

Week Six – Ch. 4-12 Tribulations – 7 Seals, 7 Trumpets

"If God brings you to it, he will bring you through it!"

Message to the Churches (Ch. 2-3) Hear – Listen – Repent – Correct - Act

1. Ephesus - Love God above All
2. Smyrna - Persevere in Suffering
3. Pergamos – Teach Truth Apologetically
4. Thyatira – Be godly in Lifestyle
5. Sardis – Endure in doing Good
6. Philadelphia – Continue responding to Opportunities
7. Laodicea – Be fervent in Faith

The words to the churches in chapters 2-3 will be referenced in the seven seals.

With these corrections and encouragements, we move into a message given to powerfully motivate Christian to faithfulness. Chapters 4-5 are a worshipful, sensory experience of sights, sounds (music), smells (incense) and actions, of the throne room of God. At the center is an awesome Lord, powerful and glorious, and He will shepherd His church. He who died for the church, established and loves the church, will not let the gates of hell prevail against the church, even in times of judgment and great turmoil. Individual congregations may die if they do not make the corrections of chapter 2-3, but the church will continue and see Jesus' return in glory & victory.

Modern Day Context

A message promoting a Bible Study - Like the Corinthians of old, we find ourselves in a society that is obsessed with self, indifferent (if not antagonistic) to God, confused about love, in denial of the Resurrection, and riddled with sin. Unfortunately, these sins have influenced the church today, just as they influenced the Corinthian church.

- Comments of evangelicals in response to the Pope's indorsement of homosexual civil unions.
- Representative Rob Whitman's comments on the future of the USA.

Headlines from Monday in the Christian Post:

Nigerian Christian killed in Fulani ambush attack as violence skyrockets

"'Justine Patrick' is clearly a Christian name. In Nigeria, if you're a Christian, you have a Christian name. If you're a Muslim, you have a Muslim name." ... "Thousands of people have died at the hands of extremists groups such as Boko Haram and the Fulani militants.

Christian orgs in China drop 'Jesus' from book titles to circumvent internet censorship

Internet censorship targeting Christians in China has become so severe that even official government-sanctioned Christian groups are now using the Chinese pinyin initials "JD" to replace Chinese characters for "Christ," according to U.S.-based China Aid.

Endocrine Society used deceptive terminology for trans experimentation on children, document shows

A document recently uncovered by an endocrinologist shows the ways in which a professional medical organization deceptively blurred key terms to further the interests of experimental transgender medicine and acquire government funding for it.

Sri Lankan pastor forced to close church amid escalating threats from Buddhist monks, police

A Sri Lankan pastor has been forced to shut down his church and end his ministry work after being detained by police and threatened by Buddhist monks, the Barnabas Fund reports.

'We are in a battle with Satan': The biblical truth we too often ignore

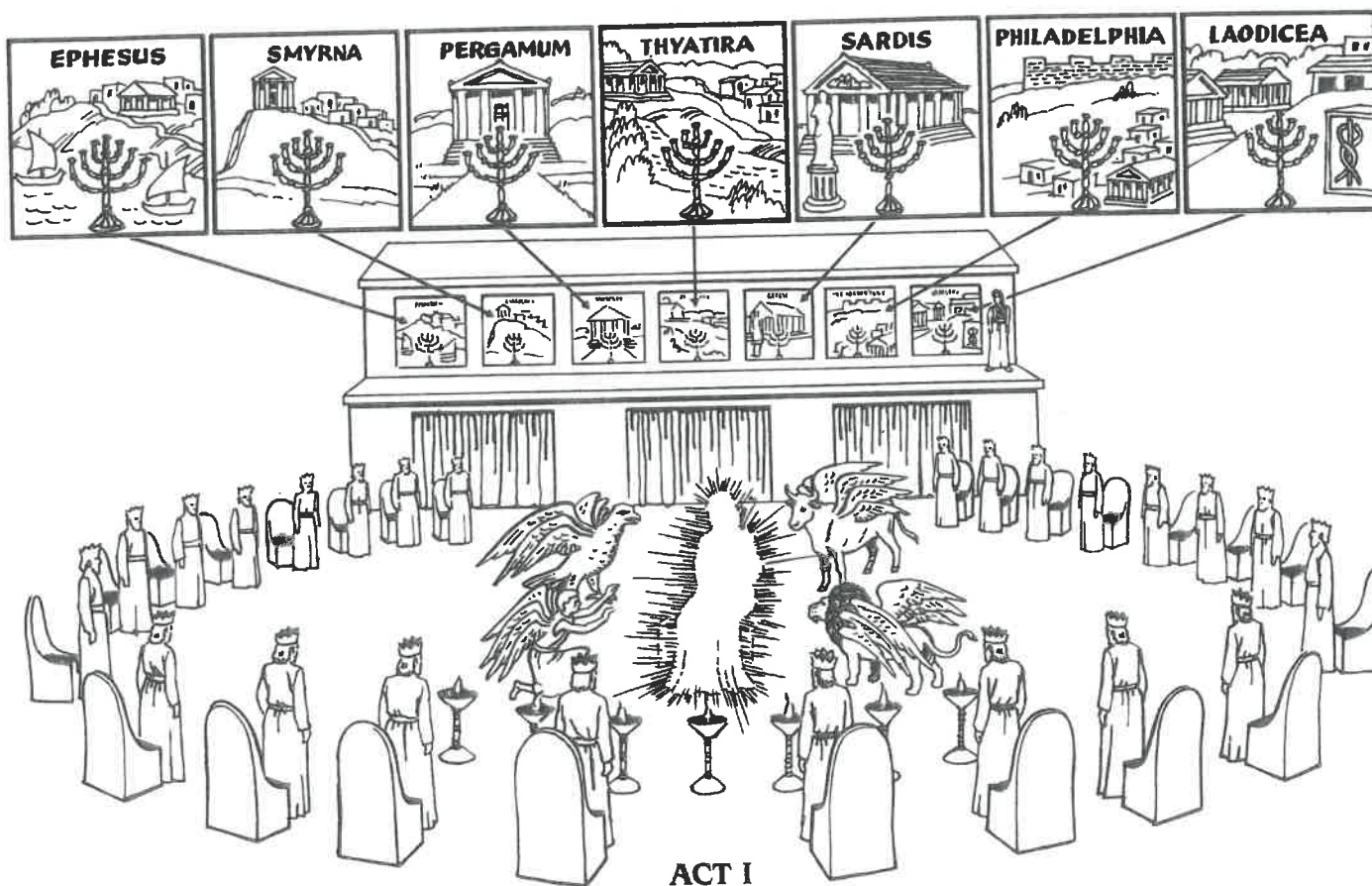
In our feel-good, live-in-the moment culture, it's easy to gloss over the parts of scripture that implore us to consider what we cannot always see: the invisible hand of evil.

Ch. 4-5 Throne Room of Heaven

Inspired Handel's Messiah, a glorious scene of all creation bowing before the lamb in worship. In 4:11 it we hear the assertion of the sovereignty of God over all creation. And chapter five ends the chapter with all the creatures in heaven blessing the Lord. Then the chapter ends (5:14) with a perfunctory exclamation, "Amen" = so be it. Let the future come! Jesus, he one who knows suffering and sees all is Lord!

We go back to 1:17-18 *When I saw him, I fell at his feet like a dead man. He laid his right hand on me and said, "Don't be afraid. I am the First and the Last, ¹⁸ and the Living One. I was dead, but look—I am alive forever and ever, and I hold the keys of death and Hades.*

No matter what happens, Satan is not in charge and evil will not overcome. All who believe in Jesus will be victorious. Be faithful and be blessed. In the end, We Win.



Ch. 6 The Seals - Opened by the Lamb

The seals are opened by the one who gave his life for the salvation of all who believe. Unrepentant sin leads to judgment and it is never pleasant nor pretty. In the judgments that come on the sinful world we see the seriousness of systemic sin.

The mystery and anxiety of the seals was overwhelming, leading to weeping (5:4). The opening of the seals moves us from anxiety to awful situations brought on by sin. Many have anxieties about the unknown of the future. Whatever comes, 1. Jesus is with us. 2. Jesus has an eternal home prepared for us. 3. Jesus knows suffering and He is our example to follow (1 Peter 2:21f).

The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse

6:1-2 First Seal - White Horse - Conquering cf. John 6:33; Romans 8:35-37

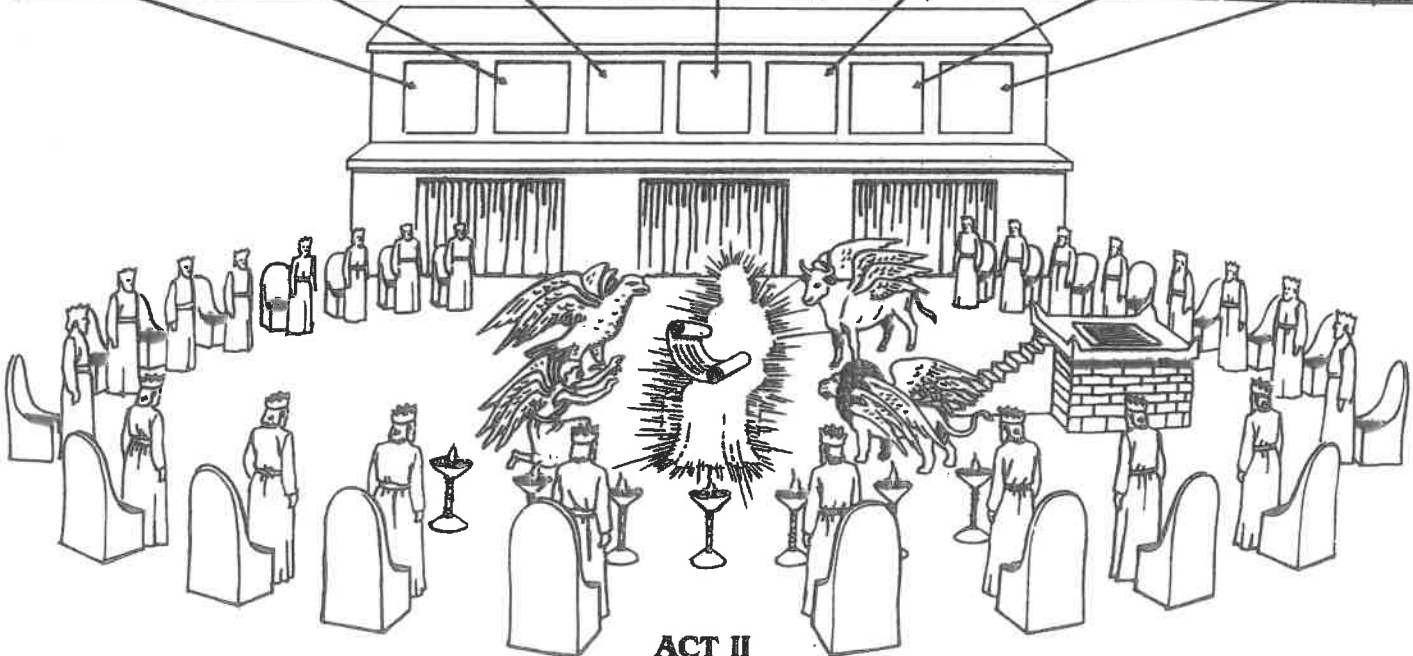
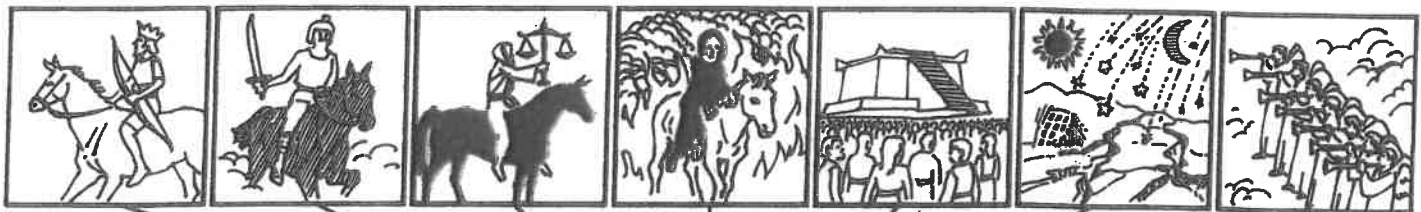
6:3-4 Second seal - Red Horse - War cf. Romans 5:1; later Red serpent at war with God in 12:3 → 2 Cor. 11:3; We need to be alert to the battles we face: 2 Cor. 10:3-6, *11:13-15* Mt. 7:21-22; Ephesians 6:10-18; 1 John 4:1-6; Jude 1:12-14

6:5-6 Third Seal - Black Horse - Famine cf. Matthew 6:25,33

6:7-8 Fourth Seal - Pale Green Horse - Death cf. Romans 6:5; 1 Cor. 15:54-56

6:9-11 Fifth Seal - Martyrs for the Word - How Long? Trust & Rest. Jesus knows when, and not one extra person will suffer or die. Cf. Psalms 139:16

6:12-17 Sixth Seal - Days of Wrath cf. **Key Question: 6:17** In face of the wrath of God, "**Who is able to stand?**" cf. On Wrath Romans 2:5-11; 1 Thes. 5:9



An Interlude

Ch. 7 The Faithful – God's Provision and Reward for Martyrs

Answers the previous question.

Words of Encouragement for the Tribes of Israel/Children of Abraham – Cf. Galatians 3:27-29 to understand the 144,000. Look ahead to Revelation 14:1-5

Some will pay the price! They are known to God.

God's restraint. (2 Peter 2:9, 3:9; Jude 1:6)

Till the number is fulfilled. (Romans 11:25-36)

v. 13-17 Dressed in white - 12:11; 19:14 (cf. Ephesians 2:6-7; Philippians 3:20-21)
Blessed (2nd Beatitude) are those who die for their faith in the great tribulation. They are welcomed to the throne of God. We are welcomed to the throne room now in prayer through Jesus. cf. John 15:16, 16:23-24; Ephesians 2:18; Hebrews 4:16