



THE LAST BOOK

**HERE IS A
REVIEW OF THE
LAST BOOK OF
THE BIBLE**
THE LAST BOOK
OF THE BIBLE,
THE BOOK OF
REVELATION, IS A
DIFFICULT BOOK
AND GIVES US
DIFFERENT
PERSPECTIVES
FROM THE FINAL
PERIOD OF THE
APOSTLE JOHN
ON THE ISLAND
OF PATMOS.

**REV: LARS-GUNNAR
SANDBERG**

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

1. Introduction

The Book of Revelation is a very difficult book to understand. This is because it is written using the imagery of John's time. This means that the Christians in John's time understood the meaning of the images and symbols, but today it is very difficult for us to do so. This type of writing is called apocalyptic. It is a Greek word that means "revelation." The apocalyptic writings conveyed God's revelation to those who were able to understand the images and symbols.

As we study the book, we should try to discover the meaning of the images and symbols.

Translated from my original English text written in 1987 during my time as a Bible teacher in 85 congregations in northern Zambia.

The Author of the Book

I believe that John, the son of Zebedee, an apostle of the Lord Jesus, wrote the Book of Revelation (see 1:1, 4). Others believe that another person named John wrote the book, but they cannot prove this. They think so because the language in the Book of Revelation differs from the language in the Gospel that John wrote. I believe that the difference is due to the fact that John wrote the Book of Revelation several years after the Gospel, and that here he addressed different subjects than in the Gospel.

When did John write the book?

He wrote the book between the years AD 90 and 95. This was about 60–65 years after Jesus died on the cross.

The Name of the Book

The name comes from a word in the first verse. In verse 1 we read: “The revelation of Jesus Christ ...” The Greek word is *apokalypsis*. Some English books use this word and refer to the Book of Revelation as “The Apocalypse of John.”

Why did John write the book?

He wrote this book for those who had heard the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and had received Jesus as their Savior. They had heard the following:

1. Jesus is the Christ (the Messiah), the Son of God.
2. He has authority to rule over everything.
3. He was rejected by people and crucified, but this did not happen because He lacked power, but because it was God’s way to save people.
4. He died, but He also rose from the dead and reigns forever.
5. He returned to heaven, but He will come back to the earth, destroy all other kingdoms, and reign forever.

This is what they had heard — but what did they see?

6. The return of Jesus was delayed.

7. The church was a very small group, and it did not seem as if it would ever spread across the whole earth.
8. Most people continued in their evil ways.
9. The Romans had great power and ruled over the whole known world at that time. They persecuted the Christians.
10. The Romans worshiped idols. Only a few of them accepted Jesus as their Savior.

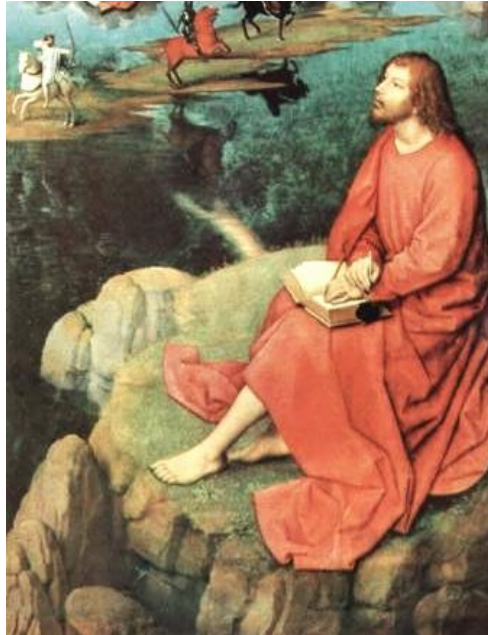
The Christians asked themselves:
What is happening to the gospel? Is it true? Is it just nonsense? Should we continue to believe in it?

John wrote the Book of Revelation to answer these questions.

My Method of Studying the Book

I will ask three questions:

1. What message did John write to the church in his own time?
2. What message did he write to the church in the world today?
3. What did he write about things that will happen in the future?



Chapter 1 – John Explains the Book

Verse 1

“Revelation.” Here it means a revelation that cannot be understood by human wisdom. These things have been revealed by God and can only be understood by those to whom God gives wisdom.

“The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him.” This means that God gave the revelation to Jesus Christ, so that He in turn could give it to His servants. Jesus...

He sent His angel as a messenger to reveal this to His servant John.

“What must soon take place.” This shows that John primarily wrote for the church in his own time. But we should remember that for God a thousand years are like a day (2 Peter 3:8). This means that the Book of Revelation also speaks to us today and furthermore tells of things that will happen in the future.

Verse 2

In this book, John wrote the message that came from God concerning Jesus Christ.

Verse 3

“Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy and blessed are those who hear it.”

Compare these words with:

14:13: “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.”

16:15: “Behold, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments, so that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed.”

19:9: “Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.”

20:6: “Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection.”

22:7: “Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”

22:14: “Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and may enter the city by the gates.”

Part 3

In 1:3, “the words of the prophecy” are the words that God revealed to John.

“The one who reads aloud” refers to those who read the words of the book aloud during Sunday services.

“Those who hear” refers to those who attended the services.

Both those who read the words to others and those who hear them will be blessed. It is always good to read and listen to God’s Word.

Notice that these people are not blessed unless they do what is taught in the book. They must hold fast to what is written.

We Christians today are blessed if we listen to God’s Word and live according to what we hear (cf. James 1:22).

“For the time is near.” See the notes on the words “what must soon take place” in verse 1. Christians must always believe that the time is near and watch and wait for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verses 4–8 – Greeting

Verse 4 John wrote the Book of Revelation as a letter to the seven churches in the province of Asia.

Asia was the region around the city of Ephesus.

Which churches did John write to? In chapters 2 and 3 we find their names: Ephesus (2:1), Smyrna (2:8),

Pergamum (2:12), Thyatira (2:18), Sardis (3:1), Philadelphia (3:7), and Laodicea (3:14). The names are also found in 1:11.

“Grace to you and peace.” These words appear again and again in the New Testament (see Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2; Eph 1:2; Phil 1:2; Col 1:2; 1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:2; 1 Tim 1:2; Titus 1:4; Philemon 3; 1 Pet 1:2; 2 Pet 1:2; 2 John 3).

We see that the first Christians used these words when they greeted their Christian friends.

“Grace.” Because of our sin, we deserve God’s wrath and judgment, but because of God’s love, we receive forgiveness and salvation.

“Peace.” Because of our sins, we are enemies of God, but in Jesus Christ we receive peace with God (see Rom 5:1). We also have peace in our hearts because our sins are forgiven.

“From Him who is and who was and who is to come.” We receive grace and peace from God the Father, who never changes. He is here today, He was there at the beginning of time, and He will be with us in the future (see Mal 3:6; James 1:17). God is eternal. People are born and die, but God has neither beginning nor end.

“And from the seven spirits who are before His throne.” There are two possible meanings here:

1. John was referring to the spirits of the seven churches, that is, that these represented the churches before God’s throne (cf. v. 20).

2. In many Jewish writings, the number seven means perfection or completeness. In that case, “the seven spirits” would refer to the one perfect Spirit — the Holy Spirit of God.

Also note that God the Father is mentioned in verse 4 and Jesus Christ in verse 5, with the seven spirits in between.

Therefore, it seems that the words refer to the Holy Spirit. Yet we do not know with certainty which meaning John had in mind.

Grace and peace also come from Jesus Christ. Notice how Jesus is described:

“The faithful witness.” Jesus never lies. He always reveals the truth to people (cf. 3:14; Ps 89:37–38).

“The firstborn from the dead.” (See Col 1:18; Acts 26:23; 1 Cor 15:20.)

Jesus was not the first to be raised from the dead (see John 11:17–44), but all the others died again. Jesus rose, lives today, and will live forever. When Jesus rose, He became “the firstborn from the dead.” All Christians will follow Him—they will rise and live forever.

“The ruler of the kings of the earth.” Jesus is the King of kings (see 17:14; 19:16; Ps 89:28).

Then John reflected on what Jesus had done:

“He who loves us.” This is something wonderful: the Son of God loves us sinners. See John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20. For John, Jesus’ love for him was very important (cf. Gal 2:20). The same was true for Paul. We too should rejoice that Jesus loves us.

Because Jesus loves us, He has freed us from our sins. See Heb 9:22: “Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.” Therefore, Jesus shed His blood to free us from our sins (see also 1 Pet 1:18–19).

“And has made us a kingdom.” See Exod 19:6. All who believe in Jesus are members of His kingdom.

“And priests to His God and Father.” A priest is a mediator between God and people. He prays for the people and presents their offerings before God. He proclaims God’s Word to the people.

We Christians today pray for others before God. We also offer our bodies as a sacrifice to God (see Rom 12:1). We proclaim the message that comes from God to the people.

Notice that God saves us in Christ so that we may serve Him.

When John thought about all this, his heart was filled with worship, and he wrote:

“To Him be glory and power forever and ever.

Verse 7

Although John ended verse 6 with “Amen,” he continued to think about Jesus and about what will happen in the future. Jesus will come on the clouds of heaven (see Dan 7:13; Matt 16:27; 24:30).

“Every eye will see Him.” These words show the great glory of Jesus. Jesus will come in the glory of the Father together with His angels, with such splendour that all people will see Him.

Then John wrote about those who pierced Him and about all the tribes of the earth. He was thinking about Jesus...

...to judge them. Therefore they will mourn and wail.

“Yes, amen.” John was convinced that what he wrote would truly happen.

Verse 8

“I am the Alpha and the Omega.” Alpha is the first letter of the Greek alphabet and Omega the last (see 21:6; 22:13). God is the One who is at the beginning and the One who is at the end.

“Who is and who was and who is to come.” Here again we see the greatness of the eternal God.

“The Almighty.” There is no one else who has power like our God.

“The Lord God.” John uses these names to emphasize God’s power and greatness.

Verses 9–20 – John’s First Vision

Verse 9

Here we see that John lived in fellowship with those who would read his words. He did not write: “I know this because I am a great man.” He wanted to show that he wrote because God had revealed this to him.

“Your brother and partner in the tribulation.” John suffered together with the other Christians.

“And in the kingdom.” See the note on verse 6.

“And in the endurance that is in Jesus.” This refers to the strength to continue serving Jesus even in suffering. This strength comes from God through faith (cf. Heb 12:1).

John suffered because of his faith. They sent him to the island of Patmos because he preached God’s Word, the gospel of Jesus. Patmos was an island in the sea opposite Ephesus. As punishment, John was forced to break stones with a hammer every day and was not allowed to leave the island. He was a prisoner.

Verse 10

“I was in the Spirit.” See also 4:2; 17:3; 21:10. Cf. 1 Sam 10:10; 19:22–24. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Saul so that he prophesied.

That John was “in the Spirit” means that God’s Spirit, the Holy Spirit, came upon him and guided him so that he saw visions and was able to write down God’s Word.

” “On the Lord’s Day.” The Lord’s Day is Sunday. The first Christians celebrated Sunday because Jesus rose from the dead on that day. They chose that day to worship the Lord. Those who worship on Saturday follow the law of the Old Testament, but not the practices of the early Christians that we find in the New Testament.

“A loud voice like a trumpet.” John uses figurative language to describe God’s voice — “like a trumpet” shows how powerful it was.

Verse 11

Compare with verse 4. Here the seven churches are mentioned again. They were all located near Ephesus. We believe that John was the Lord’s servant in Ephesus before he was sent to Patmos. Therefore, he knew these churches well.

Verse 12

John saw seven golden lampstands. See verse 20: they represent the seven churches.

Verse 13

“One like a Son of Man.” See Dan 7:13. Jesus called Himself the Son of Man. The name refers both to Jesus’ humanity and to His glory. He came as a true human but is also the Lord from heaven (1 Cor 15:47).

“Clothed with a long robe.” Such garments were worn by people of great honour and authority.

“With a golden sash around His chest.” This was a sign of royal dignity.

Verse 14

“His head and hair were white.” Cf. Dan 7:9. This speaks of wisdom and glory.

“His eyes were like flames of fire.” This shows His power (cf. 2:18; 19:12; Dan 10:6).

Verse 15

“His feet were like glowing bronze.” This shows His strength and also His judgment (cf. 19:15).

“His voice was like the sound of rushing waters.” Cf. Ezek 43:2. John uses of Jesus words that Ezekiel used of God.

Verse 16

“In His right hand He held seven stars.” See v.20. The stars represent the angels of the churches. The image shows that Jesus holds the churches in His hand—He gives them strength and cares for them.

“Out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword.” This is a picture of judgment. Jesus’ word will judge His enemies (cf. 2:16; Hebr 4:12; John 12:48).

“His face was like the sun shining in full strength.” This shows Jesus’ glory and power.

Verse 17

The vision of Jesus made John afraid, and he fell down as though dead. But Jesus said, “Do not be afraid,” and revealed Himself to him.

“I am the First and the Last.” Cf. v.8; Isa 44:6; 48:12. These words are used of God, and...

Part 7–11

...this applies to Jesus, since God and Jesus Christ are one (see John 1:1).

We saw in verse 16 that Jesus holds the churches in His right hand. Here we see that He helps John with His right hand. This means that Jesus gives strength to the churches and takes care of them, but also that He holds every believer in His power and cares for each one.

Verse 18

Jesus’ resurrection from the dead was very important. Because of the resurrection, He is the Living One, who lives forever and ever.

“I have the keys of death and of Hades.” This means that Jesus has authority even over death and Hades. Hades is the place of the dead. Christ has power over life and death. The Roman emperor who persecuted the Christians had great power, but his power was not as great as Christ’s.

Verse 19

Jesus commanded John to write down what he saw (cf. v.11).

“What you see” refers to the visions of Jesus Christ.

John was to write about what concerned the seven churches in Asia (chapters 2–3) and also about what would happen after his time.

Verse 20

John explains the seven stars and the seven lampstands.

The stars are a picture of the angels of the churches. What does “angel” mean here? We do not know exactly, but there are three suggestions:

1. Heavenly angels—that each church is represented by an angel before God. But would Jesus have John write to angels in heaven?
2. The leaders (pastors) of the churches. But why then did John not write: “To the leader of the church in ...”?
3. The word “angel” is used figuratively for the spirit of the church itself.

All these explanations have difficulties, but I believe that the angels refer to the leaders of the churches.

The lampstands represent the churches. Notice that the churches are only lampstands—Jesus Christ Himself is the light (see John 1:9).

Chapter 2 The Church in Ephesus

Now we begin to study the letters to the seven churches. Even though John wrote to seven churches in Asia, we find much in these letters that applies to our church today.

In the letters we find:

Greeting: “To the angel of the church in ...”

1. A description of Jesus Christ.
 2. Thanksgiving for the church’s work and character (missing in the letter to Laodicea).
 3. Rebuke because of sin in the church (missing in the letters to Smyrna and Philadelphia).
 4. Exhortation.
 5. “He who has ears, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”
 6. A promise to those who remain faithful.
7. Ephesus (2:1–7)

“To the angel ...” see 1:20.

Ephesus was the largest city in Asia. Paul worked there for two years and founded the church (Acts 19). There was also the great cult of Artemis there. Paul wrote the letter to the Ephesians, Timothy lived there for a time (1 Tim 1:3), and John is believed to have lived there before he was taken to Patmos.



“He who holds the seven stars in His right hand” — Jesus holds the leaders of the churches in His power and cares for them (cf. 1:16, 20).

“He who walks among the seven golden lampstands” — Jesus lives in fellowship with His churches.

Verses 2–3

Jesus praises the church for their deeds, labor, and perseverance. They served Christ despite suffering. They also refused to have fellowship with those who did not teach the truth about Christ.

Verses 4–5

The warning: “You have forsaken your first love.” At the beginning, they had loved Jesus deeply, but their love had grown cold. They resisted false teaching but lacked love

for people. Jesus teaches that we should love even our enemies (Matt 5:43–44).

They must remember, repent, and return to their first works. Otherwise, Jesus would come and remove their lampstand—the church would cease to exist.

What about us? Do we love Jesus with all our heart? Do we love others, even our enemies?

Verse 6

They hated the works of the Nicolaitans (not the people). These taught that it was acceptable to eat food sacrificed to idols and to live immorally.

Verse 7

The one who overcomes will be given to eat from the tree of life—that is, to receive eternal life—in the paradise of God.

The church in Smyrna (2:8–11)

Jesus is called “the First and the Last” and “the One who died and came to life.”

Jesus knows their suffering and poverty, but says: “you are rich” — they were rich in the Spirit.

The Jews who persecuted them are called “a synagogue of Satan.”

They would suffer even more but are urged to be faithful unto death. Then they will receive the crown of life — eternal life.

The one who overcomes will not be harmed by the second death.

The church in Pergamum (2:12–17)

Jesus has the sharp two-edged sword.

The church lived where “Satan has his throne” — emperor worship was especially strong there. Despite persecution, they remained faithful, even when Antipas was killed.

But some followed the teaching of Balaam: they led Christians into idolatry and immorality.

Jesus commands them to repent.

The one who overcomes will receive the hidden manna and a white stone with a new name — a new character before God.

The church in Thyatira (2:18–23)

Thyatira was a small trading city. Lydia came from there (Acts 16:14).

Jesus is described with eyes like flames of fire and feet like bronze — power and judgment.

The church had love, faith, service, and perseverance, and their good works were increasing.

But they tolerated “Jezebel” — a woman who taught them to take part in idolatry and immorality, like Queen Jezebel in the Old Testament.

Jesus gave her time to repent, but she refused. Therefore, judgment would come upon her and her followers if they did not repent.

“Her children” are those who accept her teaching. They will die as a warning to others.

“I am He who searches hearts and minds.”

This means that Jesus knows everything within a person. He knows our motives and all our thoughts.

Verses 24–25

Those who did not accept this woman’s teaching did right. Jesus wanted them simply to continue as they were.

Verse 26

“The one who overcomes.” See the comments on verse 7.

“I will give him authority over the nations.” This means that Christians who are faithful will reign with Jesus when He returns.

Verse 27

These words mean that Jesus will judge the nations together with those who belong to Him.

“Just as I have received authority from My Father.” See Ps. 2:7–9.

Verse 28

“I will give him the morning star.” This seems to refer to Christ Himself (see Rev. 22:16).

Fellowship with Christ Himself is the greatest reward for the Christian.

v. 29

Se v. 7, 11, 17.

Chapter 3 – The church in Sardis

Verse 1

Compare 2:1, 8, 12, 18.

Five roads met in the city of Sardis. This meant that many caravans with goods passed through it. Many merchants lived in the city. The people of Sardis had great wealth. They focused on their riches and forgot the things of God.

“He who has the seven spirits of God.” This seems to mean that Jesus has the Holy Spirit and gives Him to Christians (see 1:4).

“The seven stars.” See 1:20.

The church in Sardis had a good reputation. People said: “Look at the church in Sardis. It is large and rich.”

But Jesus said: “You are dead.” Why? Because they did not have God’s life in their hearts (see 2 Tim. 3:5; James 2:17).

Verse 2

The city of Sardis was captured by Cyrus, king of Persia, in 549 BC and by Antiochus in 218 BC because the people did not keep watch.

Now Jesus says to them: “Be watchful” or “Wake up.” Satan tries to control us and defeat us, and if we do not watch, he will defeat us without a struggle.

The Christians in Sardis must revive God’s work before the church dies.

“I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God.”

These are strong words of condemnation.

Verse 3

They should remember what they had received and heard and repent. If they do not wake up, Jesus will come to them in judgment like a thief (see Matt. 24:43; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10). He will come suddenly.

Verse 4

“A few who have not soiled their garments.” This is a picture of those who have not taken part in the sinful actions of the others in Sardis. White garments are a picture of righteousness. They will walk with Christ as those who have been cleansed in His blood.

“They are worthy” because they are faithful.

Verse 5

“White garments.” A sign of holiness and righteousness (see v. 4).

“The book of life.” Here we encounter the idea that the names of those who will receive eternal life are written in the book of life in heaven.

The one who overcomes will stand righteous in heaven with eternal life, and Jesus Christ Himself will testify for him before God...

...and all the angels, and say:
“This person believed in Me and has lived well.”

Verse 6
Compare 2:7, 11, 17, 29.

The church in Philadelphia

Verse 7
Compare 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1.

Philadelphia was an important city when John wrote. It lay between Sardis and Laodicea. Many merchants passed through Philadelphia, so the people were wealthy. They also cultivated vineyards around the city.

The church had no internal problems, but the Christians were persecuted by those outside.

“The Holy One, the True One.” These words refer to Jesus. He is holy like God, and He is always true to His word.

“The key of David.” (Isa. 22:22). Jerusalem was David’s city. Jesus has authority to open and shut the gates of the new Jerusalem—this is the same as saying that Jesus has the keys of the kingdom of heaven (cf. 1:18).

Verse 8

Those in Philadelphia were weak, but they held fast to Jesus’ word and did not deny His name. Therefore Jesus said:

“See, I have set before you an open door.”

This means that they will certainly enter the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 9

Jews who refused to accept Christ persecuted the Christians. Jesus will exalt the Christians and humble their persecutors. This seems to happen when He comes.

Verse 10

A time of great persecution will come upon the inhabitants of the earth, but the Christians in Philadelphia will not suffer. Jesus will keep them because they have been faithful.

Verse 11

They must hold fast to their faith so that they do not lose their reward (“your crown” refers to the reward).

Verse 12

“I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God.”
This means that the one who overcomes will live forever in God’s presence.

“I will write on him the name of My God.”
This means that he will belong to God forever.

“And the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem.”

This means that the one who overcomes will be a citizen of heaven.

Chapter 3:13

Verse 13

“He who has ears, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

The church in Laodicea (Rev. 3:14 ff.)

Compare 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6.

Verse 14

Compare 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7.

Laodicea was a city in the region of Asia. It was a large city on the border between Asia and Phrygia. Everyone traveling from Ephesus to Phrygia passed through Laodicea. The city was extremely wealthy—probably the richest city in the known world at that time. There were many banks in the city, and the people produced clothing from wool. The Romans collected taxes in Laodicea.

It seems that Epaphras, a co-worker of Paul, started the church in Laodicea (see Col. 4:12–13). Paul also wrote a letter to Laodicea (Col. 4:16).

“Amen.” Here the word points to Jesus’ authority to command.

“The faithful and true witness.” See 1:5.

“The beginning of God’s creation.” This does not mean that Jesus was the first thing God created. It means that Christ initiated creation (see John 1:3; Col. 1:15, 18).

Verse 15

“You are neither cold nor hot.” See Rom. 12:10–11, especially v. 11. Those in Laodicea did not follow these words.

What do we see in a church that is neither hot nor cold?

1. The members do not want to pray.
2. The members do not want to study God’s Word.
3. The members do not listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit.
4. The members have no desire to bring others to Christ.
5. The members give very little in offerings to God.

The members do not serve Jesus with joy in their hearts, but go to church only out of duty, because they do not want God to punish them

They do not openly deny Jesus, but neither do they testify about Him. They are silent about the things of the Lord.

“I wish that you were either cold or hot!”

If a church is cold, the members simply refuse to receive God’s Word when they hear it.

If a church is hot, the members live according to God's Word when they hear it.

But the people in Laodicea ignored God's Word. When they heard the preaching, they thanked the pastor for a good message and then forgot everything.

It is clear that Jesus cannot use such a church in His work.

Verse 16

Such a church makes Jesus nauseous! Jesus will reject it.

Verse 17

The people in Laodicea trusted in their wealth. They had many banks, but Jesus said: "You are poor," because they lacked spiritual riches.

They had a large hospital in the city, but Jesus said: "You are blind," because they did not see spiritual things.

They produced large amounts of wool clothing, but Jesus said: "You are naked," because they were not clothed in righteousness.

Verse 18

They should seek three things from Jesus:

1. "Gold refined by fire" (see 1 Pet. 1:6–7). This is a picture of true holiness.
2. "White garments." As we have seen before, this is a picture of holiness and righteousness.

3. “Eye salve.” Jesus had the power to give them spiritual sight so that they could see spiritual things.

Verse 19

Here we see something very important:

“All those whom I love, I rebuke and discipline.”

Jesus allows the church to suffer in order to correct and purify it. The church in Laodicea made Jesus nauseous, yet He still loved it. Therefore, He rebuked and disciplined it. They should be zealous in Jesus’ work and repent of their evil ways.

Verse 20

These are very important words. First, they applied to the church in Laodicea. Jesus stood outside the church because the members had forgotten Him. Jesus knocked on the door because He wanted to come in and have fellowship with them. John saw this in a vision.

But notice the words: “If anyone hears My voice ...”

This means that the words also apply to each individual person. Jesus stands at the door of a person’s heart and knocks, because He wants to come in and have fellowship with them. Eating together is a sign of fellowship.

Verse 21

A throne is a sign of the king’s glory. Those who overcome will sit in glory like that of the Lord Jesus

Christ. They will reign together with Him. And Jesus will reign together with His Father (see 22:1, 3).

Verse 22

See the comments on 2:7.

Chapter 4 John's Vision of Heaven

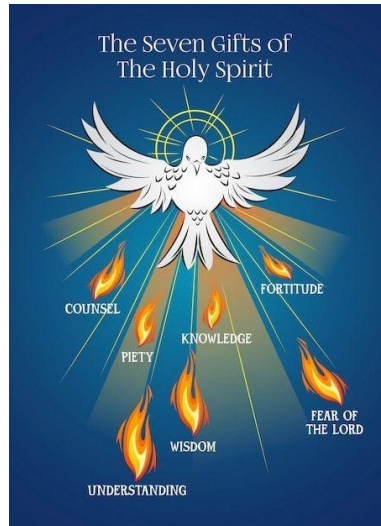
Verse 1

During his vision, John heard the voice of Jesus (cf. 1:10). The voice called him to come up to heaven and see what would happen in the future.

Verse 2

“Immediately I was in the Spirit.” See 1:10.

The rest of verse 2 tells us that John, in his vision, saw God sitting on a throne. Those who sat on earthly thrones persecuted the Christians, but John reminded them that God still had full control over everything.



Verse 3

The precious stones give us a picture of God's great glory. The rainbow was a sign of God's covenant with humanity (see Gen. 9:13).

Verse 4

The twenty-four elders represented the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve apostles of the church.

Here we see the glory of God's kingdom. White garments are a sign of righteousness and victory. The golden crowns point to authority.

Verse 5

Flashes of lightning, voices, and thunder describe God's awesome voice. The sound of His voice creates awe and fear in those who hear it.

"The seven spirits of God," as we have seen earlier, most likely refers to the Holy Spirit.

Verse 6

"A sea of glass."

In rural areas, women regularly lay new clay on floors. Those who have concrete floors polish them. All this is done to make the floors look beautiful.

Before God's eyes, the court was very beautiful, because it lay directly before the King of kings. This beautiful

court was also the boundary between God and humans—a sign of God’s holiness.

“Four living creatures.” These were wonderful beings that God created to serve around His throne (see also 4:8; 5:8, 14; 7:11; 19:4).

The four living creatures represent all of God’s creation before Him

The Jews had a proverb:

“The eagle has greater power than all other birds. The ox is stronger than all other domestic animals. The lion is greatest among the wild animals. Man is the greatest of all that God has created.”

Verse 8

The four living creatures praised God and spoke of His holiness, power, and eternity (see 1:4; cf. Isa. 6:3).

“Full of eyes all around and within” means that they could see everything.

Verses 9–10

When the four living creatures worshiped God, the elders also worshiped—those who represent humanity before God’s throne.

We see the words “the throne” and “Him who lives forever and ever.” God is King, and He is eternal. These are very important truths for all Christians.

“They cast their crowns before the throne.” This is a sign of humility and worship before the King of kings.

Verse 11

They worshiped God because He is worthy to receive glory, honour, and power.

In chapter 4, we see God's greatness, glory, and power. God is the One who is above all.

John wrote to people who were persecuted by the power of the Roman emperor. They knew the emperor's greatness, glory, and power. They saw evil everywhere...

Chapter 5

It seemed as if Satan's power ruled the world. But John wrote about his visions to remind the Christians that God, the King of kings, has control over everything. He has the power to create all things. Therefore, we should continue to trust in God.

"In heaven or on earth or under the earth." This means all of God's creation.

The mighty angel asked all creation: "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" That means: "Who is good enough to open the scroll?" In all creation, there was no one who could open it. There was no one who was worthy.

Verse 4

John wept greatly because he wanted to see God's revelation that was in the scroll, but there was no one who could open it.

Verse 5

One of the elders explained that Jesus Christ was worthy to open the scroll.

Notice the names of Jesus in this verse:

“The Lion of the tribe of Judah.” Compare Gen. 49:9. The lion is a symbol of one who rules. In other Jewish writings (outside the Bible), the lion is a symbol of the Messiah. Jesus Christ is King; He is the Messiah. Jesus was born in the tribe of Judah (see Heb. 7:14).

“The Root of David.” See Isa. 11:1, 10; Luke 2:4–6; Rev. 22:16.

Verse 6

Here we have a picture of Jesus Christ.

“A Lamb standing as though it had been slain.” This is Christ, our Savior (cf. John 1:29, 36; 1 Pet. 1:19).

“As though it had been slain” shows us the One who died on the cross and rose again. Even though Jesus died to save us from our sins, He now lives in heaven.

“With seven horns.” In Jewish writings, horns are a symbol of power. Seven is a perfect number, so seven horns mean that Jesus has perfect power—He is almighty.

“With seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God.” In 1:4 we saw that this refers to the Holy Spirit. Here it shows that Jesus knows everything. Perhaps John meant that the Holy Spirit reveals everything to Jesus. The verse teaches us that Jesus Christ is almighty and all-knowing,

and that He has triumphed through His death on the cross.

Verse 7

In John's vision, Jesus took the scroll from God's hand. This shows that the will of God and the will of Jesus Christ are one.

Chapter 6

Jesus opens the first seal.

The Lamb, that is, Jesus, opened the seal and revealed the first judgment. One of the four living creatures said, "Come." Then the white horse and its rider appeared.

John saw that the rider had a bow. This is a symbol of war. The crown is a sign of victory. This showed the people in John's time that great wars would come in the last days. Even today, we see great wars in many parts of the world.

Verses 3–4

Jesus opens the second seal.

John saw a red horse. The red horse is a symbol of bloodshed in war. The rider was given power to take peace from the earth. It is God who allows this in order to judge His enemies. The great sword is a picture of war. People will kill one another.

Verses 5–6

Jesus opens the third seal.

John saw a black horse. The black horse is a symbol of famine. The rider had a pair of scales for weighing food. “A quart of wheat for a day’s wages, and three quarts of barley for a day’s wages.” This shows that food will become very expensive because of scarcity.

Verses 7–8

Jesus opens the fourth seal.

The pale horse is a symbol of disease and death. The rider was named Death, and Hades followed him. They were given power to kill a fourth of the earth’s population. This is part of God’s judgment on His enemies.

These things also referred to the Roman Empire in John’s time: great wars, food shortages, disease, and death.

Verses 9–11 – The Fifth Seal

John saw the souls of those who had been killed for their faith in Jesus. They were under the altar because they had offered their lives to God.

God is the sovereign Lord over all the earth and has the power to avenge His faithful ones. But notice the words “holy and true.” God does not punish out of revenge, but according to His holiness and truth.

They were given white robes—a sign of righteousness and victory. God will bring justice when all His faithful ones have reached heaven.

This answers the question: Why does God not punish the persecutors immediately? God judges in His own time.

Verses 12–17 – The Sixth Seal

These verses speak of the Day of the Lord—the day when Jesus Christ returns. It will be a day of judgment. All creation shows that the day of God’s wrath has come.

Seven kinds of people are mentioned: kings, great men, commanders, the rich, the strong, slaves, and the free—that is, all people.

They ask the mountains and rocks to hide them. The Lamb also comes in wrath, because many have rejected His love. This is the day of wrath for love that has been rejected.

No sinner can stand before God on that day.

Chapter 7

The Sealing of God’s People

Four angels stood at the four corners of the earth—this means they had authority over the whole earth.

“The four winds of the earth” seems to refer to the four horsemen in 6:1–8 (cf. Zech. 6:1–5). The angels hold back these forces until God’s people have been sealed.

Here is an English translation and summary of the text you sent about Rev. 7:2–14:

Verse 2

Another angel came with the seal of the living God. In John's time, people placed seals on letters and possessions to show who owned them and who had sent them. Today we write our names, but back then seals were used.

God's seal showed who belonged to Him.

This angel called out to the four angels who had authority over the first horsemen. They also had power to harm the earth and the sea.

Verse 3

The angel commanded the other angels to wait before destroying anything until the seal had been placed on God's people.

Verses 4–8

The number 144,000 – $12 \times 12 \times 10 \times 10 = 144,000$.

- The number 12 symbolizes Israel with its 12 tribes.
- The number 10, like the number 7, is a number of completeness or perfection.

Therefore, 144,000 symbolizes completeness or the full number of Israelites.

What does this mean? There are several interpretations, but two main ideas:

1. Literal interpretation:
Those mentioned in 7:1–8 are a large group of Jewish men from the tribes listed in verses 5–8. They receive God’s seal so that they can remain on earth during the great tribulation without suffering, while carrying out their mission of preaching the gospel.
2. Symbolic interpretation:
144,000 is a symbolic number representing all the saved from Israel. Since Israel also represents the church (in the New Testament the church is called “the new Israel”), this means that God will place His seal on all believers who are living on the earth at that time (see Rom. 2:28–29; Gal. 3:29; 6:16; Phil. 3:3; James 1:1; 1 Pet. 1:1).

Some believe that 144,000 is the exact number of the saved on the day of judgment, but that is not correct.

In verse 9 we see “a great multitude that no one could count” in heaven—these are those who are saved, and no one can number them.

Verse 14

The words “who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are chaste” are a picture of purified and holy believers. This is symbolic of those who are fully devoted to God and faithful to Him.

Chapter 7:9–17 – The Great Multitude in Heaven

Verse 9

John saw “a great multitude that no one could count” from every nation, tribe, people, and language.

- This shows that salvation is not only for the Jews (the 144,000) but for all believers from the whole world.
- The great multitude consists of all who have been saved, and they have God’s seal on their foreheads.

Verse 10

They cried out with a loud voice:

“Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.”

- This is a song of praise honouring both God the Father and Jesus Christ as the Lamb.
- It shows that salvation comes through Jesus, our Redeemer.

Verse 11

All the angels, the elders, and the living creatures fell down before the throne and worshiped God.

- All creation acknowledges the power and glory of God and the Lamb.

Verse 12

They praised the Lamb for having been slain, yet living and victorious.

- This shows Jesus' victory over sin and death through His sacrifice on the cross.

Verse 13

Every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea praised God and the Lamb.

- This shows that the unity of God and Jesus is universal—all creation worships them.

Verse 14

The great multitude is clothed in white robes.

- White is a symbol of righteousness, purity, and victory.
- They have been cleansed from their sins through the blood of the Lamb.

Verse 15

They stand before God's throne and worship Him day and night in His temple.

- This shows that they always have fellowship with God and share in His presence.

Verses 16–17

God protects them:

- They are not subjected to the final judgment and persecution on earth.
- The Lamb (Jesus) watches over them and leads them to the water of life.

- God wipes away every tear from their eyes—there is no more sorrow or pain.

Summary and connection to the 144,000

- The 144,000 represent perfect faithfulness and God’s chosen people (literally or symbolically).
- The great multitude shows that the grace of salvation is universal and includes all believers from every nation.
- Both the 144,000 and the great multitude have God’s seal—they belong to God and are protected during the trials of the last times.
- All creation praises God and the Lamb, emphasizing that salvation is both personal and cosmic in its scope.

Chapter 8 – The Seventh Seal and the Seven Trumpets

Verses 1–2

- Jesus opens the seventh seal.
- Seven angels appear and are given seven trumpets.
- There is silence in heaven for a while, so that God may hear the prayers of the saints.
- An angel places the prayers of the saints on the golden altar before God.

Verse 5

- Fire is thrown to the earth from the altar.
- This represents God’s judgment, which is also an answer to the prayers of the saints.
- The prayers have real power—even on earth they can overcome the enemies whom God wills to defeat.

Verses 6–12 – The First Four Trumpets

1. First trumpet: Hail and fire (like lightning) mixed with blood → one third of the earth is burned, vegetation destroyed.
2. Second trumpet: A burning “mountain-like” mass is thrown into the sea → one third of the sea becomes blood, marine life is damaged.
3. Third trumpet: A star (called Wormwood) falls on rivers and springs → the water becomes bitter and people die from it.
4. Fourth trumpet: The sun, moon, and stars are struck → one third of their light is taken away, warning humanity.

Verse 13

- An “eagle’s cry” warns that the three remaining trumpets will bring even greater destruction.

Chapter 9 – The Fifth and Sixth Trumpets

Verses 1–2

- A star falls from heaven (an angel) and opens the abyss, where Satan and his evil spirits dwell.

Verses 3–5

- A swarm of locusts comes out of the abyss with powers like scorpions.
- They can harm people who do not have God’s seal on their foreheads, but they do not destroy vegetation.
- This is a picture of demons and evil spirits who are allowed by God to torment the unbelieving.
- The purpose is warning, not immediate death.

Verses 6–10

- People suffer torment and want to die but cannot.
- The locusts are described with human-like faces, among like iron, and millions of wings → showing their strength and demonic nature.

Verse 11

- “Abaddon / Apollyon” is mentioned as the king of the locusts.
 - Usually identified with Satan himself.
 - Represents total destructive power over those who are under God’s judgment.

Verse 12

- The first “woe” has passed.
- It is a time of extreme spiritual and physical torment, where people suffer under Satan but are also warned to repent.

Verses 13–15 – The Sixth Trumpet

- Four angels who had been bound at the Euphrates River are released.
- They kill a third of humanity → showing God’s sovereign plan and righteous judgment.
- The time, place, and extent are determined according to God’s will.

Main points from Chapters 8–9

The prayers of the saints are powerful and reach God.

God’s judgment is both just and initially limited as a warning for repentance.

The first four trumpets are warning judgments on the earth, sea, and heavens.

The fifth and sixth trumpets show increasing spiritual evil (demons) and God’s sovereign power to punish the unbelieving.

Abaddon/Satan is the demonic source of torment.

God’s plan is perfect, and the judgments occur at God’s appointed time, not randomly.

Now follows a clear summary of the seven trumpets (Rev. 8–11) and the conflict with the beast and the Antichrist (Rev. 13):

The Seven Trumpets (Rev. 8–11)

1st Trumpet (Rev. 8:7)

Event: Hail and fire mixed with blood fall on the earth.

Effect: One third of the vegetation is destroyed.

Symbolism: A warning of coming judgment; war and natural disasters.

2nd Trumpet (Rev. 8:8–9)

Event: A burning mountain is thrown into the sea.

Effect: One third of the sea becomes blood, marine life is destroyed.

Symbolism: Judgment over the sea and trade; punishment for the unbelieving.

3rd Trumpet (Rev. 8:10–11)

Event: A “star” falls on rivers and springs.

Effect: The water becomes bitter, and people die when they drink it.

Symbolism: God’s judgment over the sources of life and the corrupting power of evil.

4th Trumpet (Rev. 8:12)

Event: The sun, moon, and stars are partially darkened.

Effect: One third of the light is taken away → increased darkness.

Symbolism: A warning to humanity; reduced understanding and clarity.

5th Trumpet (Rev. 9:1–12)

Event: The abyss is opened, and locust-like demons are released.

Effect: They torment people who do not have God's seal, but do not kill them.

Symbolism: Evil spirits and demonic torment, a warning to repent.

6th Trumpet (Rev. 9:13–21)

Event: Four bound angels are released at the Euphrates → they kill one third of humanity.

Effect: Massive death among humanity; a great spiritual and physical catastrophe.

Symbolism: God's sovereign plan; judgment at the appointed time.

7th Trumpet (Rev. 11:15–19)

Event: The final trumpet sounds → God's kingdom is proclaimed.

Effect: Heaven declares that "the kingdom is the kingdom of God and of His Christ."

Symbolism: The fulfillment of God's judgment; victory for the faithful.

The Beast and the Antichrist (Rev. 13)

1. The First Beast

Rises out of the sea, has seven heads and ten horns → symbolizes political and military power.

Authority: Has power over the people of the earth, demands worship and submission.

Symbolism: A world power that opposes God (many associate it with the Roman Empire or a future Antichrist).

2. The Second Beast (False Prophet)

Rises out of the earth, speaks like a dragon → promotes worship of the first beast.

Power: Performs signs and wonders → causes people to worship the beast.

Symbolism: Religious or ideological power that supports the Antichrist.

3. The Mark on the Forehead / Hand

No one can buy or sell without the mark (666).

Symbolism: Total control of the economy and spiritual allegiance.

Time period: Occurs during the great tribulation.

4. The Conflict with the Faithful

The faithful refuse to worship the beast and suffer for their faith.

God's victory is certain; the beast is ultimately defeated by Christ (Rev. 19:19–21).

Main Message

The Trumpets: God's warnings and judgments revealed step by step, with opportunity for repentance.

The Beast and the Antichrist: A symbol of evil power on earth; the enemies of God are given limited authority within God's plan.

Comfort for the Faithful: Those who remain faithful receive God's protection, reward, and ultimate victory.

Timeline: Trumpets, Tribulation, the Beast, and the Antichrist

1. Preparation and Heavenly Vision

John receives a vision of God's throne and the worship in heaven (Rev. 4–5).

Jesus, "the Lamb who was slain," is worthy to open the scroll with seven seals.

The faithful praise God and receive hope and comfort.

2. The Seven Seals Are Opened

Seals 1–4 (The Four Horsemen): War, famine, death, and plague spread over the earth.

Seal 5: The martyrs who died for their faith cry out for God’s justice.

Seal 6: Natural disasters—earthquakes; the sun, moon, and stars are affected → the day of the Lord’s wrath is approaching.

Seal 7: Preparation for the seven trumpets; silence in heaven.

3. The Seven Trumpets (Rev. 8–11)

Trumpet – Event – Symbolism / Effect

Hail and fire mixed with blood
→ One third of the vegetation is destroyed → warning of war and disasters

Burning mountain thrown into the sea
→ One third of the sea becomes blood; marine life is destroyed → warning of God’s judgment

A star falls into the rivers
→ The water becomes bitter → people die → warning and call to repentance

Sun, moon, and stars partially darkened
→ One third of the light disappears → warning of darkness and lack of understanding

The abyss is opened; locust-like demons
→ Torment people without God’s seal → the power of evil becomes visible

Four bound angels are released

→ Kill one third of humanity → great death and judgment

The trumpet sounds → God's kingdom is proclaimed
→ Heaven rejoices; God's victory and judgment are completed

4. The Beast and the Antichrist (Rev. 13)

The first beast (Antichrist / world power)

Rises from the sea with seven heads and ten horns → political/military power

Demands worship and submission from the people of the earth

The second beast (False prophet / religious power)

Rises from the earth, supports the first beast

Performs signs and miracles, causing people to worship the Antichrist

The mark 666

No one can buy or sell without the mark → total control over economy and loyalty

Conflict

The faithful refuse to worship the beast, leading to persecution and suffering

God's victory is certain: the beast and its followers are ultimately defeated by Christ

5. The Tribulation

A period of great trial and persecution on earth

Believers are protected by God's seal and given endurance

Evil reaches its peak but remains under God's control

6. Final Victory

Christ returns → the beast and the Antichrist are defeated

The faithful receive reward and eternal life

God's kingdom is fulfilled → all creation praises God and the Lamb

In this judgment, God will not destroy everyone, but it will truly be a very severe visitation.

Verse 16

It seems that these four angels lead a very large army.

Verse 17

These words describe a great and terrifying army and their fearsome horses. In John's time, wars were fought on horseback, but the horses John describes here remind us of war machines and armoured weapons with large cannons in front and behind.

These horses have the power to kill a third of humanity. It seems that these people will be killed in a great war.

Now we see something important in verses 13–21. It is truly remarkable. Even though people have seen God's judgment in the death of a third of humanity, those who remain refuse to repent.

They continue to worship idols (v.20). Notice what is said about idols:

1. They are made from things God created, such as gold and silver.
2. They cannot see, hear, or walk.

This means they have no power, yet people continue to trust in idols instead of in God, who sent the great judgment.

They also continue in their sins.

It is the same today. God warns us again and again, but many people refuse to repent. They continue to worship their idols. They continue in their sins.

Chapter 10

The Little Scroll and the Seven Thunders

Verse 1

Here we see another mighty angel. We know he is very important because of how he is described.

“Clothed with a cloud.” Cf. Ps. 104:3. In this psalm, the clouds are God’s chariot.

“With a rainbow over his head.” See 4:3, where the rainbow surrounds God’s throne.

“His face was like the sun.” See 1:16, where these words describe Jesus’ face.

“His legs like pillars of fire.” The pillar of fire was the symbol of God in Exod. 13:21–22.

“A little scroll, open in his hand.” This means the angel was ready to reveal what was written in the scroll.

“He placed his right foot on the sea and his left on the land.”

This means the angel proclaimed God’s message to the whole earth. It shows how important God’s message is. The church in John’s time was very small. Many mocked God’s message. But John says that God’s message was in the hands of a mighty angel, showing how important it is.

Verses 3–4

Here is a mystery, because we do not know what the seven thunders mean. John heard their words, but God told him not to write them down. Why? We do not know.

Verses 5–6

The angel swore a great oath. Notice how God is described in verse 6. Many words are used, strengthening the oath. The angel swore that “there would be no more delay.” This means that the judgments that had been delayed would now happen immediately.

Verse 7

This takes place when the seventh trumpet sounds. God’s hidden plans are fulfilled. God had revealed His plan to the prophets, and they had preached it to the people, but...

...the people could not understand it.

Verses 8–10

John was commanded to take the scroll from the angel’s hand and eat it. This means that John was to receive the words so that he could preach them to others.

“It will be bitter in your stomach.” The words John had to preach are words of judgment. Therefore, he did not rejoice when he heard them.

“Sweet as honey in your mouth.” Cf. Ezek. 3:1–3; Ps. 119:103. Believers rejoice when they hear God’s Word.

What about us today? Do we rejoice when we hear God’s Word?

When we preach words of judgment, do we rejoice that God punishes the wicked, or are we saddened that He

must do so because they refuse to repent? If we rejoice in the punishment of sinners, then we do not have God's love in our hearts.

Verse 11

John was to preach these words to all peoples on earth, even to kings. We see that God's Word is greater than the greatness of kings.

Chapter 11

The Two Witnesses – The Second Woe

This chapter is difficult to interpret. I believe that John wrote the entire chapter in symbolic language.

Verse 1

“The temple of God.” This is a picture of the church. John was to measure the temple so that it would be preserved—that is, measure the church so that it would be saved. Compare with 7:1–8, where people receive God's seal to be preserved during the great tribulation.

“And those who worship there.” This shows that John was not only thinking about a building but about God's people.

Verse 2

“Do not measure the outer court.” The Gentiles were allowed to enter there in the temple in Jerusalem. John uses this to describe those who are outside the church—that is, those who do not believe in Christ.

“The holy city.” Now John changes the image: Jerusalem now represents the church.

Those who do not believe in Christ will severely persecute the church for forty-two months.

Forty-two months = 1,260 days = “a time, times, and half a time.” This is the period during which unbelievers persecute the church, when the two witnesses prophesy, when the woman stays in the wilderness, and when the beast has great power.

The important point is this: in John’s time, Christians were severely persecuted, but John says that the persecution lasts only a limited time. The words also point forward to the time near Christ’s return.

Verse 3

“My two witnesses.” Some say these are Moses and Elijah; others say they are the Old and New Testaments. I believe the two witnesses are a picture of the whole church.

The church continues its testimony even during severe persecution.

“Clothed in sackcloth.” This is a sign of sorrow, because they preached words of judgment.

Verse 4

The two olive trees (Zech. 4). The oil is a picture of the Holy Spirit: “Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord.”

The testimony continues through the power of God's Spirit.

The lampstands are a picture of the church.

Verses 5–6

No one can destroy the witnesses until their work is finished. For John's time, this meant that the Roman emperors could not destroy the church. And for us today, it means that no one can destroy the church until it has completed its mission.

Fire from their mouths is a picture of God's powerful Word.

They have power like Elijah (to stop rain) and like Moses (to turn water into blood and strike the earth with plagues).

Verses 7–10

When the church's testimony is finished, evil will temporarily triumph. The beast from the abyss is a picture of evil. The world mocks the church when it appears defeated.

Verse 11

After three and a half days, God gives new life. Evil can only triumph for a very short time. In John's time, the Romans tried to destroy the church but failed. The church grew and spread throughout the world.

Even today, the church suffers greatly in some countries, such as Russia and China. Many pray that God will give new life there.

These words apply both to the persecuted church throughout history and to the final time before Jesus' return.

Verse 12

This refers to two things:

1. The believers being taken up to heaven during times of persecution.
2. The gathering of all believers when Jesus returns (1 Thess. 4:16–17).

Verse 13

Here we see God's judgment on those who refuse to accept the church's testimony.

“Seven thousand people.” This is a picture of a large number of people. Those who remain will praise God out of fear (cf. 9:20–21).

Verse 14

See 8:13; 9:12.

Another Interpretation of 11:1–13

The temple in verses 1–2 is the temple in Jerusalem. Jerusalem, the holy city, will suffer persecution from God's enemies for forty-two months.

God's two witnesses (v.3) are two individuals. We do not know their names.

These two witnesses will have extraordinary power so that they can complete their mission (vv.5–6).

When they have finished their work, they will be killed by the beast from the abyss (v.7).

Their bodies will lie in the streets of Jerusalem, the city called Sodom and Egypt because of its wickedness. The Lord was crucified in Jerusalem (v.8).

People will mock their unburied bodies and rejoice greatly because their testimony has ended (vv.9–10).

God will raise His witnesses and take them to heaven (vv.11–12).

God's judgment will come upon the city of Jerusalem, and the people will worship God out of fear.

Verses 15–19 – The Seventh Trumpet

Verse 15

Here we are near the time when Jesus will return to take dominion over everything.

“Loud voices in heaven.” These are the voices of the heavenly hosts.

The voices declared that “the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.”

“Our Lord” — this is God.

“And His Christ” — Christ means “the Anointed One.”

God anointed Jesus Christ and sent Him to earth to accomplish His work (Acts 10:38; Ps. 2:2).

Right now, the kingdom of the world is not God's kingdom, because many do not believe in God. Satan is called "the prince of this world" (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). Satan rules over many on earth today.

But when Jesus returns, the kingdom of the earth will become the kingdom of God and of Jesus—the One whom God has anointed and sent to save people. God's kingdom on earth will be eternal.

Verse 16

The twenty-four elders worshiped God (cf. 7:11).

Verse 17

The elders mention two things about God: His power and His eternity (cf. 4:8; 1:4).

Verse 18

Here we see both judgment and blessing. God's wrath comes upon the nations that rage. God will destroy those who destroy the earth.

We see that God allows the punishment to match the crime.

God will reward all His servants. In 1 Cor. 3:14 we see that we receive a reward according to our work. This means that God gives each Christian the reward he deserves.

What will our reward be? We do not know exactly. In 2 Tim. 4:8 it is called the crown of righteousness, and in 1 Pet. 5:4 the crown of glory.

We will surely receive God's blessings, but the Bible does not describe them in detail.

Verse 19

“The temple of God in heaven.” See Heb. 8:1–5; 9:24.

John saw the ark of the covenant. In the earthly temple, the ark was hidden behind the veil (Heb. 9:1–4). Only the high priest could enter behind the veil, and only once a year (Heb. 9:6–7). Ordinary people never saw the ark.

The ark of the covenant is a sign of God's presence. John saw the ark. This means that all people now have the right to enter into God's presence. This is possible because the veil was torn when Jesus died on the cross (Matt. 27:51; Heb. 10:19–20).

God will keep His covenant with all who come to Him.

The lightning, voices, thunder, earthquake, and hail introduce the sign that we will study in 12:1.

We have now studied the seven seals (6:1–8:5) and the seven trumpets (8:6–11:19). In chapter 12 we begin to study seven great signs.

The important lesson is this: God is greater than evil. God is greater than Satan. Satan tried to overcome Jesus and destroy Him but failed. Satan tries today to destroy God's people, but his time is very short. God will destroy him.

12:1–6 – The Woman Clothed with the Sun

Verse 1

“A great sign.” Here, sign means a wonderful miracle.

“Appeared in heaven.” This does not mean where God dwells, but in the sky with the sun and stars.

The woman is a picture of the nation of Israel.

“Twelve stars.” These refer to the twelve tribes of Israel.

Verse 2

Israel is often described in the Bible as a woman in labor pains (Isa. 26:17–18; 66:7–9; Jer. 4:31; Mic. 4:10; 5:3).

Israel could not save the world, but here we see that the Messiah, the Savior of the world, is born into the nation of Israel. Jesus Christ was born in Israel (Mic. 5:2–4; Isa. 11:1–2).

Verses 3–4

The great red dragon is Satan (v.9).

The seven heads show his cunning and evil.

The ten horns are a picture of power.

The seven crowns show Satan’s greatness and glory.

The stars that are cast down likely refer to angels who followed Satan in his rebellion against God.

Verse 5

“A male child.” This is Jesus Christ.

He would rule with a rod of iron. Satan tried to destroy Christ but failed. Jesus lived without sin and then ascended to heaven.

Verse 6

Now the woman is a picture of all God's people. God preserves His people, and Satan cannot destroy them.

Verses 7–12 – Satan Cast Down

Michael leads God's angels. Satan is defeated and cast down.

Satan is called:

- the ancient serpent
- the devil (the accuser)
- Satan (the enemy)
- the deceiver of the whole world

He accuses believers day and night.

Believers overcome him through:

1. The blood of the Lamb (Jesus' blood)
2. The word of their testimony
3. Their devotion—they were willing to die

Verses 13–17

Satan persecutes the woman—God's people. God gives them protection and a way of escape. When Satan fails to destroy Israel, he attacks the rest of God's people.

“Those who keep God’s commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus” — these are Christians.

Chapter 13

The New Testament teaches that great evil will come in the last days. A particular person will lead the forces of evil. In 1 John 2:18 he is called the Antichrist. In 2 Thess. 2:3 he is called the man of lawlessness. Here John calls him the beast. He is in alliance with Satan.

In John’s time, the words in chapter 13 described the Roman emperor, but they also point to a person who will come in the future and lead the forces of evil.

Verse 1

“A beast.” This is the Antichrist.

“Rising out of the sea.” At that time, the sea was used as a symbol of evil. Here it represents those who do not believe in Jesus.

“With ten horns and seven heads.” Cf. 12:3, where Satan had ten horns and seven heads. See the notes there.

“Ten crowns.” This shows how powerful the Antichrist will be. Crowns are the royal diadems that kings wear.

“A blasphemous name.” This shows that the Antichrist will despise God and blaspheme Him.

Read Daniel 7. In Daniel, the beasts represent four kingdoms on earth. In John’s time, Christians believed that the beast in Revelation 13 represented the Roman Empire.

The Roman emperor persecuted Christians severely.

The seven heads of the beast represented seven Roman emperors.

In verse 2 we see a very cruel beast. The Roman Empire was a cruel enemy of Christians. This is true, but the beast also points to a king who is yet to come. He will be a terrible enemy of Christians in the last days. He will control all who are enemies of Christianity.

Notice that he receives his power, his throne, and his authority from Satan.

Verse 3

Notice two important things:

1. One of the heads had received a fatal wound—the beast should have died.
2. “But the fatal wound was healed.”

Jesus died and rose from the dead. It seems as though Satan gives the beast power to imitate Jesus’ great works.

Verse 4

We worship Jesus because He died and rose again. When people see the works of the beast, many will worship it. They will also worship the dragon, Satan, because he has given the beast power and authority.

Verses 5–6

Here we see the character of the Antichrist. He is given power to speak great things so that people are amazed

and continue to worship him. He will constantly blaspheme God.

“And His dwelling.” See 1 Cor. 6:19. God dwells in the hearts of His people. His dwelling is the church. This means that the Antichrist will blaspheme both God’s people on earth and God’s people in heaven.

In John’s time, the Roman emperor blasphemed God and His people.

In the future, the Antichrist will come and blaspheme God and His people in a greater way than anyone before. But his time will be short: he is given authority for forty-two months (see 11:2).

Verse 7

He will lead an army and conquer the whole world. All who are not Christians will worship him.

“In the Lamb’s book of life.” See 3:5; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27; Dan. 12:1. The names of those who believe in Jesus are written in the Lamb’s book.

“Written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.” Here we see that God planned our salvation already when He created the universe.

Verse 9

See 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22.

Verse 10

This verse is difficult to interpret exactly. Two possible meanings:

1. If God allows a Christian to be taken captive, then it will happen. If God allows a Christian to be killed by the sword, then it will happen. Therefore, the saints must have patience and endurance. They cannot save themselves.
2. The one who leads others into captivity will himself go into captivity. The one who kills with the sword will himself be killed with the sword. This means that Christians should not fight their oppressors but show patience, because God has determined that their enemies will ultimately fall.

Christ's enemies will not prevail.

Verses 11–18 – The Second Beast

Verse 11

The second beast is not as violent as the first. It has only two horns.

“And it spoke like a dragon.” This means that the man speaks the words of Satan.

In 16:13; 19:20; and 20:10 this beast is called “the false prophet.” He functions as the priest of the Antichrist.

Verse 12

The first beast resembles Christ in that it nearly dies but then “comes back to life.” The second beast resembles

the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit's role is to glorify Christ; here we see that the false prophet's role is to glorify the first beast.

Satan deceives the inhabitants of the earth by imitating God's work.

Verses 13–14

The beast represents a man—the false prophet. He is given power to perform great signs in order to deceive people so that they worship the Antichrist. He causes them to make an image or statue of the Antichrist.

Verse 15

The false prophet is given tremendous power. He even gives life to the image so that it can speak and causes those who refuse to worship the Antichrist to be killed.

Here we see how the false prophet tries to force all people to worship the Antichrist. If Christians do not receive the mark of the Antichrist, they cannot buy or sell. The Antichrist and the false prophet will persecute Christians mercilessly.

Verse 18

Who is the Antichrist? We do not know. Many have tried to calculate his name. Some say Nero, others the pope, others the president of Russia. The first readers seemed to know, but today we do not.

Chapter 13 shows a powerful person who will come and rule over the whole earth. He receives power and glory

from Satan and rejects Jesus Christ. He leads the unbelievers in the fight against Christians.

Then another person comes—the false prophet, the priest of the Antichrist. The two will control all trade. It will be a time of severe persecution for Christians.

Chapter 14

Verses 1–5 – The Lamb on Mount Zion

In chapter 13, we saw the future powers of evil. In chapter 14, we see the victory of those who follow the Lamb—Jesus Christ.

“The Lamb” is Jesus.

“Mount Zion.” This either refers to heaven, where God’s throne is, or, according to some, to Jerusalem during a future millennial kingdom.

“144,000.” See 7:1–8.

Those who follow the Antichrist have his mark. The 144,000 have the name of the Lamb and of the Father written on their foreheads.

Verses 2–3

The 144,000 sing a new song to the Lamb. Only the redeemed can sing it.

Verses 4–5

The redeemed are the bride of Christ (2 Cor. 11:2; Rev. 21:9). They follow the Lamb wherever He goes. They are purchased with Christ's blood, first fruits to God. They do not lie and are blameless before God.

Verses 6–20 – God's Harvest on the Earth

Evil comes to a swift end. God judges sinners at the time He Himself determines.

Verses 6–7

An angel proclaims the eternal gospel to the whole earth: fear God and give Him glory—repent before judgment comes.

Verse 8

Babylon is a picture of proud, sinful humanity. In John's time, Babylon referred to Rome. God will overthrow this kingdom.

The Roman Empire fell in AD 476. When Jesus returns, He will destroy the kingdom of sin—the kingdom of the Antichrist.

Verses 9–10

The third angel explains what happens to those who worship the Antichrist and receive his mark. God's full wrath will come upon them.

“They will be tormented with fire and sulfur.” This describes their terrible punishment.

“In the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb.” Just as the Romans tortured Christians publicly, so now

Christ's enemies will be judged before the hosts of heaven.

Verse 11

Their punishment will be eternal. Some Christians may want to escape persecution and therefore abandon Christ and turn to the Antichrist. John warns them that they will then receive an eternal punishment that will be very terrible.

Verse 12

The saints must be patient and faithful. Their persecution will end after a short time, but the punishment for those who abandon Christ will be eternal.

Verse 13

“Those who die in the Lord.”

Some will be persecuted to death because of their faith in Jesus Christ. They are blessed! They will receive blessings from God in heaven. These are encouraging words for those who suffer persecution.

These words come from the Holy Spirit, therefore we know they are true.

“So that they may rest from their labor.” This means they rest from the work of bearing witness for Christ, even during times of persecution.

“Their deeds follow them.” They will receive rewards in heaven for the faithful work they have done on earth.

Verses 14–16 – The Reaper in the Cloud

Verse 14

Cf. Dan. 7:13–14; Matt. 16:27–28; 24:29–31; 25:31–32; 26:64.

Because of these passages, many believe that the one like a Son of Man in verse 14 is Jesus Christ. Christ will come with the clouds to judge the people on earth (see also John 5:22, 27).

However, others believe that this “Son of Man” is not Christ but an angel. They also say it would not be appropriate for an angel to give Christ an order, as the angel does in verse 15.

Here again we have a difficult question, and it is not easy to know the correct answer. Personally, I believe the words refer to Christ.

Verses 15–16

This angel brought a message from God. The time for the harvest—that is, the time of judgment—had come.

“The harvest of the earth is ripe.”

“And the earth was harvested.” This means that the people of the earth were judged (cf. Matt. 25:31–46).

Verses 17–20 – The Harvest of the Earth’s Vine

Verse 17

Another angel came out of heaven with a sharp sickle.

Verse 18

Then another angel came out from the altar, and he had power over fire (see Deut. 4:24; 2 Thess. 1:7–8). In these texts, fire is a symbol of God’s judgment. Compare this angel’s words with those in verse 15.

Verses 19–20

Here we are given a picture of the terrible nature of God’s judgment. In those days, grapes were placed in winepresses—pits in the ground—and trampled to extract the juice. The juice was collected, but the fruit itself was destroyed.

When God’s wrath comes upon His enemies, they will be destroyed. How great this destruction is, we see in the words:

“And blood flowed from the winepress, as high as a horse’s bridle, for a distance of 1,600 stadia.” This is approximately the distance from Ndola to Lusaka.

It may seem as though the saints suffer now while God’s enemies are blessed. But we have seen in chapter 14 that the saints will triumph in the future, while God’s enemies will perish.

Chapter 15

The words in chapter 15 describe the seven angels who will pour out God’s wrath upon humanity. Here John shows that God has power over all human affairs.

Verse 1

John saw a new sign in heaven (cf. 12:1).

When the seven angels have brought the seven plagues upon the earth, God's wrath is completed.

Verse 2

In his vision, John saw an image drawn from Exodus. Just as the Israelites passed through the Red Sea to escape the Egyptians, the saints will cross the sea of glass mixed with fire in John's vision. They have escaped the Antichrist, his image, and his mark.

The sea of glass mixed with fire becomes a sea of God's wrath that will destroy the enemies of the saints.

Verse 3

Just as the Israelites sang the song of Moses to praise God for the victory at the Red Sea (Exod. 15), the saints will sing a song of praise to God. They will sing the song of the Lamb, because they have triumphed through Jesus.

Notice the words that describe God in the song:

- "Great and marvellous are Your works" (see Ps. 92:5; 139:14). God's works are greater than those of Satan and the Antichrist.
- "Lord God Almighty." Here we see God's greatness and power. His power is greater than that of Satan and the Antichrist.
- "Just and true are Your ways" (cf. Ps. 145:17). Here we see God's good character.
- "King of the nations." God's kingdom is an eternal kingdom.

Verse 4

“Who will not fear and glorify Your name, O Lord?” (cf. Ps. 86:9; Mal. 1:11). The unbelieving will worship the Antichrist because of what he does (see chapter 13), but the saints will worship God because of His works and His character.

“For You alone are holy” (1 Sam. 2:2). This means that only God is without sin.

Again, John mentions that all nations will worship God because of His righteous judgments.

Verse 5

“The temple, the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven.” This means the place where God dwells.

Verse 6

The seven angels came out from God’s presence. Their clothing shows their holiness.

Verse 7

They were given seven golden bowls filled with God’s wrath.

Verse 8

Cf. Exod. 40:34; 1 Kings 8:10; Isa. 6:4; Ezek. 10:4; 44:4. The images in this verse show God’s glory and power.

“No one could enter the temple.” This means that no one could prevent God’s judgment upon humanity. He will truly judge the people of the earth.

Chapter 16

John saw these things in his vision, but they concern what will happen in the future.

Verse 1

A loud voice from the temple—that is, God’s voice—commanded the seven angels to pour out His wrath upon the earth.

Verse 2 – First Bowl

“The people who bore the mark of the beast and worshiped its image.” We studied this in chapter 13. The beast is the Antichrist. God’s wrath upon those who follow the Antichrist causes painful sores (cf. 9:10–11).

Verse 3 – Second Bowl

Cf. 8:8–9. There one third of the sea became blood, but here the entire sea becomes blood. This shows that this is God’s final judgment (cf. Exod. 7:17–21).

Verses 4–7 – Third Bowl

Verse 4: Cf. 8:10. All drinking water became blood.

Verses 5–6:

The words of the angel of the waters show that God’s

judgments are righteous: “You are just, O Holy One.” In verse 6 we see that this judgment comes upon the enemies of Christians. They shed the blood of the saints—now they must drink blood.

Verse 7:

In 8:3 we saw that the prayers of the saints are on the altar. When we read here, “I heard the altar say,” we may understand that the saints praise God in their prayers. They agree with the angel’s words in verses 5–6: the Lord’s judgments are righteous. God does not judge out of malice but according to His righteousness.

Fourth Bowl

God gave the sun power to scorch the unbelieving.
Notice what they did:

1. They cursed the name of God.
2. They did not repent and give Him glory (cf. 9:20–21).

Again and again we see in God’s Word the hardness of human hearts.

Verses 10–11 – Fifth Bowl

Here we see that God’s wrath reaches the Antichrist himself and those who serve him.

“His kingdom became dark” (cf. 9:2; Exod. 10:21–23).

We do not know what caused their suffering. Despite God's judgment coming upon them, they refused to repent.

Verses 12–16 – Sixth Bowl

Verse 12

These words remind us of when Cyrus, king of Persia, crossed the Euphrates River and conquered Babylon. Cyrus came from the east. In John's time, people believed that a king from the east would come and overthrow the Roman Empire.

Today we see great nations such as China and India in the east. These nations will gather for battle in the land of Israel when Christ returns.

Verses 13–14

Here we meet the same figures as in chapter 13:

- The dragon is Satan.
- The beast is the Antichrist.
- The false prophet leads those who follow and worship the Antichrist.

These three send messengers to “the kings of the whole world” to gather them for war.

“The battle on the great day of God Almighty” (cf. Isa. 2:12; 13:6; Joel 1:15; Zeph. 1:7; Amos 5:18; Mal. 4:5; 1 Cor. 5:5; 2 Cor. 1:14; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10).

Verse 15

Here Jesus speaks (cf. 3:3). In verse 14 we saw how the armies of evil gather. The words in verse 15 remind us that Jesus will come then.

Jesus will come like a thief (see also 1 Thess. 5:2). We do not know when He will return. We must watch—that is, wait for Him.

We must keep our garments—our garments in this book are a picture of our righteousness (see also Isa. 64:6; Rev. 19:8). We are to live righteously while we wait for His return.

Verse 16

“Armageddon” is the plain of Megiddo (see Judg. 5:19). The final great battle will be fought in this place.

Verses 17–21 – The Seventh Bowl

Verse 17

The loud voice, that is, God’s voice, said: “It is done.” This means that the final great judgment has begun. The judgment came from the air, from heaven.

Verse 18

Cf. 4:5; 8:5; 11:19.

“Lightning, voices, and thunder.” These describe a very great judgment.

This judgment begins with the greatest earthquake that has ever occurred.

Verse 19

The great earthquake will destroy the city of Babylon. Babylon is a picture of proud humanity (see also 14:8).

God is very angry because of human pride. Notice especially the words:

“so that she had to drink the cup filled with the wine of His fierce wrath.”

God will destroy all proud humanity.

Verse 20

There will be great devastation on the earth. Islands will disappear and mountains will no longer be found.

Verse 21

Huge hailstones, each weighing about a talent, will fall from heaven upon people. Yet people will curse God because of the plague of hail, since the plague was so severe.



Revelation 16:21 – Chapter 17 (v.1ff.)

Cf. Exodus 9:22–26.

“Great hailstones, weighing about a talent.” This weight is around twenty kilograms.

Even though a very great judgment has come, people continue to refuse to repent. Instead, they curse God because of what has happened.

I now believe that verses 17–21 describe war. Today we have airplanes that can carry bombs and drop them over cities. These bombs have the power to cause great earthquakes and destroy entire cities (see v.19). I believe that the hailstones in v.21 are images of bombs dropped from airplanes, causing great destruction on the earth.

****Chapters 17–20**

The Victory of Almighty God**

Again and again in the Book of Revelation, we see God’s glory, greatness, and power. Now, from 17:1 to 20:15, we see that God’s glory, greatness, and power surpass all.

John shows us that evil is very strong, but it can only do what God allows.

But in chapters 17–20, John clearly says that the time for God’s victory will come. God will destroy all evil and all His enemies.

****Chapter 17**

The Judgment of the Great Prostitute**

Verse 1

“The judgment of the great prostitute.”

In John’s time, this woman was a picture of Rome (see v.9). Rome was built on seven hills. See also v.18. The Roman emperor ruled over many kingdoms on earth in John’s time.

But the words in this passage also point to a future time.

There are many different interpretations in the church:

1. Some believe the prostitute is a picture of the Roman Catholic Church.
2. Others believe the prostitute represents all humanity that does not believe in Jesus.

But see v.16. The ten horns represent kingdoms on earth (v.12), and the beast represents the Antichrist. The ten kings and the Antichrist will destroy the prostitute.

Those who say the prostitute represents all unbelieving humanity argue that v.16 shows division among the forces of evil.

But I believe the group of the Antichrist and the group of the prostitute are different. I believe the prostitute represents false Christians—those who teach others to deny the Lord and those who follow their teaching.

“Who sits on many waters.” See v.15.

Verse 2

“With her the kings of the earth committed immorality.”

In John’s time, Rome was a godless city, because the emperor said: “I am God—you must worship me.” He persecuted Christians and led many to leave the church, the bride of Christ.

The kings who followed the Roman emperor were like men committing adultery with prostitutes.

In the last days, the kings of the earth will be deceived by the teachings of false Christians.

Verse 3

“And he carried me away in the Spirit.” Cf. 1:10.

“Sitting on a scarlet beast.” We saw the first beast in 13:1—it was a picture of the Antichrist. Red was the

colour of the dragon, and the dragon is a picture of Satan (12:3). It is also the color of sin (Isa. 1:18).

“Full of blasphemous names.” Blasphemy is a mark of the Antichrist (13:1, 5–6).

“Seven heads and ten horns.” See 13:1. At first, the Antichrist helped the false teachers and their followers. The prostitute rode on the beast.

Verse 4

The woman was dressed like a queen, but also like a prostitute who wants to attract men. This shows both her glory and her evil.

“A golden cup full of abominations.” This means she had a golden cup filled with idolatry. In those days, people worshiped the idols of the Roman emperor. Cf. 13:15. In the last days, people will worship an image.

Verse 5

“On her forehead was written a name.”

Notice that God’s servants receive God’s seal on their foreheads (7:3; 22:4), and those who follow the Antichrist receive his mark on their foreheads (13:16; 14:9; 20:4).

The prostitute’s name shows her character. The name was a mystery because it was not revealed to everyone.

“Babylon.” In the Old Testament, Babylon was an evil city because its king defeated God’s people and took them into captivity. When John wrote Revelation, the

name Babylon was used for Rome. In the last days, the name refers to false Christians.

“Mother of prostitutes.” The woman did evil and caused others to do the same kind of evil.

Verse 6

This is a terrible picture of the city of Rome. The Romans persecuted Christians without mercy. Some were thrown to lions. Others were tied to stakes and burned. Still others were killed in similarly terrible ways.

No wonder John wrote: “Drunk with the blood of the saints.”

In the last days, false Christians will persecute true Christians.

Verse 7

The angel said to John:
“I will explain the mystery of the woman and of the beast.”

Verse 8 (cf. 13:3–4)

In Rome’s history, Nero was a very evil emperor. He died, and those who followed him were not as evil. But Domitian became emperor and did the same evil things as Nero.

This means the words in v.3 refer to the Roman Empire. Nero represents the evil kingdom that was and is not. Domitian represents the kingdom that will rise from the abyss (see 9:1–3). The evil kingdom will eventually be destroyed.

The verse may also mean that the Antichrist will first become very powerful, then almost die and lose his power, but later be healed and gain great power again (see 13:3–4).

The rest of the verse shows that those who are saved have their names written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world—that is, from the beginning of creation. God knew humanity would fall into sin, but from the beginning He prepared salvation for those who would believe in Jesus Christ (see also 3:5; 20:12,15; 21:27).

John wanted his readers to understand that the prostitute was the city of Rome, built on seven hills. For us today, the prostitute is a picture of a group of false Christians.

Verses 10–11

This passage is very difficult to interpret.

It seems that the seven heads represent both the seven hills of Rome and seven Roman emperors.

- “Five have fallen” — five emperors had died.
- “One is” — refers to the emperor ruling when John wrote.
- Another would come, but reign only a short time.

We do not know the names of these kings.

In v.11 we read about the Antichrist. He will be the eighth king and very evil. “He belongs to the seven,” likely meaning he is evil like them and will persecute Christians in the same way.

The important point is that the Antichrist will be destroyed.

Verses 12–13

The ten kings will come and serve the Antichrist (see 16:13–14). Again, we see that the Antichrist and the kings who follow him receive power only for a short time: “they receive authority as kings for one hour.”

Verse 14 (cf. 19:19–21)

Here John briefly describes the battle of Armageddon.

“The Lamb” is Jesus Christ. He is “Lord of lords and King of kings.” Therefore, Jesus and His army will defeat the Antichrist and his army.

Again and again in Revelation, John says that God and the Lord Jesus Christ will triumph, while the forces of evil will be destroyed.

“Called and chosen and faithful.” These words describe true Christians.

- We were called by Jesus when He said: “Follow Me.”
- We were chosen by God when we believed in Jesus.
- We must be faithful—then we will share victory with the Lamb.

Verse 15

The prostitute will have power over many people, meaning that many will believe and follow the teachings of false teachers.

Verse 16

But even before Jesus defeats the Antichrist and the forces of evil, the false Christians will be destroyed.

At first, the Antichrist will help the false Christians (17:3), because they also deny Christ. But near the end...

1. ...near the time of Christ's return, the Antichrist will turn against these false Christians and destroy them.
2. Verse 17
Here we see God at work in human affairs. He will cause the Antichrist and the kings who follow him to destroy the false Christians, according to His will.
3. Verse 18
In John's time, "the great city that has dominion over the kings of the earth" was Rome.
4. But in the last days, this is a picture of a group of false Christians. They say they are Christians, but they teach things that are not true about God and about the Lord Jesus Christ. This means that in practice they deny God and Christ.
5. Chapter 18 – The Fall of Babylon

6. The angel described the fall of the great city. We know that the army of the Antichrist will destroy the city (17:16).
7. Verse 1
The angel was very mighty. He had great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his glory.
- 8.
9. Verse 2
Cf. 14:8.

“Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!”

In John’s time, these words meant that the city of Rome would be destroyed. But today they refer to the destruction of a counterfeit or false Christianity (see the notes on 17:1, 16).

The destruction of the city is described in three ways:

“It has become a dwelling place for demons.” This means that all people have left the city.

“A haunt for every unclean spirit.” This means that the city has become a very evil place.

“A haunt for every unclean and hateful bird.” Such birds live in abandoned places. Some of them come to eat the bodies of those who died in the destruction.

Verse 3

The nations and kings who cooperated with the Roman emperor, and the merchants who bought and

sold in Rome—all of these will fall when the city is overthrown.

In the last days, this means that those who follow false teaching will perish together with their teachers.

Verses 4–5

God calls His people to come out of the city.

Because they were persecuted by the Romans, many Christians tried to worship the emperor and live like the Romans.

But notice God’s call: “Come out of her, my people.” (Cf. Gen. 12:1; 19:12; Num. 16:26; Isa. 48:20; 52:11; Jer. 50:8; 51:45; Zech. 2:6–7; 2 Cor. 6:14–15; Eph. 5:11; 1 Tim. ...)

God’s people must not live in fellowship with those who deny Christ. Christians must not behave like those who deny Christ. They must not follow the teaching of false teachers.

“Her sins have piled up to heaven” (v.5). This means that her sin has become so great that it has reached heaven.

“And God has remembered her iniquities” (v.5; see 16:19).

Sometimes it seems that evil people sin and get away with it. It looks as though they are not punished. But God does not forget their sins.

Notice God’s word to those who believe in Him:
“Their sins and lawless deeds I will remember no more.” (Heb. 10:17)

Verses 6–8

Here we see the command to punish the city. It is to be punished severely: “Repay her double for what she has done.”

Verse 7

The city is to receive punishment in the same measure as her pride.

She says: “I sit as queen, I am no widow, and mourning I shall never see.”

Verse 8

Here we see the city’s terrible downfall. Plagues will come upon her in a single day: death, mourning, and famine. The city will be destroyed quickly.

It will surely be destroyed, because “mighty is the Lord God who judges her.”

Verses 9–19 – A Lament over the Fall of the City

John describes the city’s destruction by showing us those who mourn when the city has fallen.

Verses 9–10

The kings of the earth, who followed the king of Rome and received help and riches from him, will mourn when they see that the city is burning.

Notice the words: “You great city, you mighty city, Babylon!”

In John’s time, people saw the greatness of Rome and feared her power, especially the Christians. Christians were only a small group. It seemed as though the city could destroy God’s people at any moment.

But John said that the great city would be destroyed and that God would give victory to the church.

“In a single hour your judgment has come.” We see that the city was destroyed quickly.

Verses 11–15

The merchants of the earth will weep and mourn. Why? Not because they loved the city, but because no one buys their goods anymore (v.11).

In verses 12–14 we see what they sold in Rome. One of the Roman emperors, who reigned only about a year, bought goods worth about 10 million during that year. It is no wonder that the merchants mourned when the city fell.

Verses 16–17a

Here we see the sorrow of the merchants. The kings spoke of the city’s greatness (v.10), but the merchants spoke of her wealth.

Again we see how quickly the city was destroyed: “In a single hour all this wealth has been laid waste.”

Verses 17b–19

Here the sailors and all who travel by sea mourn.

They had grown rich from what their ships carried to Rome.

They had travelled and seen many lands and cities, but had never seen a city like Rome.

They said: “What city was like the great city?”

They mourned deeply and threw dust on their heads, but they mourned only because they would never again gain riches from the city.

Notice again the words: “In a single hour she has been laid waste.”

The kings, merchants, and sailors all stood at a distance and mourned. They did not enter the city to help. None of them reached out a hand to help the city. They had prospered through the city, but they did not love it.

Verses 20–24 – The Destruction of the City

Verse 20

Why should all believers rejoice that God punished the city? Because those who lived in the city had persecuted the Christians. They were the enemies of the believers.

Verse 21

A mighty angel gave a picture of the city’s destruction: it would never be seen again.

Verses 22–23

These words describe the city’s downfall.

The last words in verse 23 give us two reasons why the city was destroyed:

“For your merchants were the great men of the earth.”

This means they were very proud. They did not worship the living God.

“And all nations were deceived by your sorcery.”

Here, *sorcery* represents all the evil in the city.

Verse 24

Now we see that the city was destroyed because it persecuted God’s people.

Notice that the words in chapter 18 refer first of all to Rome, but also to the expression: “and all who have been slain on the earth.”

Compare v.24 with Jesus’ words about Jerusalem in Matthew 23:34–35.

That is, the prostitute is a picture of Babylon, Rome, and Jerusalem. Why? Because the people in these three cities were enemies of God’s people.

The people of Babylon persecuted the Jews. The people of Rome and Jerusalem persecuted the Christians.

As we have already seen, the prostitute is also a picture of a group of false Christians who will appear later in history. They will be completely destroyed.

Chapter 19

Verses 1–5 – Thanksgiving in Heaven

A great multitude in heaven thanks and praises God because He has destroyed the city.

“Hallelujah” means in Hebrew: “Praise the Lord!”

They praise God by speaking of His character. God is the Savior with great glory and power.

Verse 2

Because God is the Savior with great power, His judgments are true and just. God does not judge the prostitute out of malice, but because she has corrupted the earth and killed many of God’s servants—therefore she deserves punishment.

Verse 3

Again, the great multitude in heaven praises God.

Verse 4

The twenty-four elders represent the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve apostles. All of God’s chosen people, both in Israel and in the church, praise the Lord.

The four living creatures represent the hosts of heaven.

Verse 5

All believers are called to worship God.

Verses 6–10 – The Wedding of the Lamb

Here the victory of the Lord’s servants is symbolized by a wedding.

Verse 6

A new song is added as the hosts of heaven worship God:

“For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.”

Satan and the forces of evil have great power. Even the Roman emperor had great power. But God is greater than all. He will give His people victory.

Verse 7

Here they praise God because the wedding of the Lamb has come.

The “bridegroom” is Jesus Christ.

The “bride” is the church.

Note that the nation of Israel was called the Lord’s bride (Isa. 54:5–6; Jer. 2:19; Hos. 2:19). The church is the bride of Christ (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25–27; Rev. 19:9; 21:2,9; 22:17).

Verse 8

The bride of Christ is clothed in fine linen, bright and pure. The fine linen represents the righteous deeds of the saints. The bride receives her righteousness from God Himself—faith in Jesus Christ makes believers righteous.

Verse 9

“Blessed are those who are invited.” Those who are called to faith in Jesus become part of the bride of the Lamb. One cannot take part in the wedding feast without faith.

Those who are invited are blessed because they are saved and will live with Christ in heaven forever.

Verse 10

John fell down to worship the one speaking to him, but the angel said he was only a servant of God, just like John and all the saints.

“The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” This means:

All true prophets testified about Jesus Christ.

All true prophets prophesied about Him.

We are to worship God alone.

Verses 11–16 – The Final Victory

Verse 11

John saw a new vision: a white horse, a symbol of victory. The one riding it has a name that shows His character: “Faithful and True.” Jesus always acts according to His word.

“In righteousness He judges and makes war.” This gives hope to persecuted Christians—Jesus will fight for them.

Verse 12

His eyes are like flames of fire. He sees everything and symbolizes glory and judgment.

“On His head are many crowns.” This shows the majesty of the “King of kings.”

“He has a name written that no one knows except Himself.” No one can control Jesus.

Verse 13

“Clothed in a robe dipped in blood.” This reminds us of Jesus’ sacrifice at Golgotha. He is our Savior, and we are cleansed from sin through His blood.

“The Word of God” speaks God’s word to people.

Verse 14

“The armies of heaven”—all God’s saints, clothed in fine linen, a sign of righteousness

and holiness. Angels also march with this army.

Verse 15

Jesus uses the power of His word. He strikes the nations with a sword:

To destroy God's enemies.

To judge humanity.

He will rule with an iron rod and tread the winepress—those who refuse His rule will perish in God's wrath.

Verse 16

“King of kings and Lord of lords.” Jesus Christ will rule over everything and everyone (Phil. 2:9–11).

Verses 17–21 – The Beast and the False Prophet

John uses imagery to show the destruction of God's enemies. Birds are called to eat the dead from the battle.

The beast is a picture of the Antichrist, along with the kings of the earth and the forces of evil.

Jesus, riding the horse, confronts the armies of evil.

Verse 20

The leaders of God’s enemies are destroyed.
“The lake of fire burning with sulphur”
symbolizes total destruction.

Verse 21

All the armies of evil will be destroyed by
Jesus Christ.

Chapter 20 – Introduction

We have now studied many difficult passages
in the Book of Revelation, but now we come
to the most challenging.

It is not possible to give one single
interpretation that is “the correct one.” We
will study these passages and look at the
different ideas people have had about them.

Believers have long discussed these passages,
but we should do so with love until God
reveals everything to us.

Chapter 20 – Satan and the Thousand-Year Reign of Believers

Verses 1–3 – Satan Bound

The main point is that Satan and his forces will be defeated, while Jesus will reign together with all believers.

v.2: “And he bound him for a thousand years.”

There are several interpretations of these thousand years:

The Millennium: When Jesus returns, dead ...believers will be raised, and the living will be caught up to meet the Lord. All believers will reign with Christ on earth for a thousand years. Satan is bound during this time, but is released for a short period at the end, after which all the ungodly are raised and judged.

Interpretations of the Thousand Years

1. The Millennium (literal thousand years):
When Jesus returns, dead believers will be raised, and the living will be caught up to meet the Lord. All believers will reign with Christ on earth for a thousand years. Satan is bound during this time but released briefly at the end, followed by the resurrection and judgment of the ungodly.
2. Symbolic Millennium:
Some believe Jesus returns at the end of the thousand-year period. The millennium may represent:
 - The present age, where Jesus reigns in the hearts of believers.

- The time just before Christ’s return.
3. From Christ’s First Coming to His Return:
The thousand years symbolize the entire period from when Jesus walked on earth until His return. The “first resurrection” represents the new birth, when believers are raised from sin.

Verses 1–3 – Satan Bound

- Satan is bound with a key and chain and can no longer deceive the nations.
- At the end of the millennium, Satan is released to test the living and bring about the final judgment.

Verses 4–6 – The First Resurrection

John saw two groups:

1. Those seated on thrones who were given authority to judge.
 2. Those who had been killed for their faith in Jesus—both historically (persecuted by the Romans) and future martyrs during the time of the Antichrist.
- All believers will reign with Christ for a thousand years.
 - v.5: “The rest of the dead”—those who do not believe in Jesus—are raised after the thousand years.
 - v.6: “Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection.”

- The second death (the lake of fire) has no power over them.
- They become priests of God and Christ.
- They will reign with Christ for a thousand years.

Verses 7–10 – Satan’s Final Defeat

- During the millennium, new people are born on earth who serve Jesus.
- Satan is released at the end and deceives many.
- v.8–9:
“Gog and Magog” (see Ezek. 38–39) symbolize all nations that oppose God in the final battle. They are defeated by God’s fire.
- v.10:
Satan is finally thrown into the lake of fire, together with the Antichrist and the false prophet. They are tormented forever.

Verses 11–15 – The Final Judgment

- v.11: A great white throne—God’s throne. Earth and heaven flee from His presence.
- Some believe the one on the throne is Jesus Christ, since He will judge the world (Matt. 25:31–32; John 5:22).
- v.12: All the dead, great and small, are judged according to their deeds.

- Books are opened: records of deeds and the Book of Life. Those written in the Book of Life receive eternal life.
- v.13–14: The dead are raised to be judged. Death and Hades are thrown into the lake of fire—the second death.
- v.15: Believers receive reward; the ungodly are judged to eternal condemnation.

Chapter 21 – A New Heaven and a New Earth

- The prophets (Isa. 65:17; 66:22; 2 Pet. 3:13) describe a new heaven and a new earth.
- v.1: “And the sea was no more.”
The sea symbolizes evil and unrest. In the new kingdom, there is only goodness and peace.

Verse 2 – The New Jerusalem

- John sees the New Jerusalem, “like a bride prepared for her husband,” a picture of the church.

Does the city come down from heaven? This may mean:

1. The church will live on earth forever.
2. Believers will live with God in heaven.

The important point: the new world is a place of peace, fellowship, and God’s presence.

Chapter 21 – New Creation and New Jerusalem

1. New Heaven and New Earth (vv.1–2)

- The old creation has passed away; the sea is gone (symbol of evil and chaos).
- God, Jesus, and all believers will dwell together.
- The New Jerusalem is described as a bride—symbolizing the church in union with Christ.

2. God’s Presence with His People (vv.3–5)

- God Himself dwells among humanity.
- All sorrow, suffering, death, and pain are removed.
- God makes everything new—a complete restoration.
- He is the Alpha and Omega—eternal Creator and finisher of all things.

3. Eternal Reward for the Faithful (vv.6–7)

- Those who thirst for God receive the water of life.
- Faithful believers live in close fellowship with God.
- They are called God’s children and heirs of His kingdom.

4. The New Jerusalem (vv.9–27)

- The city is God’s creation—glorious, vast, and beautiful like a jewel.
- It has a high wall, twelve gates guarded by angels, with the names of Israel’s tribes.
- Its foundations represent the twelve apostles.
- It is enormous (about 2,500 km on each side) and holds all believers.
- The city’s light comes from God and Jesus—there is no darkness.
- Only those written in the Lamb’s Book of Life may enter.

Chapter 22 – The River of Life and Eternal Light

1. The River of Life (vv.1–2)

- A clear river flows from the throne of God and the Lamb—symbol of eternal life.
- The tree of life bears fruit and leaves that heal the nations—no sickness or suffering remains.

2. Reward and Service for the Faithful (vv.3–5)

- God and Jesus dwell with the people; they serve Him in His presence.
- Believers see God face to face and truly belong to Him.

- They receive eternal authority to reign with Him.
- The curse and darkness are gone forever.

3. The Return of Jesus (vv.6–21)

- God’s word and promises are true and trustworthy.
- Jesus is coming soon; those who live according to His word are blessed.
- Those who do not repent miss the opportunity and remain in evil.
- The righteous gain access to the tree of life and the city—they have eternal fellowship with God.
- John is told not to seal the prophecy, because Christ’s return is near.

Revelation 20–22 – Summary

Chapter 20 – Satan, Believers, and Final Judgment

1. Satan is bound for a thousand years so he cannot deceive the nations (vv.1–3).
2. The first resurrection: believers who died for Christ are raised and reign with Him (vv.4–6).
3. Satan is released and finally defeated, then thrown into the lake of fire (vv.7–10).

4. Final judgment: all are judged; those not in the Book of Life are cast into the lake of fire (vv.11–15).

Chapter 21 – New Heaven, New Earth, and New Jerusalem

- Chapter 21 – A New Creation
- A new creation: The old heaven and earth pass away; the sea (a symbol of evil) is gone (v.1).
- God’s presence:
God dwells with His people; all suffering, sorrow, death, and pain are removed (vv.3–5).
- Eternal reward:
Believers receive eternal life, see God face to face, become God’s children, and reign with Christ (vv.6–7).
- The New Jerusalem:
A city representing the church—great, beautiful, filled with God’s light and eternal glory. Only those written in the Lamb’s Book of Life may enter (vv.9–27).
- Chapter 22 – The River of Life and Eternal Light
- 1. The River of Life
- It flows from the throne of God and the Lamb and gives eternal life and healing (vv.1–2).
- 2. Eternal blessings for the faithful

- God and Jesus dwell with the people
- Believers see God face to face
- They truly become God’s people and reign forever
- No curse or night remains (vv.3–5)
- 3. Jesus is coming soon
- Repeated warnings and promises: “Behold, I am coming soon.”
- Believers are urged to live holy and faithful lives (vv.6–21)
-
- Key Verses and Important Lessons
- 21:8: All sinners are excluded from the New Jerusalem.
- 22:16: Jesus is “the Root and the Offspring of David” and “the bright Morning Star”—a symbol of new eternal light and a new era.
- 22:17: The holy invitation: The Spirit and the bride call everyone to receive the water of life.
- 22:20–21: Final words: Jesus is coming soon; all believers say:
“Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!”
- Conclusion

- God and Jesus dwell with their people—eternal fellowship and glory.
- Believers are rewarded—eternal life, seeing God face to face, reigning with Christ.
- Sin and evil are judged—eternal punishment; no sin has a place in the new creation.
- Christ’s return is near—be ready, live holy lives, and share the gospel.
- Revelation 20 (Detailed Explanation)
- The main point of this passage is that Satan and his powers will be destroyed, but Jesus will reign together with all believers.
- Verse 2 – “and bound him for a thousand years”
- There are several views about the “thousand years.” We will consider three:
 - Many believe that when Jesus returns, believers who have died will rise, and those still living will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air (cf. 1 Thess. 4). All believers will reign with the Lord Jesus Christ on earth for a thousand years. Satan will be bound during this time, but at the end he will be released for a short time.
 - After that, the unbelieving dead will rise, and all will be judged before God’s great white throne.
 - Others believe Jesus comes at the end of the thousand-year period. If so, what does “thousand years” mean?

- a. Some say it represents the present age: Jesus reigns in believers' hearts and the gospel triumphs over sin.
- b. Others say it refers to a time shortly before Jesus returns.
- Still others believe the “thousand years” symbolize the entire period from when Jesus lived on earth until His return. They say the “first resurrection” (v.5) represents the new birth—believers rising from death in sin to new life.
- Historical note: From the early church until around AD 400, many believers held to the first view, but later other interpretations emerged.
- Verses 1–3 — Satan Bound
- The key and chain show that the angel has authority over the abyss and over Satan.
- Satan is bound while Christ and the saints reign (thousand years).
- He is completely restrained and cannot deceive the nations.
- Question: If the “thousand years” represent the present age—is Satan bound now?
- Why is Satan released at the end? Two reasons are suggested:
- His temptations reveal who are truly faithful believers (a final test).

- He is brought forward for final judgment, his release leads to the end.

- Verses 4–6 — The First Resurrection
- John sees two groups:
 - a) Those seated on thrones, given authority to judge (cf. 1 Cor. 6:2).
 - b) Those who died for their faith in Jesus—both in John’s time (Roman persecution) and those killed during the reign of the Antichrist.
- Together, these represent all believers. They reign with Christ. Some believe this happens in heaven, others on earth. The commentary leans toward Christ reigning on earth after Armageddon (chapter 19).
- v.5: “The rest of the dead” = unbelievers; they rise after the thousand years.
- v.6: Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection:
 - The second death (lake of fire) has no power over them.
 - They will be priests of God and Christ.
 - They will reign with Him (cf. Rom. 8:17).
- Verses 7–10 — Satan’s Final Rebellion and Defeat

- After the thousand years, Satan is released and deceives many into rebellion.
- “Gog and Magog” (from Ezekiel 38–39) symbolize the final enemies gathered against Christ and His people—not one specific modern nation, but all enemies of God.
- They surround “the beloved city” (Jerusalem), but fire from God destroys them.
- Satan is cast into the lake of fire where the beast and the false prophet already are (19:20). The punishment is described as eternal.
- Verses 11–15 — The Final Judgment
- The great white throne is God’s throne.
- The New Testament speaks both of Christ as judge and of standing before God—these are understood as one unified judgment.
- Books are opened:
 - Records of human deeds
 - The Book of Life
 - Those written in the Book of Life receive eternal life.
- Death and Hades are thrown into the lake of fire (cf. 1 Cor. 15:26). This is “the second death.”
- Chapter 21 — New Heaven and New Earth
- Connected to Isaiah 65–66 and 2 Peter 3.

- “The sea was no more” is understood as meaning that chaos and evil are gone.
- The New Jerusalem is described as a bride—a picture of the church.
- God dwells with His people:
 - No tears
 - No death
 - No sorrow
 - No pain
- “Behold, I make all things new.”
- The believers are God’s children and inherit everything.
- Those who reject God will face the second death.

Revelation 21:9–27 — The Holy City

The city shines with God’s glory. It is great, secure, and holy. The gates are never shut. Only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life may enter.

Chapter 22 — The Fullness of Life and the Final Invitation

The river of life and the tree of life: eternal life and wholeness.

22:3–5 — Four Blessings

1. God and the Lamb dwell with them; they serve in His presence.
2. They see God face to face.
3. They belong fully to God (His name is on their foreheads).
4. They reign forever and ever.

And the curse and the night are gone.

Final Words

Jesus is coming soon. A warning not to add to or take away from the message.

Final prayer:

“Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.”

Final blessing:

The grace of the Lord.

Prepared Answers to Study Questions (1–15)

1. What does “the Lion of Judah” (5:5) mean?

“The Lion of Judah” is a messianic title referring to Jesus as the promised King from the tribe of Judah (cf. Gen. 49:9–10). It expresses His royal authority, victory, and right to reign. In Revelation, it shows that Jesus has triumphed and is therefore worthy to open the scroll.

2. What is characteristic of God in chapters 4–5?

God is presented as holy and almighty, seated on the throne and ruling history. He is worthy of all worship, honour, and power. His majesty and holiness are emphasized through the worship around the throne, and in chapter 5 we see that His plan of salvation is fulfilled through the Lamb.

3. Explain “the seven horns” (5:6).

The seven horns symbolize complete power and authority (horn = strength, seven = fullness). The Lamb (Jesus) has all power to carry out God’s plan and execute righteous judgment. In other words: Jesus is not weak despite being sacrificed—He reigns with full divine authority.

4. What do the horses in chapter 6 symbolize?

The four horses represent different forms of judgment and suffering:

- White: conquest/advancement
- Red: war and violence
- Black: famine and economic hardship
- Pale: death, plague, and destruction

5. Why does the wrath of the Lamb come upon humanity?

Because people rebel against God, reject truth, and choose sin, idolatry, and unrighteousness. The judgment is not arbitrary—it is God’s just response to persistent evil and refusal to repent.

6. What blessings are seen in chapter 7?

God protects and saves His people. They belong to Him, stand before His throne in purity, and receive comfort: God leads them, wipes away their tears, and gives them eternal fellowship and victory.

7. What are the methods of judgment in chapter 8?

Judgment comes through trumpets and plagues affecting creation. These judgments are often partial (e.g., “one-third”), showing they are warnings calling people to repentance before the final judgment.

8. Describe the locusts in Revelation 9:3 (cf. Joel 2:4)

They are terrifying, warlike, and resemble an army. They symbolize destructive judgment permitted by God. The connection to Joel emphasizes an unstoppable force that shakes people and reveals their spiritual condition.

9. Name the twelve tribes of Israel and where they appear in the OT

Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph (often Ephraim and Manasseh), Benjamin.

They appear in places such as Genesis 35, Numbers 1, and Joshua 13–21. Lists vary depending on whether Levi is counted or Joseph is divided.

10. Short sermon on Revelation 7:9–12

This passage shows a great multitude from every nation standing before God and the Lamb. It gives hope: the gospel is global and victorious. Their white robes symbolize salvation and purity. Their worship shows that all glory belongs to God and the Lamb. In times of suffering, this passage comforts us—the church is moving toward victory and eternal worship.

11. Revelation 10:2 — two meanings of the scroll

1. The open scroll shows that God’s message is revealed and must be proclaimed.
2. It contains both promise and judgment—sweet as hope, but bitter because it confronts sin.

12. Revelation 12:11 — three ways to overcome Satan

1. The blood of the Lamb (Jesus’ atonement)
2. The word of their testimony
3. Faithfulness, even unto death

13. The two beasts — who are they and their task?

a) The beast from the sea: political/antichrist power.
The beast from the earth (false prophet):
religious/ideological deception.

b) Their task: to deceive, demand worship, control people, and persecute believers.

14. Explain “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great”

Babylon represents the world system opposed to God: idolatry, corruption, and oppression. Its fall means God judges and destroys all that stands against Him. Evil is temporary—God’s kingdom endures.

15. Revelation 19:11–16 — describe the rider on the white horse

The rider is Jesus Christ. He is called Faithful and True and judges righteously. His eyes are like fire, He wears many crowns, and is called “the Word of God.” He leads heaven’s armies and has absolute authority. On His robe is written:

“King of kings and Lord of lords.”

- 16. Revelation 20:11–15 – Interpret the final judgment

The great white throne shows God’s absolute authority to judge. All the dead stand before God. The books are opened (their deeds), and the Book of Life determines belonging: those whose names are written there belong to God and receive life. Those not found in the Book of Life are judged and thrown into the lake of fire—the second death. This shows that no one escapes God and that the end brings perfect justice.

****17. What will happen to:**

- a) believers in the New Jerusalem
- b) unbelievers not written in the Lamb's Book of Life?

a) Believers receive eternal fellowship with God: no death, sorrow, or pain. They live in light, holiness, and joy and reign with Christ.

b) Unbelievers remain outside the city and face the second death: righteous judgment and eternal separation from God's life.

****18. a) Four blessings (22:3–5)**

b) Two blessings for “those who wash their robes”

a) Four blessings:

God and the Lamb dwell with them, and they serve Him.

They see God face to face.

They bear His name and fully belong to Him.

They reign forever.

b) Two blessings:

5. The right to the tree of life (eternal life).

6. Entrance through the gates into the city (participation in God's kingdom and glory).

19. Sermon on “Behold, I am coming soon” (three times in chapter 22)

“Behold, I am coming soon” is both comfort and exhortation.

Comfort: Suffering and evil have a limit—Jesus will come to complete salvation and bring justice.

Exhortation: Live watchfully and holy, hold fast to the Word, and bear witness.

The text calls us to live with an eternal perspective—not to be caught up in what is temporary, but to remain faithful, because Jesus truly is coming—and His coming changes everything.

Summary Message from Chapters 21–22

1. Complete fellowship with God

God dwells among His people, removes all evil, and creates a new, perfect world.

2. Eternal reward for the faithful

Believers live forever, see God face to face, and reign with Christ.

The tree of life and the New Jerusalem symbolize eternal life, healing, and perfect fellowship.

3. Jesus as the center

The new creation and the city are established through God and the Lamb.

Christ's return is certain, and His justice and blessings will be fully realized.

4. Final separation between good and evil

Only those written in the Lamb's Book of Life may enter.

Evil and everything that causes suffering are completely removed.

Summary of Revelation 20–22

Chapter 20 – Satan Bound and the Millennium

Satan bound (vv.1–3)

An angel binds Satan and throws him into the abyss so he cannot deceive the nations for a thousand years.

Interpretations of the millennium:

A literal reign of Christ on earth after His return

A symbolic period between Christ's first and second coming

A representation of Christ's rule in believers' hearts

The first resurrection (vv.4–6)

Believers who died for their faith, along with all who reign with Christ, are raised and given authority.

They are blessed because the second death has no power over them.

They become priests and reign with Christ.

Satan released (vv.7–9)

Satan is released and deceives many.

Nations (Gog and Magog) gather against God but are defeated by divine fire.

Satan cast into the lake of fire (v.10)

Satan, the Antichrist, and the false prophet are thrown into the lake of fire and punished eternally.

The final judgment (vv.11–15)

All the dead are judged according to their deeds.

The Book of Life determines eternal destiny.

The wicked are cast into the second death.

Death and Hades are destroyed.

Chapter 21 – A New Heaven and a New Earth

New creation (v.1)

The old heaven and earth pass away; the sea (symbol of evil and chaos) is gone.

The New Jerusalem (v.2)
The city is like a bride—symbolizing the church and God’s presence among His people.

Eternal fellowship with God
Believers live in perfect fellowship with God, without sorrow, death, or suffering.

Chapter 22 – The River of Life and Eternal Light

The river of life and the tree of life (vv.1–2)
A river flows from God’s throne—symbol of eternal life. The tree of life brings healing and restoration.

Eternal light and God’s presence (vv.3–5)

No curse remains

God and the Lamb illuminate everything

Believers serve and reign forever

The return of Jesus (vv.6–21)

Jesus promises to come soon

Warnings to the unrighteous

Promises to believers: eternal life and fellowship with God

Final Summary Message (Chapters 20–22)

God's victory is certain
Satan and all evil powers are finally defeated.

Reward for believers
Those who follow Jesus—even through suffering—will reign with Him and live eternally with God.

Final judgment and justice
God's judgment is perfect and final evil is judged, and righteousness is established forever.

All the dead and the living are judged according to their deeds. The believers receive the reward of life, while the ungodly receive eternal condemnation.

2. New Creation and Eternal Fellowship

A new heaven and a new earth without evil, filled with God's presence.

The New Jerusalem and the river of life symbolize eternal joy, peace, and healing.

3. Jesus Christ as the Center

From the battle against the Antichrist to the new heaven and new earth, Jesus Christ is the victorious one—the Lamb and the King.

The entire focus is on His return and His perfect victory.



A Complete Commentary and Summary (Chapters 1–22)

INTRODUCTION This study guide explains the Book of Revelation. Its main message: God is sovereign, Jesus is victorious, and evil will be destroyed.

PART 1 – THE VISION OF CHRIST Jesus appears in glory to John and shows His authority.

PART 2 – THE SEVEN CHURCHES Messages to seven churches calling for faithfulness and repentance.

PART 3 – THE THRONE OF GOD AND THE LAMB God reigns, and Jesus (the Lamb) is worthy to carry out His plan.

PART 4 – THE SEVEN SEALS Judgments begin, but God protects His people.

PART 5 – THE SEVEN TRUMPETS Warnings through disasters calling for repentance.

PART 6 – THE SPIRITUAL BATTLE Satan, the beast, and the false prophet oppose God.

PART 7 – FINAL JUDGMENTS God’s wrath is completed.

PART 8 – THE FALL OF BABYLON The corrupt world system is destroyed.

PART 9 – THE VICTORY OF CHRIST Jesus returns as King and defeats evil.

PART 10 – THE MILLENNIUM AND FINAL JUDGMENT Satan is defeated, and all are judged.

PART 11 – THE NEW CREATION A new heaven and earth with no pain or death.

PART 12 – ETERNAL LIFE Believers live with God forever.

KEY THEMES God’s sovereignty, Christ’s victory, judgment, and hope.

FINAL SUMMARY God wins. Evil is defeated. Believers live forever.

FINAL PRAYER Amen. Come, Lord Jesus

Rev Lars Gunnar Sandberg

www.pastorlars.org

Contact@pastorlars.org

