

Revelation

Lesson 01: Introduction

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

The Title

The Revelation (or Apocalypse) of Jesus Christ

Revelation/Apocalypse –Uncovering

The Author

The author is the Apostle John.

Outlived the other apostles.

Exiled to Patmos

Biblical Evidence that John wrote Revelation.

Revelation 1:1, 4, 9

Non-biblical sources point to John being the author.

Ancient tradition

Extra-biblical writers confirm that John was exiled to Patmos. (Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius)



The Nature of the Message of the Book

The message is of Jesus and from Jesus.

The reader must be able to appreciate figurative language.

Interpreting the Message of the Book

Four methods to interpret Revelation

The Preteristic Method: Revelation is about the past.

The Historical Method: Revelation traces history from the Roman Empire to the second coming of Christ.

The Futuristic Method: Revelation refers to what will transpire just before the second coming of Christ.

The Prophetic-Symbolic Method: Revelation applies to John's time and all periods until the second coming of Christ.

The Practical Nature the Book

The book of Revelation was given...

- To encourage John as he suffered on the Island of Patmos.
- To give congregations of that day courage and assurance to withstand their persecution.
- To encourage Christians living in all ages to stand strong in the face of persecution.
- To challenge all believers of all times to live as overcomers.

An Overview for Understanding Revelation

Revelation 1:1-3

Instead of seeing the book as a calculator for the end of time, it is better to view Revelation as a comfort for the present time. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

As long as the righteous servants of Christ experience suffering, there is reason for reading this book.

Major theme: God is with His people, and sin will be punished.

Revelation tells us both sides of the story with God verses the Opposer.

Repetition is an important element.

Series of sevens: Letters, Trumpets, Seals, Bowls, Blessings

Time terms

Place terms (Sodom, Egypt, Babylon)

The presence of God and His people is an important element.

God's Temple and the 144,000 (Revelation 7:14-17)

The book of Revelation offers the reader a clear understanding of God's place amid conflict.

Revelation

Lesson 02: Revelation 1:1-20

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Review

Rule of thumb for studying the Bible: _____ before _____.

The Prophetic/Symbolic Approach

A prophet's job was to "tell it like it is" and to "tell it like it is going to be."

The Prologue (Revelation 1:1-3)

Revelation— To draw back a veil.

blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it,

We are much more content when we understand the times we live in and where things are headed, even if it is difficult.

The Introduction (Revelation 1:4-8)

A Letter Format (vs 4)

From: John

To: The Seven Churches That are in Asia.

The number seven: Instead of the _____ of the number, consider the _____ of the number.

The Seven Spirits before the Throne: Likely translation, "the sevenfold spirit".
Isaiah 11:2

John utilizes some Old Testament phrases in verse seven.

Daniel 7:13; Zechariah 12:10

Alpha and Omega: A picture of _____.

Who is, and who was, and who is to come: A picture of _____.

A Picture of the Lord of the Church (Revelation 1:9-20)

Christians in Stress Identify with John (vs 9)

John's Vision Begins (vs 10)

2 Corinthians 12:1ff

Specific Messages for Specific Needs Revealed (vs 11)

Seeing a Relationship (vs 12)

Christ and His Glory (vs 13-18)

An Important Message of Reassurance (vs 19-20)

Seven Stars: Seven Messengers

Seven Lampstands: Seven Churches

The Lord of the Church in the Midst of the Lampstands

Revelation

Lesson 03: Revelation 2:1-9

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Review

General Rules of Thumb

CONTEXT before CONTENT. If you understand what was going on, you can better understand what is being said.

A prophet's job was to "tell it like it is" and to "tell it like it is going to be."

What We Observed in Chapter 1

The Vision: We see a vision of the glorified Christ holding seven stars in his hands and standing in the middle of seven lampstands.

The number seven points to the things of God.

Brightness points to the glory of God.

The seven stars represent the seven angels (messengers).

The seven lampstands represent the "seven churches in Asia."

The Takeaway: God has not abandoned us.

Chapter 2 – Letters to Seven Churches (part 1)

General Observations

John's one letter becomes seven letters to seven churches.

The imagery that was introduced in chapter 1 is repeated throughout these seven letters.

Letter to the Church in Ephesus (Revelation 2:1-7)

A common theme in these letters is, "Christ knows your situation."

About the City: Great city in Asia Minor, a Roman capital, a center of the worship of Diana, and a wealthy commercial center.

About the Church: The church was visited by Paul. Paul was very close to the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:29). Timothy ministered there and received letters from Paul. John also ministered in Ephesus.

The Ephesians stood strong against false teachings.

The Ephesians had lost their "first love." (Ephesians 4:15; Ephesians 4:29-32)

Letter to the Church in Smyrna (Revelation 2:8-11)

About the City: Smyrna was a large city with a population of 200,000. It was a center for culture and emperor worship.

About the Church: Exhorted to remember that suffering is _____.

Letter to the Church in Pergamum (Revelation 2:12-17)

About the City: Pergamum became the capital of the Roman province of Asia in 133 BC. It was best known for its great library. It was also a center of the Caesar-worship cult.

About the Church: Many, but not all, had stayed faithful to the Christ in an environment that was hostile to the Gospel.

Letter to the Church in Thyatira (Revelation 2:18-29)

About the City: Thyatira is the smallest of the seven cities listed. The city was known for its wool-eyeing occupations. Lydia was from this city (Acts 16:14).

About the Church: In some ways this church was generally heading the right direction; however, some had tolerated false teachings. God admonished these people to repent from their willful ignorance.

1 Corinthians 2:10; Psalm 2:8-9

Conclusion

God hates sin, though He loves sinners. He warns his people to be wary of faulty

_____ , faulty _____ , and faulty _____ .

Letters to the Seven Churches				
Church	Commendation	Rebuke	Solution	Consequence of
Ephesus (2:1-7)	doctrinal vigilance and endurance	loss of first love	remember, repent, and do the works done at first	removal of their lampstand
Smyrna (2:8-11)	spiritually rich, enduring persecution		be faithful unto death	
Pergamum (2:12-17)	holding fast Christ's name, not denying their faith	false teaching	repent	war against them with the sword of Christ's mouth
Thyatira (2:18-29)	growing love, evidenced in deeds of service	lack of discernment; toleration of heresy	hold fast and keep Christ's works till the end	each given as their works deserve
Sardis (3:1-6)	a few remain pure and loyal	dead works	keep the Word and repent	Christ will come like a thief
Philadelphia (3:7-13)	patiently enduring, keeping God's word and not denying his name		hold fast what you have	
Laodicea (3:14-22)		spiritually blind, bankrupt, naked, lukewarm	buy gold, white garments, and salve from Christ; be zealous and	will be spit out of Christ's mouth

Revelation

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Lesson 04: Revelation 3:1-22

Review

General Background

A prophet's job was to "tell it like it is" and to "tell it like it is going to be."

The word "Revelation" means "uncovering."

John, the author, uses vivid, symbolic imagery to get the message across.

This writing is designed to be a vivid message to a hurting church not a hidden code for a few scholars.

What We Observed in Chapter 1

Jesus is pictured in a glorified form. He is standing among seven golden lampstands representing seven churches.

What We Observed in Chapter 2

In chapter 2, the one letter (Revelation 1:4) becomes seven letters to seven Asian churches.

This chapter contains four of the seven letters.

The Church in Ephesus (Revelation 2:1-7)

Persevered in the face of false teachings but lost their first love.

The Church in Smyrna (Revelation 2:8-11)

Practiced Christianity in a hostile environment and encouraged to "stay faithful unto death."

The Church in Pergamum (Revelation 2:12-17)

Had been faithful to live out their faith in "Satan's throne."

Sadly, some had given into the pagan ways of Rome.

Threefold reward offered those who heeded this message.

The Church in Thyatira (Revelation 2:18-29)

Generally heading in the right direction.

Some had turned to following "Jezebel."

Exhorted to become victorious (overcomers).

Chapter 3 – Letters to Seven Churches (part 2)

The Church in Sardis (Revelation 3:1-6)

About the City

Located fifty miles east of Ephesus.

An important industrial center famous for its garment industries.

About the Church

Jesus points out the reality of their spiritual decline.

Jesus calls them to repent, warning them of a coming sudden judgment.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-3

Jesus calls them to put on "clean garments."

1 Corinthians 15:53-54

Jesus promises a threefold blessing

Clothed in white garments

Name in the book of life

Name acknowledged before the Father

The Church in Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7-13)

About the City

The name Philadelphia means "city of brotherly love."
Known as the "Gateway to the East."
Subject to earthquakes.

About the Church

The church is presented with a symbolic "open door" symbolizing the maintaining of a relationship with Christ.

Jesus gives assurance that those who mistreat them because of Christ will eventually be humbled (Isaiah 60:14).

Jesus promises a four-sided result for the victorious (overcomers).

They will be considered a pillar in God's temple

God's name will be written on them

The name of God's city will be written on them

They will be given a new name

The Church in Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22)

About the City

Located southeast of Philadelphia along a great trade route.
Famous for its medicine, boasting of a remedy for weak eyes.
Had hot springs that were reportedly medically beneficial.
Contained important banking and textile businesses.

About the Church

Jesus does not offer a commendation (compliment) to this church.

Described as "lukewarm."

Love was the motive behind Jesus' strong words to the church (Hebrews 12:6)

Jesus knocking at the door was an invitation to _____ with Christ.

Conclusion

It is important for Christians to understand the _____ of their relationship with Christ.

Even in the midst of great tribulation _____ is possible if we trust Christ and heed his message.

The rewards of this victory make overcoming the opposition _____.

Revelation

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Lesson #5: Revelation 4:1-11

Review

General Background

The author, John, under the direction of God, uses vivid, symbolic imagery to get the message across.

This writing is designed to be a vivid message to a hurting church not a hidden code for a few scholars.

This book was originally written to a hurting church undergoing great persecution.

The encouragement to be victorious (or an overcomer) is repeated throughout the book.

What We Observed in Chapter 1

Jesus is pictured in a glorified form. He is standing among seven golden lampstands representing seven churches.

What We Observed in Chapters 2 & 3

The one letter that begins in Revelation 1:4 becomes seven letters to seven churches in Asia. (Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea)

The letters described the 'reality on the ground' in each church. Some contained commendations, some condemnation, and some a combination of both.

Major reminders...

It is important for Christians to understand the condition of their relationship with Christ.

Even in the midst of great tribulation victory is possible if we trust Christ and heed his message.

The rewards of this overcoming make the suffering worth it all.

Revelation 4:1-11 – The Throne in Heaven

Verse 1

This is the third 'door' described in Revelation so far.

Door of opportunity (Revelation 3:8)

Door of the heart (Revelation 3:20)

Door of revelation (Revelation 4:1)

The 'voice like a trumpet' refers back to Revelation 1:10.

Verse 2

'In the Spirit' – Christians live between the physical and spiritual realms, both equally real. (2 Kings 6:16-17; Ephesians 6:12)

'Throne in heaven' -This same imagery is seen in Isaiah 6:1, Daniel 7:9, and 1 Kings 22:19

Verse 3

'Jasper, Ruby, Rainbow (Emerald)' – Pictures the incomparable grandeur of God.

Verse 4

'24 elders' – There is no Old Testament counterpart for these 24 elders. Many commentators believe that they represent the 12 tribes of the Israel from the OT and the original 12 apostles of the New Testament.

Bottom line – these are individuals of authority in service of God.

Verse 5

'Lightning and thunder' – Bright images and loud sounds point to God.

'Seven spirits of God' – Sevenfold spirit of God. (Isaiah 11:2)

Verses 6-8a

'Sea of glass' – More bright imagery pointing to God.

'Four creatures' – similarities and differences to the 'creatures' described in Ezekiel 1.

Ezekiel 1 – Each of the four faces featured human, lion, ox, and eagle.

Revelation 4 – Four different faces (lion, ox, man, and eagle)

Ezekiel 1 – Each had four wings.

Revelation 4 – Each had six wings.

Revelation 4 – Each creature was 'covered with eyes'

Instead of asking "What is the identity of the 4 creatures and 24 elders?", ask "What is the purpose of the 4 creatures and 24 elders?".

Verse 8b

The purpose of the four creatures was to _____ the One on the throne.

Verses 9-11

The purpose of the 24 elders was to _____ the One on the throne.

Lessons/Observations

There exists a spiritual realm that is just a _____ L as the physical realm.

All _____ bows before God.

All _____ bows before God.

Revelation

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Lesson #6: Revelation 5:1-14

Review

General Background

The author, John, under the direction of God, uses vivid, symbolic imagery to get the message across.

This writing is designed to be a vivid message to a hurting church not a hidden code for a few scholars.

The encouragement to be victorious (or an overcomer) is repeated throughout the book.

Review of Chapters 1-3

Jesus is pictured in a glorified form. He is standing among seven golden lampstands representing seven churches.

Jesus has John write down messages to be delivered to churches in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.

Review of Chapter 4

While "in the Spirit," John's attention shifts to a vision of a great throne room where God is seated.

The images and sounds in this chapter offer a vivid description of incomparable grandeur of God. 24 Elders, individuals of authority in service of God throw down their crowns and give glory to God. 4 Living creatures with the appearances of a lion, an ox, a man, and an eagle give glory to God as well.

Big reminders of Revelation chapter 4

All authority bows before God.

All creation bows before God

Revelation 5:1-14 – The Lamb Ready to Reveal His Message

Chapters 4 & 5 – An establishing scene, then the action begins.

Verse 1

Right Hand – indicating authority

Scroll – Writing on both sides and seven seals indicates a 'complete' message.



Verse 2

Mighty Angel/Loud Voice -Emphasizing that not just anyone can open this scroll.

Who is worthy... - Only an authorized person can open the scroll.

Verses 3-4

In heaven, on earth, under the earth – pointing forward to how unique 'the Lamb' is.

I wept – Sadness is expressed because this, though this book promises to offer hope, no one has authority to open the sealed message.

Verse 5

Two Messianic Titles Given to the Lamb

[Messianic means having to do with Jesus being the “chosen one” or the Messiah]

Lion of Judah (Genesis 49:8-11)

Rood of David (Isaiah 11:1, Isaiah 11:10)

Verse 6

Lamb, looking as if he had been slain – points to the ministry of Jesus (John 1:29)

Standing – Showing He is alive

At the center -Showing He is equal with God

Seven horns, seven eyes -the Lamb is equal with God the Spirit

Verse 7

The Lamb's bold move leaves no question as to His relationship with the throne or His right to access the scroll.

Verse 8

When the Lamb takes the scroll, the creatures of Heaven react in worship.

Verses 9-10

New Song – A response to a new work of God. (Lamentations 3:22-23)

What new way had God worked in this instance?

The Lamb was shown worthy to open the scroll.

The Lamb had been slain.

The Lamb ‘purchased’ [bought out of slavery] all of humanity.

The Lamb has given the purchased ones a new community as a kingdom and priests.

Verses 11-12

Many Angels – The scene expands.

This expanding number of angels is like the Christmas account. (Luke 2:8-9; Luke 2:13-14)

Encircled the Throne – Those doing the worship encircle the throne. Those being worshipped are at the throne.

Worthy... They sing their own song of praise giving credence to the previous expressions of praise.

Verse 13

Every Creature – The scene expands again.

Verse 14

This whole scene in chapters 4 & 5 is designed to make the reader ask in anticipation,

“ _____ ?”.

Revelation

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Lesson #7: Revelation 6:1-17

Review

General Background

- The book of Revelation was written to provide comfort to those suffering because of Christ.
- The message of Revelation is unveiled in a series of vivid images.
- Often language and images from Old Testament prophecies are utilized to get the message across.

Review of Chapters 1-3

- Jesus, pictured in a glorified form and standing among seven golden lampstands representing the church, has John write down messages to be delivered to seven churches in Asia Minor.

Review of Chapters 4-5

- While "in the Spirit," John has a vision of a great throne room where God is seated.
- God holds in his right hand a scroll, sealed with seven seals, which no one in creation is worthy to open.
- A Lamb, representing Christ, is seen standing at the center of the throne and taking the scroll from the One seated there.
- The Lamb's location (at the center of the throne) and action (taking the scroll) indicate that he is equal with God.
- All of creation responds in praise as it is declared that the Lamb is worthy to open the scroll.
- The actions of the Lamb and reaction of all creation lead the reader to ask, "What is in that scroll?"

Revelation 6 - The Message of the Sealed Book

Four Horses and Their Riders (Seals #1-4)

Seal #1—The White Horse (Revelation 6:1-2)

Come (come and see) – repeated by the four creatures.

The imagery of these four horses is similar to Zechariah 6:1-4.

To understand the meaning it is important to look at all four of these horses and riders together as one picture.

Color: White

Objects: Bow—warrior; Crown—victorious

Action: Rode out bent on conquest

Seal #2—The Red Horse (Revelation 6:3-4)

Color: Red

Objects: Great Sword

Actions: Take peace from the earth and kill

Seal #3—The Black Horse (Revelation 6:5-6)

Color: Black

Object: Balance

Action: Economic disruption

This is a bleak picture of economic despair and famine is being painted here.

Seal #4—The Pale Horse (Revelation 6:7-8)

Color: Pale (yellowish green)

Objects: Companion "Hades" (abode of the dead)

Actions: Bringing death in multiple ways

"one fourth" - Focus on the quality of this number rather than the quantity. This percentage symbolizes the devastating, disruptive entrance of death into the human experience.

Looking at the Four Horses Together

From the perspective of God's people...

...the wicked seem to _____ (white horse)

...war and bloodshed continually bring _____ to the people of God (red horse).

...following the Lord sometimes results in being _____ of physical necessities (black horse).

...the difficulties of life can oftentimes result in _____ (pale horse).

Slain Saints Under the Altar (Seal #5) – Revelation 6:9-11

"souls under the altar" – The altar is not a geographical place but emphasizes their relationship with God.

"how long" — This is not a complaint, but simply a cry for assurance.

"inhabitants of the earth" - in contrast to the souls *under the altar*

2 Thessalonians 1:4-10

"white robes" - associated with God.

"wait a little longer" - stay the course.

A Scene of End Things Brought by God's Wrath (Seal #6) - Revelation 6:12-17

These images in these verses are similar to some other passages in the Bible.

Matthew 24:29 (Jesus quotes from Isaiah 13 & 34); 2 Peter 3:10

"great earthquake" - The very foundation of the earth starts breaking up.

"sun" - The source of all light is gone.

"moon & stars" - The moon is dying and the stars are too.

"heavens rolled up" - The whole canopy of the heavens in this present universe

"kings of the earth" - same as the 'inhabitants of the earth' in verse 10

"great day" - much like the phrase 'the day of the Lord' is often used in prophecy.

Revelation

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Lesson #8: Revelation 7:1-17

Review

General Background

- Written by John, the book of Revelation offers comfort to a persecuted church through a series of vivid images.

Review of Chapters 1-3

- Jesus, pictured in a glorified form and standing among seven golden lampstands representing the church, has John write down messages to be delivered to seven churches in Asia Minor.

Review of Chapters 4-5

- While "in the Spirit," John has a vision of a great throne room where God is seated.
- A scroll, sealed with seven seals, is presented.
- Only the Lamb (symbolizing Christ) is able break the seals and open the scroll to reveal its message.

Review of Chapter 6

- A series of images are presented as the Lamb opens six out of the seven seals.
 - Seal #1—White Horse & Rider (conquering power)
 - Seal #2—Red Horse & Rider (war and bloodshed)
 - Seal #3—Black Horse & Rider (economic disruption)
 - Seal #4—Pale Horse & Rider (death)
 - Seal #5—Slain Saints Under the Altar
 - Seal #6—Signs of End Times/God's Wrath

Revelation 7 – A Refreshing Interlude

Verse 1

Four angels "holding back the four winds" bring protection and can be contrasted with the four horsemen of chapter 6 bringing destruction.

144,000 Sealed Servants

Verses 2-3

Seal of God – The seal is a mark of ownership, showing something to be authentic. (Ezekiel 9:7; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22)

Verse 4

Number of those who were sealed

The people of God are described in multiple ways throughout Revelation.

- Servants (1:1)
- Companions in Suffering (1:9)
- Seven Golden Lampstands (1:12)
- Overcomers [victorious] (Chapters 2-3)
- Slain Souls Under the Altar (6:9)
- Sealed Servants (7:3-4)
- The 144,000 (7:4)

The listing of the 12 tribes of Israel is figurative here. (Romans 9:8)
Certain numbers are often used to denote completeness.

Also, _____ of numbers can be used to denote completeness.

Verses 5-8

Tribes as Listed in Revelation

1. Judah
2. Reuben
3. Gad
4. Asher
5. Naphtali
6. Manasseh*
7. Simeon
8. Levi* (In place of Dan)
9. Issachar
10. Zebulun
11. Joseph*
12. Benjamin

Tribes Listed in the Old Testament

1. Judah
2. Reuben
3. Gad
4. Asher
5. Naphtali
6. Manasseh* (son of Joseph)
7. Simeon
8. Dan*
9. Issachar
10. Zebulun
11. Ephraim* (son of Joseph)
12. Benjamin

A Numberless Multitude

Verse 9

A numberless multitude dressed wearing white robes is yet another identification of the people of God.

This expanding scene seems to mirror the progression of the gospel in book of Acts.

Acts 2 (Jews), Acts 9 (Samaritans), Acts 10-11 (Gentiles) - Romans 1:16

Verses 10-12

All the characters in the scene contribute to the picture of worship. It is building to a mighty crescendo of praise.

The Meaning: The Reality of God's Presence

Verse 13-17

Here John is being asked to draw the bottom line and comprehend the meaning of what he sees.

This is a great picture of reassurance. The greatest part of Heaven is the presence of God, while the worst part of Hell is the absence of God.

Another great blessing of Heaven is the absence of all suffering.

Somehow, with this knowledge, we are not threatened so much, and the pain is not so severe when we realize who's we are (the Lamb) and where we are (under the altar).

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(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Lesson #9: Revelation 8:1-13

Introduction

What's the deal with the rapture?

Rapture: Generally understood as the event where both dead and living believers are caught up together in a moment to meet Jesus in the air.

(1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 1 Corinthians 15:52)

Different Views of the Rapture

The different views of the rapture center around the timing of what is known as

the _____. (Daniel 9:27)

- (1) *Pre-Tribulation Rapture*: Jesus comes secretly to rapture (gather) the church prior to a seven-year Great Tribulation that precedes the return of Christ.
- (2) *Mid-Tribulation Rapture*: Jesus comes secretly to rapture (gather) the church after the first three-and-a-half years of tribulation. Then the Anti-Christ assumes power. (Revelation 13:5)
- (3) *Pre-Wrath Rapture*: Holds that the rapture will occur toward the end of the tribulation before the outpouring of God's wrath with bowls of judgment (Revelation 16) and prior to the return of Christ.
- (4) *Post-Tribulation Rapture*: The rapture occurs simultaneous to the return of Christ at the end of the Tribulation.

The most commonly held view in popular culture and Christianity is Pre-Tribulation.

Is the idea of the unsaved being 'left behind' what the Bible describes?

Consider Matthew 24:37-41 and Matthew 13:30

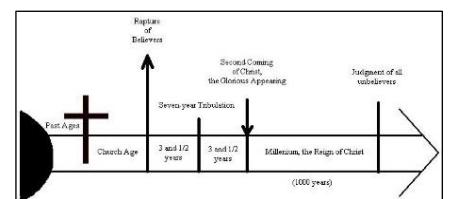
In this passage, who was taken away, the faithful or those being judged?

What We Know

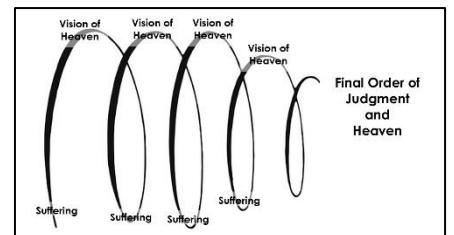
- (1) Jesus WILL Return (2 Peter 3)
- (2) All the dead will rise. (Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29)
- (3) Both the saved and the unsaved will experience a rapture. (Matthew 13:30)
- (4) The rapture will be public, not secret. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)

Two Approaches to the Timeline of Revelation

Chronological: Revelation represents a linear timeline of end-time events.



Cyclical: Revelation contains a series of repetitions leading up to the final judgment of the lost and restoration of the saved.



So Far in Revelation

Chapters 1-3 - Introduction and Jesus' letters to seven churches in Asia Minor.

Chapters 4-5 - Vision of heaven, the scroll with seven seals, and the Lamb who is worthy to break the seals.

Chapter 6 - The Lamb opens six of the seven seals.

Chapter 7 - After several bleak images are presented in chapter six, the vivid scene in chapter seven serves as a refreshing interlude.

God's People Are Identified As
Sealed Servants
The 144,000
Countless Multitude Dressed in White

Revelation 8 – The Seventh Seal & Transition to the Trumpet Message

Verses 1-2

Silence in heaven – dramatic pause

The seventh seal reveals another series of seven.

Verses 3-6

What is about to be seen is the answer to the prayers of the saints.

Verse 7 – Trumpet #1

It is implied that what is happening is from God.

One-third - Indicating devastating, earth-changing disasters

Verses 8-9 – Trumpet #2

There is nothing connected to the sea that escapes the peril of the “one-third” judgment.

Verses 10-11 – Trumpet #3

Wormwood means _____.

Jeremiah 9:15; Lamentations 3:15

This describes the contamination of the water supply.

Verse 12 – Trumpet #4

The area receiving judgment here is the sources of light.

First Four Trumpets

#1. Hail & Fire Mixed with Blood (one-third of earth/trees destroyed)

#2. Burning Mountain in the Sea (one-third of the contents of the sea destroyed)

#3. Blazing Star (Wormwood) on the Rivers (one-third of water supply contaminated)

#4. Sun, Moon, and Stars turned dark (one-third of the source of light is taken out)

Verse 13

Announcement by the eagle, “Hold on, you ain’t seen nothing yet.”

Revelation

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Lesson #10: Revelation 9:1-21

Introduction

Rapture Review

Rapture: The event where both dead and living believers are caught up together in a moment to meet Jesus in the air.

Different Views of the Rapture

- (1) *Pre-Tribulation Rapture*: Jesus comes secretly to rapture (gather) the church prior to a seven-year Great Tribulation that precedes the return of Christ.
- (2) *Mid-Tribulation Rapture*: Jesus comes secretly to rapture (gather) the church after the first three-and-a-half years of tribulation. Then the Anti-Christ assumes power. (Revelation 13:5)
- (3) *Pre-Wrath Rapture*: Holds that the rapture will occur toward the end of the tribulation before the outpouring of God's wrath with bowls of judgment (Revelation 16) and prior to the return of Christ.
- (4) *Post-Tribulation Rapture*: The rapture occurs simultaneous to the return of Christ at the end of the Tribulation.

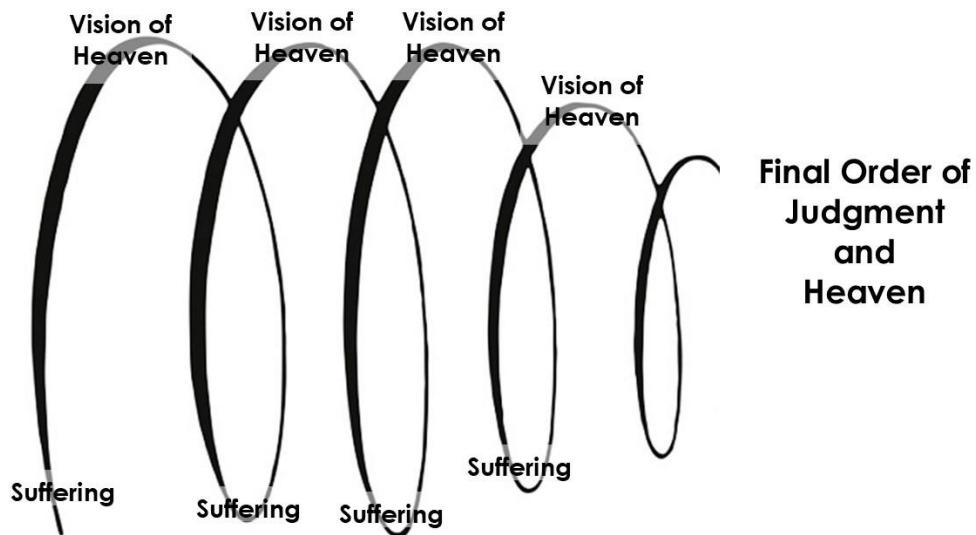
According to Jesus' teaching about the second coming and God's judgment, it is actually the lost who are "taken" and the saved who are "left behind".

Matthew 24:37-41 (Days of Noah)

Matthew 13:30 (Weeds and the Wheat)

Cyclical Approach to Revelation

Revelation contains a series of repetitions leading up to the final judgment of the lost and restoration of the saved.



So Far in Revelation

Chapters 1-3 - Introduction and Jesus' letters to seven churches in Asia Minor.

Chapters 4-5 - Vision of heaven, the scroll with seven seals, and the Lamb who is worthy to break the seals.

Chapter 6 - The Lamb opens six of the seven seals.

Chapter 7 – An interlude

Chapter 8 – The opening of the seventh seal introduces the seven trumpets.

First Four Trumpets

#1 Hail & Fire Mixed with Blood (one-third of earth/trees destroyed)

#2 Burning Mountain in the Sea (one-third of the contents of the sea destroyed)

#3 Blazing Star (Wormwood) on the Rivers (one-third of water supply contaminated)

#4 Sun, Moon, and Stars turned dark (one-third of the source of light is taken out)

Revelation 9 – More Trumpets

Verse 1

a star – used to describe the message of the angel. (Compare to chapter 1)

pit of the abyss – abundant room to offer judgment from God.

Verses 2-3

The figure of locusts as instruments of God's judgment is not new. (Joel 1:4; Joel 2:3-5)

Verses 4-6

harm – to render judgment

seal – representing a right relationship with God

five months – representing “full judgment”

agony like a scorpion sting – doesn't kill you but you wish you were dead (vs 6)

Verses 7-11

Description of these supernatural locusts

war horses - power

crowns/human faces - God ordained

hair - glory

teeth of lions - mighty

breastplates, chariots - war imagery

scorpion tails - can provide a hurting (the five month kind)

angel of the abyss - in charge of this 'army'

Abaddon - destruction

Apollyon – destroyer

Verse 12

Sure and full judgment is brought by the power of God upon those who are not “sealed.”

Verses 13-16

horns of the golden altar – originating from God

great river Euphrates – boundary where Israel's enemies would likely come from

twice ten thousand times ten thousand – two hundred million cavalry force

Verses 17-19

The horses are the main actors in this scene, not the horsemen.

breastplates (fiery red, dark blue, sulfur)
heads of lions
smoke, fire and sulfur
tails like snakes with heads

This is a _____ image of God's judgment.

Verses 20-21

These are the unrepentant kind.

There is an interlude between trumpet six and seven.

Observations

The judgment of God is _____.

The judgment of God is _____.

The judgment of God is _____.

One is either _____ or _____, an overcomer or one overcome.

Revelation

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Lesson #11: Revelation Chapters 10 & 11

Review

What We've Observed So Far

Chapters 1-3 - Introduction and Jesus' letters to seven churches in Asia Minor.

Chapters 4-5 - Vision of heaven, the scroll with seven seals, and the Lamb who is worthy to break the seals.

Chapter 6 - The Lamb opens six of the seven seals.

Chapter 7 - An interlude

Chapter 8 - The opening of the seventh seal introduces the seven trumpets.

These trumpets introduce actions from God against the ungodly.

Trumpets 1, 2, 3, & 4

Chapter 9 - Trumpets 5 & 6 use the imagery of supernatural locust exacting 'harm' on all who are 'unsealed'.

Revelation 10 and 11 – Interlude Encouraging Suffering Saints

Chapter 10

Verse 1

Images here show the grandeur of God.

Verses 2-4

angel standing on land and sea – a 'power pose'

little book – representing a message about to be communicated

seven thunders/do not write it down - The implication is that the message of the thunders serves as repetitions of the other messages (trumpets, seals, etc.).

Verses 5-7

raised right hand – demonstration of power and authority

there shall be no more delay - This seems to answer the question of the saints under the altar in chapter 6.

Time vs Eternity

It is important to remember that we live in the 'time realm' and God operates in the 'eternity realm'. 2 Peter 3:8-9

The Message of the Little Book

Verses 8-9

John becomes directly involved in this 'object lesson'.

The imagery of a messenger of God 'consuming a scroll' is also found in the Old Testament. (Ezekiel 3:1-2)

sweet and sour – this 'consumed scroll presents a paradox.

Verses 10-11

John consumes the 'sweet and sour' message and, in chapter 11, will share it.

Chapter 11

Verse 1-2

the 'measured' and 'unmeasured' - Here we have another descriptive distinction between the righteous and unrighteous.

the nations - another name giving to those without a right relationship with God.

trample the city for 42 months – Emphasizing that suffering is _____.

Verses 3-4

While the 'trampling' is taking place, the 'witnessing' is also taking place.

two witnesses – The 'measured' are now called the 'two witnesses.'

two olive trees – another description of the 'two witnesses'

This imagery is designed to show the _____ of their message.

Two Witnesses (Deuteronomy 17:6; Matthew 18:16; 2 Corinthians 13:1)

Olive Trees/Lampstands (Zechariah 4:1-6)

The two witnesses are the 'two-olive-trees' kind. They have direct and full supply from God.

The two witnesses represent the _____ of the church.

Verses 5-6

fire from their mouths – The attempt to hurt them backfires; sin brings its own judgment.

power to shut up the heavens – an image of Moses and the plagues of Egypt

An Unexpected Twist

Verse 7

the beast - This 'character' in the narrative will be more prominent in following chapters.

from the Abyss – identified as being doomed

overpower and kill them (two witnesses) – God doesn't cause it, but he permits it.

Verses 8-10

Sodom, Egypt, where their Lord was crucified – This brings to mind the experiences of God's people when they met tremendous opposition.

three and a half days – This is a temporary time.

they that dwell on earth – the unrepentant

gloat and celebrate - These people feel justified in what they did to God's people.

A Vision of Hope

Verses 11-13

Death is not _____ for Christians.

The Seventh Trumpet

Verses 14-19

The kingdom... has become the kingdom of our Lord – these words are found in Handel's Messiah (the Hallelujah Chorus)

and the twenty-four elders – calling back to chapters 4 & 5

The song of praise celebrates the _____ of God.

flashes of lightning, peals of thunder - more imagery of the glory of God

Revelation

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Lesson #12: Revelation Chapter 12

Review

Act I: Understanding the Relationship with Christ (Revelation 1-3)

A glorified Jesus is shown "standing among the lampstands." This pictures Christ's presence in the midst of a hurting church.

Act II: Understanding the Judgment from God (Revelation 4-11)

Chapters 4 & 5 - Heaven, the Scroll, the Lamb

Chapter 6 – Opening of the First Six Seals

Chapter 7 – An Interlude

Chapters 8 & 9 -Opening of Seventh Seal, The First Six Trumpets

Chapters 10 & 11 -Interlude, Seventh Trumpet

Continuing the Drama

Act III: Understanding Why There is Opposition (Revelation 12-14)

Revelation 12:1-17

The Reality of Opposition—From the Dragon

Verses 1-2

great sign - Referring to this as a great sign is to put the reader on the alert.

a woman - A new 'character' added to this drama.

pregnant/in pain - This image presents a paradox. Childbirth is a great moment, bringing life into the world. Childbirth is also a moment of temporary weakness.

Verse 3

dragon - The features of the dragon give evidence as to what the creature should be associated with.

large and red - could be compared to the horse and rider described in Revelation 6:4

seven heads/ten horns/seven crowns - Comparing the woman and the dragon, it appears they are on opposing sides.

Woman - Glorious, but seemingly in a venerable state.

Dragon - Large, intimidating. Seemingly unstoppable.

Verse 4

tail - Depicts strength and power.

devour her child - By all appearances, there would be nothing to stop the dragon from accomplishing his goal.

about to give birth - By all appearances, this woman in her weaken state, is utterly defenseless.

Verses 5-6

son/who will rule nations – See Revelation 2:27 and Psalm 2:9.

child snatched up to God and to his throne - The great red dragon was no match for the child protected by God.

woman in wilderness 1260 days - God provides protection for the woman as well as the child. The 1260 days is an image of the protection of God during temporary hardships.

The Background of Opposition

Verses 7-9

Michael - A chief angel whose name means “one who is like God”

dragon and his angels - The dragon appears to represent Satan, ‘his angels’ represent all who rebelled against God in Heaven.

he was not strong enough - From the very beginning, the Devil was doomed to fail. This is to serve as a point of reassurance for the Christian.

They lost their place - See Jude 1:6 and 1 Timothy 3:6

Whatever the name, dragon, ancient serpent, devil, Satan, the purpose is the same, to _____ the work of God, that is, the _____ of His people.

The Power Greater Than Opposition

Verse 10

the accuser - A fitting description of how the enemy attempts to operate in the life of a Christian.

Verse 11

by the blood of the lamb - The Christian is able to overcome because of his relationship to the Lamb.

did not shrink from death - The Lamb transforms death from a _____ to a _____.

Verse 12

heaven vs earth - Two groups are contrasted here, the those who dwell in heaven (righteous), vs the earth (wicked).

time is short - Yet another reminder that the Christian’s suffering is temporary.

Opposition and Protection Coexist

Verses 13-14

pursued the woman - The dragon's goal is to continue to cause trouble.
wings of a great eagle - Imagery sometimes used to symbolize the deliverance of God. See Exodus 19:4
time, times and half a time - This is a parallel to the 1260 days.

Verses 15-16

water from mouth of the serpent - Another image of how the enemy seeks to oppose God's people.

The earth helped the woman - likely drawn from the image of waters flowing from the mountains of Lebanon only to be 'lapped up' by the desert.

God's _____ is real, but so also is the _____ from the serpent.

Verse 17

dragon was enraged - The reality is the dragon never quits.

Targets of the dragon in this section

- the male child
- the woman
- the rest of her offspring

The enemy, who is constantly at war with _____ and _____, is doomed to defeat.

Revelation

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Lesson #13: Revelation Chapter 13

Review

Act I: Understanding the Relationship with Christ (Revelation 1-3)

A glorified Jesus is shown "standing among the lampstands." This pictures Christ's presence in the midst of a hurting church.

Act II: Understanding the Judgment from God (Revelation 4-11)

Chapters 4 & 5 - Heaven, the Scroll, the Lamb

Chapter 6 – Opening of the First Six Seals

Chapter 7 – An Interlude

Chapters 8 & 9 -Opening of Seventh Seal, The First Six Trumpets

Chapters 10 & 11 -Interlude, Seventh Trumpet

Act III: Understanding Why There is Opposition (Revelation 12-14)

Featured in Chapter 12:

The Woman and the Dragon

A 'woman about to give birth' being threatened by a 'great red dragon'.

The dragon's intent is to 'devour her child.'

The dragon (representing the Devil) was no match for the Child (representing Jesus).

The Background of Opposition

The reader is taken back in time to witness a war in heaven between Michael, a chief angel, and the dragon and his angels.

Main Lesson

The enemy wants to destroy the work of God and he never quits, but no matter how intimidating the 'red dragon' appears, salvation, power, and authority belong to God.

Revelation 13:1-18

The Beast of the Sea

Verses 1-2

beast – The word translated 'beast' here indicates something savage and untamed.

The word translated 'beast' in chapter 4 indicates 'living creature'.

ten horns/seven heads/crowns - This is an image of presumed power and authority.

blasphemous name - The misuse of holy things.

dragon gave the beast his power – The two (soon to be three) are working together.

His Power is Deceitful

Verses 3-4

seemed to have a fatal wound - The key word here is 'seemed'. This creature is doomed though there is an outward appearance of being healed.
people worshipped the dragon/the beast - Multitudes are easily taken in by the outward glitter.

Verses 5-6

proud words and blasphemies - The character of Satan is to be filled with pride.

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4

forty-two months - indicating that this situation is temporary

Verse 7

The purpose of the sea beast was to bring hurt to the people of God. (the forty-two-month kind)

The Effect of His Deceitful Power

Verse 8

inhabitants of the earth - a description of those who rebel against God

names not written in the Lamb's book of life - in other words, those who have chosen 'the beast' over 'the Lamb'.

Verses 9-10

whoever has ears—the reader is individually responsible for their response to this message.

"This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of God's people."

This verse becomes a _____ for all overcomers.

The Beast of the Earth

Verse 11

beast - the wild untamed kind.

horns like a lamb/spoke like a dragon - deceitful in nature, a poser

The Power and Purpose of the Second Beast

Verse 12

Its purpose is to work against God and the people of God.

Verses 13-14

performed great signs - shows false signs of divinity

ordered them to set up an image - falsely setting himself up as an object of worship

wounded and yet lived - pointing to the truth that this beast is the doomed kind.

Verse 15

This 'false god' is compelling everyone to worship.

Verses 16-17

mark on hands and forehead – This is a clear reference to the Shema, an ancient Jewish prayer of allegiance to God found in the book of Deuteronomy.
Deuteronomy 6:4-8

The beast is now demanding his own allegiance.

could not buy or sell without the mark - Unless you identify with 'the beast' you cannot function freely in life.

Verse 18

calculate - 'count' 'recon' 'decide by voting'

the number of (a) man - The original Greek does not contain the article before the word 'man'.

What do we make of the number 666?

Two Approaches

ONE: The Number Points to an _____.

Hebrew letters were also numbers.

Nero Caesar = 666 Beast = 666

Weakness of this approach: any number of names could be added up to number 666.

TWO: The Number Points to a _____.

In the same way the number 7 or 12 are associated with being 'complete', this number is associated with being 'bad'.

The nations become 'beasts' when they become full of pride.

They rise up, intimidate, and dominate.

They demand total allegiance.

But ultimately fall.

Revelation

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Lesson #14: Revelation Chapter 14

Review

Act I: Understanding the Relationship with Christ (Revelation 1-3)

A glorified Jesus who is “standing among the lampstands” (in the midst of the church), sends letters of encouragement, exhortation, and correction to seven in Asia Minor.

Act II: Understanding the Judgment from God (Revelation 4-11)

Chapters 4 & 5 - Heaven, the Scroll, the Lamb

Chapter 6 – Opening of the First Six Seals

Chapter 7 – An Interlude

Chapters 8 & 9 -Opening of Seventh Seal, The First Six Trumpets

Chapters 10 & 11 -Interlude, Seventh Trumpet

Act III: Understanding Why There is Opposition (Revelation 12-14)

Featured in Chapter 12:

The Woman and the Dragon

The Background of Opposition

Chapter 13 – Two more ‘opposers’

The beast of the sea and the beast of the land work together under the authority of the dragon to oppose God and His people.

The beast is identified with the number 666. This number is serves to describe the MORAL QUALITY of the beast (bad).

Revelation 14:1-20

Overcomers Know the Presence of God

Verse 1

Mount Zion – a figure of speech describing God’s dwelling place

144,000 - the same ‘sealed’ group found in chapter 7

Father’s name written on their foreheads - in contrast to ‘the mark’ of the beast

Revelation 2:17; 3:12

Verses 2-3

rushing waters/thunder/harpists - This reminds the reader that these things are of God.

new song - expressive of their NEW experience

no one could learn the song except the 144,000 - expressive of their SHARED

experience

Verses 4-5

This is a description of those who have not _____ to the yearnings of the false prophet.

These saints were not successful because they _____ the powerful beasts through power.

They were successful because they _____ the powerful beasts through faithfulness

Assurance the Opposition Must Be Punished

Verses 6-7

another angel - One of the great hosts of angels in service of God
fear God and give Him glory - This response is in stark contrast to that of those we saw in chapter 13 worshiping the dragon, or the beast, or the image.

Verse 8

Babylon - Used symbolically to describe a mighty foreign power that had brought captivity for the people of God.

Fallen! Fallen - A description of the wicked receiving their due justice.

Verses 9-10

if anyone worships the beast - Since they identify themselves with the beast as they do, they will share in the judgment of the beast.

full strength into the cup - God's judgment is complete.

Verse 11

fire and brimstone/smoke - Another dimension of their doom is pictured as fire sending up smoke, yet never running out of fuel.

The Key to Overcoming Opposition

Verse 12

These scenes are designed to _____ the saints to have the _____ needed to come through their trials

Verse 13

Overcoming is not about avoiding death, but being faithful even in death.

Reality of Full Judgment for the Oppressors

Verse 14

like a son of man - a common designation for 'God's man' or someone in His service.
gold crown - identifying with the things of God.

sharp sickle in his hand - The reader might identify this character as 'a reaper' or 'a harvester'

Verse 15-16

angel came out of the temple - in contrast to the dragon who comes 'out of the abyss'

the earth was harvested - Those on 'the earth' have been in opposition to God and His people.

Verse 17-18

Another angel/with sickle - Just like there were multiple 'beasts' opposing God, there are multiple angels carrying out the judgment of God.

grapes are ripe - a figure describing those who would be judged and the appropriate timing of God's judgment.

Verses 19-20

winepress of God's wrath - a picture of great pressure, a squeezing out

The point is that these are receiving their _____.

1,600 stadia - the length of the Ohio-Indiana state line.

Those marked by the Lamb receive full _____.

Those marked by the beast receive full _____.

Revelation

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Lesson #15: Revelation Chapters 15-16

Review

Act I: Understanding the Relationship with Christ (Revelation 1-3)

A glorified Jesus who is "standing among the lampstands" (in the midst of the church), sends letters of encouragement, exhortation, and correction to seven in Asia Minor.

Act II: Understanding the Judgment from God (Revelation 4-11)

Chapters 4 & 5 - Heaven, the Scroll, the Lamb

Chapter 6 – Opening of the First Six Seals

Chapter 7 – An Interlude

Chapters 8 & 9 -Opening of Seventh Seal, The First Six Trumpets

Chapters 10 & 11 -Interlude, Seventh Trumpet

Act III: Understanding Why There is Opposition (Revelation 12-14)

Featured in Chapter 12:

The Woman and the Dragon

The Background of Opposition

Featured in Chapter 13:

The Beast of the Sea

The Beast of the Land (666)

Featured in Chapter 14:

The victory experienced by those who overcome

The judgment experienced by those who oppose God

Act IV: Understanding God's Wrath and God's Righteousness (Revelation 15-22)

Act I - The Glorified Christ

Act II - The Throne Room of God

Act III - The 'Radiant Woman' and 'Great Sign'

Act IV - Another Sign in Heaven

Revelation 15:1-8

God Keeps His Promise

Verse 1

another sign - This alerts the reader that God is about to act.

seven last plagues - This underscores the importance of what is about to happen, God's final word.

Verse 2

sea of glass - Brings to mind the throne room scene in chapter 4.

those who had been victorious - A repeated description of God's people.

the beast, image, number - all of these symbols work together to describe the things that oppose God and His people.

having harps of gold - Yet another picture identifying these people with God

Verses 3-4

song of Moses - Pointing back to the greatest victory described in the Old Testament, the parting of the Red Sea. (Exodus 15:1)

song of the Lamb - This points back to the 'new song' sung by God's people in Revelation 5 and 14.

all nations will worship before you - Eventually the wicked will be humbled.

The Sevenfold Wrath of God

Verses 5-6

temple, tabernacle, covenant law - All three terms invite us into the presence of God. angels 'out of the temple' - As opposed to the dragon coming out of the abyss.

Verse 7

four living creatures - We first met these in chapter 4.

golden bowls filled with wrath - The reader is anticipating the results that will come from these instruments of divine justice.

Verse 8

smoke from the glory of God - Smoke evidencing God's glory is found several times in Scripture. Exodus 19:18 (Mt. Sinai); Exodus 40:34 (Tabernacle); 1 Kings 8:10-11 (Temple) no one could enter the temple - There is no way to interrupt God's activity here.

Revelation 16:1-21

Verse 1

God's wrath - God's _____.

into the earth - a designation commonly used in Revelation to describe those opposed to God.

The Terrible Reality of the Wrath of God

Verse 2

had the mark, worshiped its image - The identification of the wicked each time varies a little. sores broke out - The results of the wrath of God are awful.

Verse 3

on the sea - The first two bowls are poured out 'on the land' and then 'on the sea' pointing to where the two beasts of Revelation come from.

Verse 4

on the rivers—Just like the judgment of the third trumpet in Revelation 8:10-11, this plague contaminates the fresh water sources.

Only the Wicked Receive the Wrath

Verse 5

You are just in these judgments - The proposition is put out that God is just.

Verses 6-7

God's judgment here is in response to...

The blood of the _____ in Revelation 6:9-10.

The blood of the _____ in Revelation 11:7-10.

the altar - Referring to 'saints under the altar'

true and just are your Judgments - This truth is repeated to emphasize the point.

Verses 8-9

scorched by intense heat – A description of the horrible result of the wrath of God. they cursed the name of God - Another sign that this judgment was deserved.

Verses 10-11

on the throne of the beast - See Ephesians 6:10-12

darkness, gnawed their tongues - Yet another picture of the horrible result of the wrath of God.

cursed the God of heaven, refused to repent - Yet another reminder that this judgment is just.

Verse 12

river Euphrates, kings from the East - This is a picture of the opposition being marshalled against God.

Verses 13-14

frogs - In Bible times, frogs were considered symbols of _____.

Verse 15

as a thief - Christ's coming will arrive 'as a thief' for the _____.

blessed is the one who stays awake...

Twofold message of Revelation for the Christian is _____ and _____.

The Wicked are Assuredly Doomed

Verse 16

they gathered - A scene is presented as a marshalling of the forces of evil against God.



Armageddon (Har-Magedon):

Har – mountain;

Mageddon (Megiddo) - place of troops.

Image: Har-Mageddon is an actual location in Israel. The Valley of Megiddo was the scene of many battles and much bloodshed throughout history.

Verses 17-18

it is done - The enemies of God gathered to wage war only to be 'finished' by Him.

earthquake - Further indication of the glory of God.

Verses 19-21

city split into three parts, islands, mountains - Indicating God's complete judgment.

they cursed God - God's judgment is just.

Revelation

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Lesson #16: Revelation Chapter 17

Review

Revelation can be divided into four acts. Each act begins with the curtain drawn to reveal the glory of God.

Act I - The Glorified Christ

Act II - The Throne Room of God

Act III - The 'Radiant Woman' and 'Great Sign'

Act IV - Another Sign in Heaven

Act I: Understanding the Relationship with Christ (Revelation 1-3)

A glorified Jesus who is "standing among the lampstands" (in the midst of the church), sends letters of encouragement, exhortation, and correction to seven in Asia Minor.

Act II: Understanding the Judgment from God (Revelation 4-11)

Chapters 4 & 5 - Heaven, the Scroll, the Lamb

Chapter 6 – Opening of the First Six Seals

Chapter 7 – An Interlude

Chapters 8 & 9 -Opening of Seventh Seal, The First Six Trumpets

Chapters 10 & 11 -Interlude, Seventh Trumpet

Act III: Understanding Why There is Opposition (Revelation 12-14)

Featured in Chapter 12:

The Woman and the Dragon

The Background of Opposition

Featured in Chapter 13:

The Beast of the Sea

The Beast of the Land (666)

Featured in Chapter 14:

The victory experienced by those who overcome

The judgment experienced by those who oppose God

Act IV: Understanding God's Wrath and God's Righteousness (Revelation 15-22)

Chapters 15 & 16 - The Sevenfold Wrath of God

God's wrath is pictured as seven bowls being poured out by angels on the

wicked. The wrath of God is sure. The wrath of God is terrible. The wrath of God is only for the wicked.

Rules of Thumb We've Observed So Far

Things Connected to the "Stuff of God"

Bright, Flashing, Shining, Loud, Glass, Throne, Smoke, Holy

Things Connected to "Stuff Opposed to God"

Red Color, Beastly, Abyss, Image, Blasphemy, Death

Descriptions of God's People

Sealed, Under the Altar, 144,000, Overcomer, Marked by God

Descriptions of those Opposed to God

In the Earth, On the Earth, Kings of Earth, Those Marked by the Beast, Those Who
Worshipped the Beast

The 'Doomed Wicked' as Babylon

Revelation 17:1-18

Viewed from God's Vantage Point: God is Just

Verse 1

the great prostitute - Babylon is described figuratively as a 'great prostitute', worthy of judgment.

sits by many waters - Eventually we find out that this phrase refers to people (vs 15). Physical Babylon was located on the great water of the Euphrates.

Verse 2

kings/inhabitants of the earth - description of those in rebellion against God

wine of her adulteries - The Bible often uses the symbol of adultery to describe people rejecting the one true God and worshipping false gods. (Hosea 1:2)

Verse 3

in the Spirit/wilderness - Another reminder of John's circumstance. John is 'in the Spirit' seeing visions from God and 'in the wilderness', exiled to Patmos.

The Woman (good or bad?)

Scarlet beast with blasphemous names

Seven heads and ten horns - Just like the beasts in Revelation 12:3 and 13:1.

Seeing Through Her Sham

verse 4

the appearance of royalty - The purple, scarlet, gold, precious stones, pearls and golden cup give the appearance of royalty.

cup filled with filth of her adulteries - The outside is golden, but the contents are revealing.

verse 5

mystery - This word is used many times in the Bible to denote what God has revealed.

There is no _____ in this title. It reveals the sinful nature of this 'woman' and all she stands for.

verse 6

drunk with the blood - taking pleasure in bringing hardship, persecution, and death

God's holy people - saints

those who bore testimony - martyrs

astonished - deeply impacted from the realization of the truth

verse 7

the woman and the beast she rides - These two are the same _____.

verse 8

the beast...once was, now is not - as opposed to the Lord, 'who was, and is, and is to come' (Revelation 4:8).

out of the Abyss...go to its destruction - Nothing could be more doomed.

inhabitants of the earth...will be astonished - The beast impresses and deceives these people who rebel against God.

not been written in the book of life - a further description of the character of these rebellious people

The Viewer Profits from this Vision

verses 9-10

seven heads, hills, kings - These are all the same _____.

only for a little while - describing temporary suffering

verse 11

was an is not - This beast is a _____.

going to destruction - The end result is to be the main focus here.

verses 12-13

not received a kingdom - They seem to have the credentials of kings, but in reality have no authority.

one hour - Some translation say 'one day'. Any authority they have is temporary

verse 14

The Threat: The attractive but deceitful woman (prostitute), the seven-headed-ten-horned, and all those who have been involved with the prostitute unite to show the kind of opposition Christians face.

The Reality: The Lamb of God _____ over them all. Those who follow the Lamb share in His victory.

verses 15-16

will hate the prostitute/bring her to ruin - Those who have wooed the woman for their own selfish interests have now turned on her.

verse 17

God has put it into their hearts - This is a picture of God's _____ at work as He executes judgment.

verse 18

Whether we are seeing "the woman," "the prostitute," "the great city," or "Babylon," they are all alike.

Revelation

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Lesson #17: Revelation Chapter 18

Review

Act I: Understanding the Relationship with Christ (Revelation 1-3)

A glorified Jesus who is "standing among the lampstands" (in the midst of the church), sends letters of encouragement, exhortation, and correction to seven in Asia Minor.

Act II: Understanding the Judgment from God (Revelation 4-11)

Chapters 4 & 5 - Heaven, the Scroll, the Lamb

Chapter 6 – Opening of the First Six Seals

Chapter 7 – An Interlude

Chapters 8 & 9 -Opening of Seventh Seal, The First Six Trumpets

Chapters 10 & 11 -Interlude, Seventh Trumpet

Act III: Understanding Why There is Opposition (Revelation 12-14)

Featured in Chapter 12:

The Woman and the Dragon

The Background of Opposition

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The Beast of the Land (666)

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The victory experienced by those who overcome

The judgment experienced by those who oppose God

Act IV: Understanding God's Wrath and God's Righteousness (Revelation 15-22)

Chapters 15 & 16 - The Sevenfold Wrath of God

God's wrath is pictured as seven bowls being poured out by angels on the wicked. The wrath of God is sure. The wrath of God is terrible. The wrath of God is only for the wicked.

Chapter 17 – The 'Doomed Wicked' of Babylon

(Babylon is sometimes used in Scripture as a symbol of a seemingly overwhelming power causing harm to the people of God.)

Viewed from God's Vantage Point: God is Just

Babylon is described figuratively as a 'great prostitute' riding on a great beast.

Seeing Through Her Sham

Even though she has the appearance of royalty, the cup she holds is 'filled with abominable things.'

The beast she rides on is a _____.

The Viewer Profits from this Vision

The Threat: The attractive but deceitful woman (prostitute), the seven-headed-ten-horned, and all those who have been involved with the prostitute unite to show the kind of opposition that Christians face.

The Reality: The Lamb of God triumphs over them all.

Chapter 18 shows the fall of Babylon from a different perspective.

Revelation 18:1-24

Viewed from Man's Vantage Point: Loss for the Wicked

Verse 1-2a

down from heaven - The angel is coming 'down from heaven' as opposed to 'out of the abyss.'
great authority/earth illuminated/mighty voice - The 'rules of thumb' mentioned in previous lessons tell us that these things point to a message coming from God.

Verse 2

Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great! - Babylon's glory is gone.

haunt - dwelling place

demons/impure spirit/unclean bird, animal - This is simply pointing out the 'unclean' spiritual condition of this great city.

Verse 3

kings of earth - a phrase used to describe the wicked

maddening wine of her adulteries - Many on earth were 'seduced' by Babylon.

merchants of the earth/excessive luxuries - The city was also a home to greed and excess

Verses 4-5

come out of her, my people - This is a plea for the people of God not to compromise with the sins of the 'great city'.

her sins are piled up to heaven - This is in contrast to the prayers of the saints reaching heaven in Revelation 8:4.

Just as the _____ of the saints make their way before God, so do the _____ of the wicked.

Verses 6-8

pour her a double portion from her own cup - This is a parallel to Revelation 17:16 where the 'beast' turns against the 'prostitute'.

in one day - These plagues will come with _____.

The Threefold Lament

The Kings of the Earth

Verses 9-10

shared in her luxury - As they shared in the luxury of the great city, so will they share in her judgment.

The Merchants

Verses 11-17a

list of cargo - In the end, all the wealth, all the cargo, all they had traded adds up to nothing.
(Mark 8:36-37)

in one hour - All wealth could be gone 'in a moment.'

The Sea Captains

Verses 17b-19

every sea captain - They have profited from Babylon, transporting goods to and from the great city.
in one hour - Sin is both selfish and near-sighted. Its power is deceitful, and its doom is sure.

Putting one's trust in anything other than the _____ will ultimately lead to

_____ and _____.

A Celebration

Verse 20

rejoice...people of God - Again, this serves as an answer to the question found in Revelation 6:9-10. God is giving his suffering church a strong reassurance that suffering is temporary, and judgment is absolutely certain.

Never Again!

Verses 21-24

millstone thrown into the sea - This is a picture of judgment and echoes back to Jesus' statement found in Mark 9:42.

List of the Never-Agains

music/entertainment, workers of any trades, sound of a millstone (industry), light of lamp, weddings, merchants, world's important people (VIP) - It is all exposed, laid bare and made desolate.

The remaining chapters build to the climactic scenes in God's picture book.

Revelation

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Lesson #18: Revelation Chapter 19

Review

Act I: Understanding the Relationship with Christ (Revelation 1-3)

A glorified Jesus who is "standing among the lampstands" (in the midst of the church), sends letters of encouragement, exhortation, and correction to seven in Asia Minor.

Act II: Understanding the Judgment from God (Revelation 4-11)

Chapters 4 & 5 - Heaven, the Scroll, the Lamb

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Chapters 15 & 16 - The Sevenfold Wrath of God

God's wrath is pictured as seven bowls being poured out by angels on the wicked. The wrath of God is sure. The wrath of God is terrible. The wrath of God is only for the wicked.

Chapter 17 & 18 – The Doom of 'Babylon'

Babylon - The term Babylon sometimes used in Scripture as a symbol of a seemingly overwhelming power causing harm to the people of God.

Babylon is described figuratively as a 'great prostitute', worthy of judgment.

Those who seduced by and benefited from the 'great prostitute' mourn her demise. (Kings of the Earth, Merchants, Sea Captains)

Chapter 18 shows the fall of Babylon from a different perspective.

Revelation 19:1-21 Victory for the King of Kings

The Hallelujah Hymn

First Stanza, Avenged Blood

Verses 1-2

after this - What we see here is a response to what has happened before.

great multitude in heaven - This is reminiscent of Hebrews 12:1.

Hallelujah; Salvation, and glory... - The response is to offer a 'Hallelujah Hymn'.

avenged... the blood of his servants - Once again answering the cry of the 'saints under the altar' in Revelation 6:10.

Second Stanza, Praise from all God's Servants

Verse 3

smoke goes up forever - rising up as evidence of destruction below.

Verses 4-5

twenty-four elders, four living creatures - We first met them in the throne room scene of chapter 4.

all you his servants - This 'Hallelujah Hymn' can be sung even when a person is suffering if he understands the true nature of his relationship with Christ.

Third Stanza, Climax of Faithfulness

Verses 6-8

great multitude/rushing waters/thunder - an impressive powerful response of praise

God Almighty reigns - There is such an overwhelming sound that the reader cannot hear nor think about anything else. The Lord reigns!

the wedding of the Lamb - This imagery was drawn from a Jewish wedding.

Three Phases of a Jewish Wedding

_____ - When the terms of the marriage were accepted. From this moment, the two were legally husband and wife.

_____ - During this time the groom paid the dowry to the father of the bride and would prepare a home. At a time decided by the groom, there would be a procession of the wedding party. They would assemble at the house of the groom and proceed to the house of the bride.

_____ - The formal ceremony completed the marriage.

fine linen, bright and clean - This is a symbol of the purity of the faithful.

Verse 9

blessed are those who are invited - Building on the symbolism of the wedding. Those who are faithful to Christ will be part of this event.

Verse 10

I am a fellow servant with you - The angel makes it clear that John's worship is not to be directed toward him.

The Heavenly Warrior Defeats the Beast

Verse 11

heaven standing open - Another victory scene is unfolded.

white horse - This is a different 'white horse' than the one seen in Revelation 6:2.

Rider is called Faithful and True - These names offer a clue as to the identity of the rider. with justice he judges and wages war - The only thing this white horse and rider have in common with the one in chapter 6 is that they are both warriors.

Verses 12-14

blazing fire/many crowns - associated with God.

robe dipped in blood - having suffered, yet victorious

name Word of God - Reminiscent of John 1:1-5

the armies of heaven were following him - These too are victorious because of their faithfulness.

Verses 15-16

sharp sword (out of his mouth) - It is the _____ of the rider that brings judgment to the enemies of the people of God.

rule them with an iron scepter - This refers to a prophecy about Jesus found in Psalm 2:9.

robe/thigh: King of kings/Lord of lords - There is no mistaking who this rider is.

Verses 17-18

gather for the great supper - This is not to be confused with the wedding feast of the Lamb.

birds...eating the flesh... - This is similar to a scene of destruction described in Ezekiel 39:17-18.

Verse 19

gathered together to make war - Yet another depiction of the futile attempt of the wicked (beast and kings of the earth) to oppose God.

Verses 20-21

thrown into the fiery lake - Whether their doom is pictured as food for the birds or fuel for the lake of fire, the result is the same, eternal destruction—ruin forever.

Revelation

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Lesson #19: Revelation Chapter 20

Review

Act I: Understanding the Relationship with Christ (Revelation 1-3)

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Act II: Understanding the Judgment from God (Revelation 4-11)

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God's wrath is pictured as seven bowls being poured out by angels on the wicked. The wrath of God is sure. The wrath of God is terrible. The wrath of God is only for the wicked.

Chapter 17 & 18 – The Doom of 'Babylon'

Babylon is described figuratively as a 'great prostitute', worthy of judgment.

Those who were seduced by and benefited from the 'great prostitute' mourn her demise.

Featured in Chapter 19:

A series of 'hallelujah hymns' celebrating God's judgment of the wicked and His blessing of the faithful.

A picture of Jesus as a heavenly warrior defeating the beast.

Revelation 20:1-15 Thousand Years/Judgment of Satan

Drawing from What We've Observed So Far

Revelation is not _____.

Numbers in Revelation are not to be viewed _____.

Doom for the Dragon and All Oppressors

Verses 1-3

angel, Abyss, dragon - We've been introduced to these 'characters' before in chapters 9, 12, 13, 19, etc.

great chain - The tool of the angel is a 'great chain' to bind the work of the enemy.

locked and sealed (1,000 Years) - The enemy is the 'locked and sealed for 1,000 years' kind.

after that - This is to be seen as a picture and not in a chronological sense.

set free for a short time - The enemy is the 'set free for a short time' kind.

About the Millennium

The Millennium is Now (Revelation 20:1-3)

The Devil is Bound Now (John 3:8; Hebrews 2:14-15; Matthew 12:28-29; John 12:31)

The chains that bind Satan is the _____.

Christians Reign with Christ Now (Revelation 20:4)

When we are in Christ, we reign with Christ. We share in His authority. (Ephesians 2:5-6)

We Receive our First Resurrection Now (Revelation 20:5-6)

See Ephesians 2:1-5; Romans 1:17

Jesus clearly described the two resurrections.

First Resurrection (John 5:24-27)

Second Resurrection (John 5:28-30)

The first resurrection is our _____.

The second resurrection is God's _____.

The Reality of Opposition: But God's People Win

Verses 7-10

when the thousand years are over - "The visions of John are not to be understood as indicating a sequence of times. They are largely repetitious and parallel. The same scene is thrown up upon the screen a second or third time, that all the light of prophetic revelation may be focused on a single event." -Charles R. Erdman (The Revelation of John)

deceive the nations - The aim of the opposition is deceitful and destructive.

Gog and Magog - Taken from Ezekiel 38, Gog was the prince of Magog and a strong opponent of Israel.

surrounded the camp of God's people - This is another picture of the people of God facing opposition.

fire came down from heaven and devoured them - A repeating image of the enemies of God attempting to wage battle only to be destroyed.

Devil...thrown into the lake of fire - God reminds the reader that the devil is the 'doomed kind'.

God's Eternal Judgment Upon the Wicked

Verses 11-15

great white throne - This is both a judgment and a victory scene.

earth and heaven fled from his presence - The ultimate authority is from God, not from the deceiver.

gave up their dead - This is the second resurrection Jesus spoke of in John 5.

books opened - This image makes it clear that those who receive judgment are the ones who deserve it.

The good news for the Christian is that we are not judged according to what we have done, but according to what Christ has done for us. (Romans 3:23-24)

Revelation

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Lesson #20: Revelation Chapter 21

Review

Act I: Understanding the Relationship with Christ (Revelation 1-3)

A glorified Jesus who is "standing among the lampstands" (in the midst of the church), sends letters of encouragement, exhortation, and correction to seven in Asia Minor.

Act II: Understanding the Judgment from God (Revelation 4-11)

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A picture of Jesus as a heavenly warrior defeating the beast.

Chapter 20 – Thousand Years/Judgement of Satan

The Millennium is Now

The Devil is bound now.

Christians reign with Christ now.

We receive our first resurrection now.

The Reality of Opposition: But God's People Win

The Great White Throne

Revelation 21:1-27 Reward for the Righteous: God with His People

The final scenes help the faithful see themselves as...

The _____

The _____

The _____

A New Situation for God's People

Verse 1

then I saw - This phrase once again draws the reader's attention to something important.

a new heaven and a new earth - The 'new' heaven/earth is better than the 'first' heaven/earth.

no longer any sea - The sea was a symbol of threat.

The Four Heavens (Jack Cottrell)

The Bible uses the word 'heaven' and describes the concept of 'heaven' in four different senses.

The _____ Heaven: God's very being or pure divine presence.
Matthew 6:9; Deuteronomy 26:15; Psalm 109:19; John 3:13

The _____ heavens: The skies above, outer space.
Genesis 1:1; Psalm 19:1-2; Matthew 26:64; Matthew 24:30

The _____ heaven: God's present throne room.
The created world of the angels.
Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:1-6; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Revelation 6:9
This is the 'heaven' we go to when we die until the second coming of Jesus.

The _____ heaven: Our eternal home.
John 14:2; 2 Peter 3:13

Verses 1-5

God's People

holy city, new Jerusalem, bride - The people of God.

God's Presence

God himself will be with them - Wherever God is, that is where heaven is.

God's Peace

He will wipe every tear - Heaven is the great place of 'no more's'.

I am making everything new - We get an 'upgrade'.

Verses 6-7

Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End - This title was first seen in Revelation 1:8.

I will give water - A symbol of God's eternal provision.

those who are victorious (overcome) - This reward is designed for the faithful.

Verse 8

second death - In contrast to the 'new heaven' and 'new earth'.

Verse 9

I will show you the bride - The bride, the wife of the Lamb, and the city are interchangeable terms describing the people of God.

Verse 10-14

Holy City, Jerusalem - It is equivalent with the new heaven and new earth.

Using the image of a city carries with it the idea of _____ for God's people.

shone with the glory of God - It is a **lighted** city.

it had a great high wall - It is a **walled** city.

twelve gates - It is a **gated** city.

twelve foundations with names of twelve apostles - A picture of how Jesus, using the Apostles, established his church on a firm foundation. (Matthew 16:18)

Verse 15

rod of gold to measure the city - The city is the measured kind. In other words, it is _____.

Verses 16-21

The measuring simply means that God will provide a _____ place for his people.

The material list emphasizes the holiness of the place.

pearl gates - This is where that popular image of the pearly gates of heaven originated.

Verses 22-27

I did not see a temple - The temple concept has given place to the fullness of God.

glory of God gives it light - On earth, day gives way to the darkness of night.

Not so in the new heaven.

nations and kings of the earth - In this context, these 'kings' and 'nations' represent the righteous.

the gates will never be shut - There will be no more chance of danger or oppression.

nothing impure will ever enter - A place of eternal holiness.

Revelation

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Lesson #21: Revelation Chapter 22

Review

Act I: Understanding the Relationship with Christ (Revelation 1-3)

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Act II: Understanding the Judgment from God (Revelation 4-11)

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The Millennium is Now

The Devil is bound now.

Christians reign with Christ now.

We receive our first resurrection now.

The Reality of Opposition: But God's People Win

The Great White Throne

Chapter 21 – Reward for the Righteous: God with His People

The faithful are described as *the bride, the wife of the Lamb, and the Holy City*.

This chapter describes a new situation for God's people, a promised heaven.

This promised heaven is described as a holy city, a refuge, that is lighted, walled, gated, and measured.

Revelation 22:1-21 The Conclusion

Eden Restored

Verse 1-2a

water of life - This is an image of the provision of God.

middle of the great street - This endless supply of water is constantly delivered to the heart of the city.

Verse 2b

tree of life - This harkens back to a tree that was placed in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:9).

twelve crops of fruit - This number denotes complete provision.

yielding fruit every month - This denotes constant provision.

leaves for the healing of the nations - This denotes a curing supply.

Verse 3

no longer will there be any curse - The curse entered the world when Adam and Eve rebelled.

Now, finally it is gone!

throne of God of the Lamb...in the city - God and his people are together.

Verse 4

they will see his face - This is also promised in 1 John 3:2.

name on their foreheads - His name is their name. They are identified with Him.

Verse 5

no more night - God's presence provides complete security.

they will reign - Living with Christ is the same as reigning with Christ.

Reminder of the Practical Purpose of the Book

Verse 6

the angel said to me - The angel is about to offer some concluding remarks to John.

trustworthy and true - All that has been seen in this book can be trusted.

soon take place - Instead of putting a _____ value on the word 'soon', it is more helpful to put a _____ value on it.

Assurance to the Faithful

Verse 7

I am coming soon - This statement is repeated five times through the book of Revelation.

(Revelation 2:16; 3:11; 22:7; 22:12; 22:20)

The term 'soon' or 'quickly' is designed to remember one's _____,

not one's _____.

Verses 8-9

I, John, am the one who heard and saw - The message of the book was first of all intended to meet John's need on Patmos.

I fell down to worship - A natural response to hearing and understanding the truth of God is to worship.

I am a fellow servant - A reminder that we worship God alone, and not His angels.

The Message is Practical for the Righteous

Verse 10

do not seal up the words - In chapter 5, we were presented with a sealed scroll. Now that the message is revealed it should not be hidden.

the time is near - The word translated 'time' in this verse denotes the idea of _____.

Verse 11

The Point: We choose whether to follow God or follow sin.

Invitation and Warning

Verses 12-13

according to what they have done - Who one identifies with on earth will determine what one receives in eternity.

Alpha and Omega - Christ is the _____,

Verse 14

A blessing is for those who make the proper _____ to the _____ of God.

wash their robes - A figurative description of the proper response to God. (1 Corinthians 6:11)

Two blessings for with washed robes

right to the tree of life - Eternal provision

may go through the gates of the city - Eternal protection

Verse 15

outside are the dogs - To the original reader, these creatures were scavengers, not the household pets we think of today.

Verse 14 tells us what to do. Verse 15 tells us what to avoid.

Verse 16

I, Jesus - This is not only the message of Jesus, but also from Jesus.

Root of David, Morning Star - This refers to titles previously mentioned (Revelation 5:5; 2:28)

Verse 17

come - This is an invitation and encouragement for those who hear this message to respond appropriately.

Warning to the One Who Distorts the Message

Verses 18-19

If anyone adds - This amounts to 'attacking'. A willful perversion of the truth.

if anyone takes words away - A parallel of the previous verse. The phrase means 'carry off'.

Final Words

Verse 20

I am coming soon - Again, the word 'soon' can be interpreted to mean 'with certainty'.

Amen - So be it.

come, Lord Jesus - This expresses the soul cry of all who live and suffer for the Lord.

Verse 21

A fitting benediction for a powerful message.