walls.

NOTE: Five times in the conclusion, the things in this book are said to have an immediate fulfillment in view and not the end of time.

- a. 22:6 – “*Must shortly come to pass.*”
- b. 22:7 – “*I come quickly.*”
- c. 22:10 – “*The time is at hand.*”
- d. 22:12 – “*I come quickly.*”
- e. 22:20 – “*I come quickly.*”

C. Keep Life Clean (vs. 15-16)

- 1. Wicked are outside (v. 15).
- 2. Jesus is key to clean living (v. 16).
 - a. The Root and offspring of David – God and Man.
 - b. The bright Morning Star (Revelation 2:28; 2 Peter 1:19).

D. Keep Trusting Jesus (vs. 17, 20-21)

- 1. The continual invitation to the thirsty to drink (v. 17). The only requirement to come to Jesus is thirst for Him. See John 4:10; 7:37-38; Isaiah 44:3; 55:1; Jeremiah 2:13; 17:13.
- 2. The “*always*” nearness of Christ (vs. 20-21).
 - a. Promise – “*I am coming soon.*”
 - b. Response – Yes! Hurry!
 - c. Request – Grace be with you.

AMEN!!!

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWENTY-TWO

1. What is the Holy City, New Jerusalem? _____
2. What is required to drink the water of life?

3. List the six-fold description of the city.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
 - 6) _____
4. Whose names are on the foundation of the city?

5. Who are the only ones who can enter the city?

6. What does the phrase “*no more curse*” in verse 3 mean?

7. In 22:6-11, 18-19, what fourfold challenge is given concerning God’s word?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____

LESSON TWENTY-THREE

FINAL LOOK AND SONGS

INTRODUCTION



here were many things we did not have time to discuss in our study of this book. We now turn our attention, in these last two lessons, to four concepts that relate to the message of the book of Revelation.

LESSON TEXT: The *Final Look Outline* and *Revelation's Song Book Outline*.

LESSON AIM: To review everything in the book of Revelation by looking at two outlines that give us the content of the book.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. Grasp the overall thrust or tenor of the book by looking at the outlines given in our course guide.
 2. See the summary of the book's content, 1) God and His people cannot be defeated, and 2) The child of God is to be strong, determined and faithful.
 3. Be reminded that the saints have much to be joyful about, and singing songs of praise, joy, and gratitude is the natural response of the joyful and grateful heart.
-

FINAL LOOK AT THE THRUST OF REVELATION

A. The Fortunes of the Church (Chapters 1-3)

1. Blessed by their acceptance of the book (1:1-3).
2. Ruled by the Son of Man in their midst (1:9-20).
3. Judged by their inner nature (reality) (Chs. 2-3).

B. The Outer Struggle Between the Church and Rome (Chapters 4-11)

1. God rules the universe (Chapter 4).
2. The Lamb controls the future (Chapter 5).
3. Persecution, famine and death cannot harm the church (Chapter 6).
4. The servants of God are protected and victorious over all trouble and enemies (Chapter 7).
5. Natural calamity, internal decay, external forces are tools in God's hand to judge the enemy and deliver the saint (Chapters 8-11).

C. The Deeper Struggle Between Christ and Satan (Chapters 12-20)

1. An age-long battle in which Satan is a four-time loser (Chapter 12).
2. Persecution and false religion cannot touch Jesus and His followers (Chapters 13-14).

3. Complete destruction awaits the persecutors (Chapters 15-19).
 - a. The whole empire (Chapters 15-16).
 - b. The city of seduction (Chapters 17-18).
 - c. The persecutor and false god (Chapter 19).
4. The outcome for Satan and his followers (Chapter 20).
5. The outcome for the church (Chapters 21-22).
 - a. Fellowship (21:1-8).
 - b. Protection (21:9-27).
 - c. Provision (22:1-5).
 - d. Assurance (22:6-21).

REVELATION'S SONG BOOK

A. The Coming Lord (1:7)

1. With the clouds.
2. Seen by His enemies.
3. Dreaded by His enemies.
4. Desired by the saints.

NOTE: “*Quickly*,” 22:7, 12, 20.

B. Cherubim’s Constant Praise (4:8)

“Holy, Holy, Holy”

C. The Redeemed and the Cherubim Worship (4:11)

1. *You are worthy:*
 - a. Of glory.
 - b. Of honor.
 - c. Of power.
2. *You are worthy:*
 - a. Because of creation.
 - b. Because of sustenance.

D. The First “New” Song (5:9-10)

The Lamb is worthy to control the future:

1. Because He was slain.
2. Because He purchased men who serve God and rule the world.

E. 100,000,000 Angels’ Song (5:11)

The Lamb is worthy:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. Of power. | 5. Of honor. |
| 2. Of wealth. | 6. Of glory. |
| 3. Of wisdom. | 7. Of Praise. |
| 4. Of strength. | |

F. All Creation’s Song (5:13)

All praise, honor, glory and power to God and the Lamb.

G. The Innumerable Multitude Before the Throne (7:10)

H. The Angels Worship (7:12) “Amen”

Eternal praise, glory, wisdom, thanks, power and strength to God.

I. The State of the Overcoming Saints (7:15-17)

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Before the throne. | 5. No discomfort. |
| 2. Continual service. | 6. Led by Jesus. |
| 3. Under God’s tent. | 7. No Sorrow. |
| 4. Every need met. | |

J. Description of the Judge (11:15)

1. The kingdom is His.
2. The eternal rule is His.

K. Thanksgiving to the Judge (11:16-18)

1. Because of His powerful rule.
2. Because of His awesome judgment.
3. Because of His fabulous rewards.

L. The Song at the Devil’s Fall (12:10-12)

1. Joy at his fall.
2. Praise for our victory.
3. Mixed response of heaven and earth.

M. Song of Moses and the Lamb (15:3-4)

1. God’s deeds – Great and marvelous.
2. God’s ways – Just and true.
3. God’s name – Fearsome and glorious.
4. God’s judgments – Convincing and righteous.

N. The Water-Angel’s Song (16:5)

You are just in your judgment of Rome.

O. The Altar’s Response (16:7) “Yes!”**P. Heaven’s Word about Babylon (18:2-3)**

1. “*Fallen.*”
2. A place for wicked things.
3. A rich prostitute.

Q. Heaven’s Word to His People in Babylon (18:4-8)

1. Separate from her and her judgment.
2. Give her what she deserves.
3. Do it quickly.

R. Heaven's Description of Babylon's Fall (18:21-24)

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Never to be found again. | 5. No more light. |
| 2. No more music. | 6. No more joy. |
| 3. No more trade. | 7. No more honor. |
| 4. No more food. | |

S. The Hallelujah Chorus (19:1-2, 3-4, 6-8)

1. Because He judged the prostitute.
2. Because her judgment is final.
3. Because the wedding feast has come.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWENTY-THREE

1. What is important of the inner nature? _____
2. Explain the message of the outer struggle between the church and Rome.

3. Give three reasons the Lamb is worthy.
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4. List four great attributes ascribed to God in Moses' and the Lamb's song.
1) _____ 3) _____
2) _____ 4) _____
5. Name three reasons God is to be praised in the Hallelujah Chorus.
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

LESSON TWENTY-FOUR

THE ETERNAL BATTLE

INTRODUCTION

In this last lesson of the book of Revelation we want to look at the beatitudes found in the book and then look at the eternal struggle that was introduced in chapter twelve. We want to see that chapter twelve is really the conclusion of all of the Bible, and not just a chapter in the middle of the book of Revelation.

LESSON TEXT: Revelation 1:3; 22:7; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:14; 12:1ff.

LESSON AIM: To investigate and understand the *beatitudes* of Revelation.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. Learn and understand the blessings that come to the Christian despite the difficulties of life.
 2. Learn from biblical history that God rules the world and works all things for good to those who love Him and are called according to His purpose and are to receive the promise given to Abraham.
-

THE BEATITUDES OF REVELATION (3:7; 22:7; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:14)

A. Concerning the Book (1:3; 22:7)

1. The reader – To others.
2. The hearer – To take in heart.
3. The keeper – To take to heart.

B. Concerning Dead Saints (14:13)

1. Rest from labors.
2. Works follow with them.

C. Concerning the Watchful (16:15)

1. Dressed in righteousness.
2. Know no shame.

D. Concerning the Invited (19:9, 7-8)

1. Rejoicing.
2. Accepted.
3. Clothed in honor.

E. Concerning the Raised (20:6)

1. Death has no power over them.
2. They reign with and serve Christ.

F. Concerning the Washed (22:14)

1. Right to the tree of life.
2. Right to enter the city.

THE ETERNAL STRUGGLE (GENESIS 3:15)**A. A Prediction and a Promise**

1. Prediction: Conflict between Satan's seed and the woman's seed.
2. Promise: Victory for the woman's seed.

B. The Terms Defined

1. Enmity – "Ill-will, hatred, strife." Implied warfare.
2. Seed – "Ancestors, posterity or offspring."
3. Bruised – "To crush, to trample down." Implied: Lying in wait.
4. Head – "The superior position; signifying the object of power, control and authority." See Matthew 28:18; Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22.
5. Heel – "The lesser position."

C. The Nature of Redemption

1. Promised – A part of God's eternal plan and purpose.
2. Costly – Won in a hard, bitter, bloody struggle.
3. Historical – Told in the framework of a redemptive revelation.

D. Aim

1. To become aware of the viciousness of Satan and his intent to harm that seed.
2. To see that there is a greater power than Satan.
3. To understand that God's purposes will be providentially carried out. No one or no thing can stop God's continued progress toward His goal.

THE CONFLICT IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**A. Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:1-8, 25)**

1. Satan, through Cain, destroyed the righteous Abel, seeming to be victorious.
2. **BUT GOD!** *"Appointed another seed instead of Abel. . ."* Seth.
NOTE: The Seed of Woman survives and continues.

B. Daughters of Men and Sons of God (Genesis 6:7-8, 12)

1. Righteous married unrighteous and wickedness ensues.
2. A universal flood – ". . . and all flesh died . . . every man . . ." (Genesis 7:21-22).
3. **BUT GOD!** *"Noah found favor. . ."* (v. 8).
NOTE: The "Seed Family" is preserved and continues.

C. Barren Womb and Abundant Promise (Genesis 17:15-19)

1. God reaffirms His promise of years before and assures Sarah that she will bear a son, Isaac. How? For "*. . . it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women*" – She was barren and past age (18:11).

2. **BUT GOD!** Isaac is born on schedule (17:19). Cf Romans 4:8-12; Hebrews 11:11-12.

NOTE: God's purpose will not be defeated by a "barren womb." And the Seed continues.

D. Famine and Family (Genesis 41:55-50:26)

1. The seed-people doomed to starvation (42:1-2; cf. 43:8).
2. **BUT GOD!** "*Jehovah was with Joseph.*"

NOTE: God's purpose will not be defeated by a "barren earth." The Seed continues.

E. Pharaoh and the Enslaved Seed-People (Exodus 1:8ff)

1. The Seed-People are doomed by Pharaoh's decrees. The situation seems hopeless.
2. **BUT GOD!** "*Moses, Moses. . .*" (Exodus 3:4-10; cf. Hebrews 11:23-29).

NOTE: God's purpose will not be defeated by a "heathen nation." The ten plagues defeat Satan. And the Seed continues.

F. Evil Attempts and David

1. By Goliath and Saul (1 Samuel 17:1-51; 18:8-11; 19:1, 8-12).
2. By Absalom (2 Samuel 15).
3. **BUT GOD!** God's purpose is not thwarted by "men of war." And the Seed continues.

G. Devilish Woman and the Seed Royal (2 Kings 11)

1. Athaliah (Jezebel's daughter) "*. . .destroyed all the seed royal.*"
2. **BUT GOD!** "*. . .took Joash (the heir) and hid him*" (2 Kings 11:2; cf. 2 Chronicles 22:10-12; 23:8-11; 24:1).

NOTE: Again the Seed is snatched from the adversary. God's purposes are not hindered by an "evil queen." The Seed continues.

H. Death and Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:1-20:1)

1. Hezekiah is terminally ill with no heirs. Satan seemingly will win.
2. **BUT GOD!** "*I will add fifteen years . . .*" (2 Kings 20:6).

NOTE: God's purpose will not be defeated by "illness." And the Seed continues.

I. Wicked Haman and the Jewish Remnant, the Entire Book of Esther

1. Haman's envy and pride spells destruction for the Jews (3:1-6).
2. The king makes a decree to "*. . . destroy, to slay and to cause to perish all Jews, both young and old, little children and women . . .*" (3:13).
3. **BUT GOD!** "*. . .You are come to the kingdom for just such a time as this.*"

NOTE: Esther's faithful obedience is the means by which God again preserves the Seed-People. And the Seed line continues. God's purposes cannot be defeated by a "mean spirited man."

J. Herod and The Infant-Slaughterer (Matthew 2:13-23)

1. *“Then Herod . . . slew ALL the male children . . . from two years old and under. . .”* (v. 16).
2. **BUT GOD!** Joseph is told to carry “*the child*” to Egypt (2:13-15, 19f).
NOTE: God’s purpose will not be defeated by a “power hungry king.”

K. Satan and Jesus (Matthew 4:1-11)

1. Devil makes formal attack through the temptations.
2. **BUT GOD!** Jesus withstood the devil with God’s word, “*It is written!*”
NOTE: God’s purposes cannot be thwarted by “Satan’s eyeball confrontation with Messiah in the flesh .” And the Seed continues.

L. The Nations and Jesus (John 11:53)

1. The Jewish rejection and the Roman crucifixion combined to make Satan’s “Grand Finale” in seeking to trample the Seed.
 - a. The betrayal (John 13:18, 27).
 - b. The trial (Matthew 26:59).
 - c. The cross (Acts 2:23).
2. God’s vindication.
 - a. The resurrection (Romans 1:4-5).
 - b. The final declaration (Hebrews 2:14-15).
3. **BUT GOD!** Jesus Christ was bodily resurrected from the grave and lives forever.
NOTE: God’s purpose cannot be defeated by “death.”

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWENTY-FOUR

1. Which beatitude concerning the book of Revelation starts and ends the book?
Where are they found? How does the blessing come?

2. What do dead saints do?_____

3. What five things are said of the watchful and the invited?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

4. What is said about the raised and the washed?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5. Where was the seed promise first made? Explain the promise?

6. Name seven ways Satan tried to defeat God's promise to Abraham, but failed.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6) _____

7) _____

7. What two things were Satan's "*grand finale*" in his attempt to trample the seed?

1) _____

2) _____

Study Guide

Richard Rogers



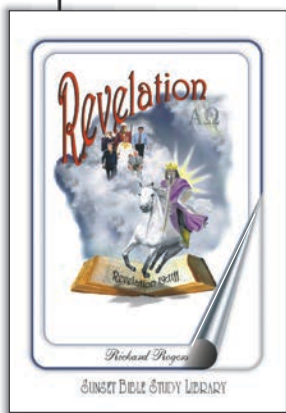
Richard Rogers was born in 1936 in Dallas, Texas. He was educated at Abilene Christian University, and Florida Christian College. An avid reader and diligent student of the Bible, he authored some twenty teaching workbooks and published outlines.

Richard was well known and recognized as a gifted evangelist, teacher, and lectureship speaker. Until his death he was in great demand as a missionary encourager and world evangelist. He taught for more than three decades at Sunset International Bible Institute, assisting in the training of thousands of preachers and missionaries. Richard mentored church planting teams in California, Mexico, Thailand, and the Philippines.

Richard preached for local congregations at Blue Ridge, Azle, Midland, and the Sunset Church of Christ in Lubbock, Texas. Speaking appointments took him to forty states and thirty foreign countries and to many Christian university campuses as a teacher and lecturer. He was also a frequent speaker at soul-winning workshops across the nation.

Richard can still be heard proclaiming the word of God via hundreds of audio and video sermons and lessons available through Sunset External Studies.

Richard and his wife, Barbara, were blessed with four children and nine grandchildren.



☞ Richard Roger's book *Revelation* is a companion book to this study.

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