

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Verse-by-Verse Commentary

by: Brad Ingram

Introduction to the Book:

-(v.1) "The Revelation of Jesus Christ..."
-The Greek word used here for 'Revelation' is 'Apocalupsis' which means "to take away the veil" or "an unveiling."

WHAT: This Book then is an unveiling of Truth.

WHO: The Lord Jesus Christ is being unveiled in His Offices of King and Judge.

WHEN: A.D. 94-96 This is the last of the books which compose our canon of Scripture.

WHERE: This book was given to John the Apostle while he was in exile on the desert isle of Patmos.

WHY: The purpose of this book is two-fold. It vindicates and verifies the righteousness of God through showing His ultimate victory and rule. It also serves as a message to the churches to "Watch."

Keys to Understanding:

1) You must understand the TIME element. There are three tenses used in this book as they relate to time. (1:19) We see then that the events in this book relate to the past, the present and the future.

2) You must understand the VIEWPOINT which John takes. In the Revelation, John sees some things from the earth while other things he sees from Heaven looking down. (4:1-2)

3) You must understand the use of SYMBOLISM. Throughout this book, we find the Lord relating truth to His church through the usage of symbolism. A reason for this may have well been the stiff persecution from Rome; it would have meant sure death to speak openly against the sinful rule.

The Doctrinal Significance of Revelation

The Apostle Paul taught that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable..." (2 Tim.3:16). Knowing this, let us discover the profit in a study of the Book of Revelation.

1) The Truth of God's Word is upheld and demonstrated in the events of this book.

*(Cf. Gen.3:14-15 with Rev.20:10). This has been the Great Conflict of the Ages between God and Satan. The events of this book show God to be Ultimate Victor and Satan the eternally defeated foe.

2) The Original Intention of God is restored in the events of this book.

*God intended for man to live in a perfect and sinless environment and to enjoy and serve Him forever, which is man's greatest joy. (Cf. Eden with Rev.22:1-5).

*Consider the comparisons between the *Book of Genesis* and the *Book of Revelation*.

Genesis (Commencement)	Revelation (Consummation)
Commencement of Heaven & Earth (1:1)	Consummation of Heaven & Earth (21:1)
The entrance of sin & the curse (3:1-19)	The end of sin & the curse (21:27;22:3)
The dawn of Satan & his activities (3:1-7)	The doom of Satan & his activities (20:10)
The tree of life is relinquished (2:9;3:24)	The tree of life is regained (22:2)
Death makes its entrance (2:17;5:5)	Death makes its exit (21:4)
Sorrow begins (3:16)	Sorrow is banished (21:4)

A Swift End

This book has fallen prey to scoffers who believe that the promises contained therein are vain. The Holy Spirit warned us of these filthy dreamers,

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

2 Peter 3:3-4.

However, verse one tells us not when He will return but when He does return, these events will happen very swiftly!

TERMS TO KNOW

LITERAL INTERPRETATION- This is the system of interpretation we will employ in this study. This method is the safest and most logical of all methods. This method seeks no deeper or hidden meaning but takes the Word of God literally unless the surrounding context suggests it must be taken figuratively. In these cases, this figurative language will point to a literal truth.

PREMILLENNIALISM- This is the doctrine that teaches that Christ will come again to the Earth to establish a literal, earthly kingdom for a literal one thousand year period. At this time, He will sit on the throne of His father David in Jerusalem.

PRETRIBULATIONAL- This is the view of the Rapture we hold to which states that Christ will come again for His church PRIOR to the time known as TRIBULATION. The Scriptural proofs for this view are many as well as the very nature of God in His past dealings with His people in which He removed them from the place of judgment BEFORE He poured out His wrath. (Noah, Lot, etc.) This view is also known as the "Pre-Wrath" view of the Rapture.

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"I AM Alpha and Omega"

The Participants in the Book

To help the student of this book avoid sure confusion, a knowledge of the human participates must be had. God sees all men as belonging to one of three groups of people. These three groups are delineated by Paul, *"Give none offence, neither to **the Jews**, nor to **the Gentiles**, nor to **the church of God**"*

1 Corinthians 10:32.

So here is God's division. Everyone that is living now and that ever has lived or ever will live has been a member of one of these classes.

In the book of the Revelation, God will deal with each group of people above mentioned in a special and distinct way. In this book, each group will be judged by God according to different standards and for different purposes. Each group will gain reward or suffer loss in various ways.

The student of the Bible must consider to whom is the Holy Spirit referring to throughout this book. It would be disastrous to place the church in the Tribulation and have Christ's bride undergo such testing. It would be equally dishonest to make the Jew stand in the judgment of the Gentile nations.

In conclusion, the student must look diligently for clues as to which of these three groups are being addressed throughout this prophetic book of the Revelation.

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Truth Baptist Church School of the Bible

Brad Ingram, *Pastor*

Week Two

In Chapter One we are introduced to the Glorified Lord Jesus. John sees Christ as the One Who Judges as He stands in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. We have seen that these candlesticks represent the seven churches and the seven stars in the Lord's hand represent the seven angels (pastors) of the seven churches (1:20). With this introduction, we move into the second chapter of the Book which deals with the Lord's individual messages to these seven churches. This discourse spans chapters two and three.

It is helpful to note here the place that is given to these churches in the structure of the Book of the Revelation.

CHAPTER ONE- THE GLORIFIED LORD

(Post-Resurrection Ministry)

CHAPTERS TWO & THREE- THE CHURCH ON THE EARTH

(Pentecost to Rapture)

CHAPTER FOUR- THE GLORIFIED CHURCH

(In Heaven AFTER Rapture)

Understanding this placement, we will be better able to discern the Lord's messages to these (literal) churches as having an application to all churches in EVERY AGE.

The Things Which Are

As we noted in chapter one, the entire Book of Revelation is divided into one of three tenses regarding time. These include: the things which John *has seen*, the things *which are*, and the things *which shall be hereafter*. Therefore, the book is divided into PAST, PRESENT, and FUTURE.

Chapters two and three take up with the second of these divisions, *the things which are*. In the region of Asia Minor, there were established Christian Churches that were birthed by the disciples and Apostles of the Lord. There were certainly more than seven local congregations, but the Lord chose to address only these seven. We cannot speculate on the Lord's purpose, but one could interject that these seven churches were representative of the churches surrounding them. But for whatever reason, these seven churches were given a message by their Living Lord and a study of these messages will be most profitable for the members of the Church of God.

Unto the Church of Ephesus (2:1-7)

The historical record of the founding of this church can be found in Acts 19. Here, Paul taught and remained for several months while causing uproar among the local silversmiths. Ephesus was the capitol city of Asia and its name literally means 'desirable.' To this church had been committed some of the richest truths concerning Christ and His Church. This was the city that housed the Temple of Diana one of the Seven Wonders of the World. It was known in that day as 'The Light of Asia.'

The Glorified Lord was walking in the midst of the candlesticks and He was observing the state of things in His Church. To this church He sends His first message.

1) Their Works Were Fruitful (vv.2-3)

The Lord begins this message with commendation. They had exemplified their calling by their works. They had labored tirelessly for their Lord (the Greek word used here implies labor until strength is gone). They had shown patience and endurance in the face of trials and persecution that came upon them in a wicked civilization.

Not only had they lived the Gospel, but they had tested others by it. The Lord applauds them for testing those who claimed to be Apostles and found them liars. The Holy Spirit had warned these Ephesian elders about these wolves (Acts 20:28-31). The Lord says they did not nor could not even 'bear them.' This has the idea that this church could not even TOLERATE false doctrine. This must be the attitude taken today by the true Church against those who would pervert the truth.

2) Their Devotion Was Failing (vv.4-5)

Amid His commendation, the Lord uttered a solemn warning. He relayed to this church that He did have something against them. What was the sin of Ephesus that went unnoticed by man but seen clearly by God? **They had left their FIRST LOVE.** What is meant here? The first love mentioned here is 'agape' love, cherished and dear love. It is the love of espousals, the honeymoon love. The Lord was charging Ephesus with leaving their FIRST LOVE...Him. It is possible and happens all over the world that a man may remain faithful to his wife, he may provide her a good home and he may be a good father...but in that man's heart he has left that agape love for his wife far behind.

This is the thing our Lord desires more than anything else, that we love Him (Mark 12:28-30). In fact, the Lord desires our affection MORE than He desires our WORK (Luke 10:38-42). Our Christian lives MUST have this order: LOVE then SERVICE. If we attempt to serve as Ephesus served without the same love that Ephesus lacked, we shall be as the Church of Ephesus is today...FORGOTTEN and EXTINCT!

Let us examine our own hearts. We must not forget that this message was not ONLY for the Church at Ephesus, but also for individual believers (v.7) **"He that heath an ear..."**.

3) Their Judgment Was Foretold (v.5)

The Lord desired for this Church to come back to their first love, remember...LOVE IS A CHOICE! Their way to restoration was two-fold **REMEMBER & REPENT**. Before they could repent, they had to remember their first love and how wonderful it was to commune with the Lord Jesus. **The Lord remembers our first love...do we?** (Jeremiah 2:2) *Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.*

After REMEMBRANCE there had to be REPENTANCE. Repentance is a change of mind and heart about something you once enjoyed. Repentance also automatically acknowledges wrongdoing. The message here is clear, the Ephesian believers had to realize that it was a terrible and sinful thing to depart from God AND they had to change their mind about the things that were currently getting their affection. Jeremiah 2:11-13 *Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.*

What then would be the result if Ephesus DID NOT return to her first love? The Lord, after giving this church the remedy for their sad situation then tells of their judgment if they refused to return (v.5b). Notice the wording of this judgment:

"I will come unto thee quickly"

This shows it is the Lord Himself Who administers judgment to His church when it needs it. These words also refer back to the Lord's place in the midst of the candlesticks; Jesus will come to that church's candlestick to administer judgment.

"And will remove thy candlestick out of its place"

This speaks of loss of influence. This DOES NOT refer to the salvation of the believers because the candlesticks DO NOT refer to individual believers but to the churches. When a candlestick is removed, it can provide NO MORE LIGHT. We are to be lights in this world and we only do this as we keep the love for Christ fervently in our hearts. Churches all over the world are still having worship services and still preaching the Bible and still going through the motions, but because of their inner coldness towards Christ, they have lost ALL influence in this world!

(NOTE: Consider the Lord's words concerning the Nicolaitanes. Christ commended Ephesus for hating their deeds as He also did. Little is known about this ancient sect, but by looking at the meaning of their name, we gain clues as to their error. 'Nikao' means "to conquer" and 'lao' means "the people or laity". The rendering could be "to conquer the lay people." The idea of two groups of Christians is implied here, the clergy & laity.)

Unto the Church in Smyrna (2:8-11)

It is uncertain what events led up to the establishing of this church, perhaps Paul was instrumental on his third missionary journey. The city of Smyrna was a coastal spot that was known for trade and commerce. One of the most common exports of the city was myrrh, the sweet smelling fragrance. It is interesting to note that the name Smyrna literally means "bitter." This name seems to fit as it was this church that was undergoing the bitterest attacks of Satan in the form of persecution. This local assembly was located some forty miles north of Ephesus.

1) They Were Being Troubled (vv.8-10)

The Lord speaks no rebuke to this church in the fire. This is typical of our Lord's dealing with the sons of men, *"Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust."* Matthew 12:18-21. Our Lord, knowing their sorrow and tribulation spoke comfortably to them while yet giving them painful truth.

Severe persecution of the Christian Church had begun around 64 A.D. with Nero and the burning of Rome. This had escalated and spread like leaven throughout the Empire. Christians everywhere were being hunted, tortured, imprisoned and slain. The persecution seems to have been the heaviest in this region of Smyrna. It is to this church that Jesus speaks directly concerning their fiery trials.

The Lord then elaborates on the details of this persecution.

"The blasphemy of them which say they are Jews"

Aside from Rome persecuting this church, the "Jews" were also hurling stones at them. The word 'blasphemy' here means 'slander,' so the Jews of that area were slandering the Christians as they always had. They were not of God as they claimed; they were of the Devil or the Slanderer. This parallels with Christ's words to the Jews of His day. *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.* John 8:44

"Ye shall have tribulation ten days"

This statement by our Lord corresponds perfectly to Roman history. From the time of Nero, there were ten emperors who issued ten separate edicts against Christians. After these edicts, churches suffered greatly.

2) They Would Be Triumphant (V.10b-11)

After such painful truths, the Lord reminds His faithful that at last they would be the VICTORS! He reassures them several ways in this message.

By His Description of Himself(v.8)

Notice what Christ says of Himself ONLY when addressing this church. **"THESE THINGS SAITH THE FIRST AND THE LAST, WHICH WAS DEAD AND IS ALIVE!" (v.8)** Just as surely as these believers were facing the prospect of death, Christ reminds them that He, too, had faced it and came out of its bars the VICTOR! The Lord is conveying to them the truth that in Him they have the power over Suffering and Death! "...Because I live, ye shall live also."

John 14:19

By Reminding Them of Their Wealth (v.9)

The second phrase the Lord uses to encourage these believers is one that reminds them of what they possessed. In verse nine, after speaking of their poverty (materially), Christ interjects a fact, "BUT THOU ART RICH!" What a statement to make to folks who were poor and despised! Most believers in Smyrna were homeless and unable to find work due to their faith. But yet Christ, Who knows all things said they were rich! He was speaking of their wealth in Heaven.

- *"Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."* John 6:27
- *"The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment."* Luke 12:23
- *"And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."* Luke 12:15

By Reminding Them of Their Reward (v.10)

The Crown of Life was their future hope.

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Week Three

This week we continue in the study of the Messages to the Seven Churches of Asia. This section continues with "*The Things Which Are...*"

To the Church in Pergamos (2:12-17)

Pergamos was the capital city of Mysia, a Roman province in Northwest Asia Minor. This city was approximately twenty miles from the sea; this was not a city of commerce, but rather a center of religion. Some of the chief deities of this city were Zeus, Aphrodite, and Aesculapius (god of medicine). This last god was symbolized as a serpent on a pole and worshipped as the health giving god.

1) Their Church was Located in Satan's Seat (v.13)

The Lord Jesus calls this place the 'throne' of Satan. It is interesting to note that Satan's throne was the place where religion was the topic of the day. Satan has ALWAYS thrived in his evil work through false religion. {Men have the inborn desire to worship; Satan knows this and capitalizes on this.}

2) The Lord Knew Where They Were (v.13)

In the midst of that wicked city, there was a true church trying to be a faithful witness. It must have been comforting to them to be reminded of the fact that the Lord had not forgotten where they were. Remember, His Eye is On the Sparrow!

3) They Were Commended For Their Faithfulness (v.13)

This group of believers had not denied the only true God in the midst of many false gods! They had held true to that Name that is above every name! Notice the Lord does not commend them for their size OR strength, He does commend them for their steadfastness!

4) They Were Rebuked for Toleration (vv.14-16)

In the time of faithfulness, there were already the marks of leaven. What had they tolerated? *They had tolerated those who held to the doctrine of Baalam.* If Balak could not curse the people of God, he would corrupt them! That doctrine is practiced by Satan today in many fundamental churches! **They had also tolerated those that held to the doctrines of the Nicolaitanes.** There is a lesson here, we are held accountable for what goes on in our midst EVEN if we do not directly participate (Achan's wife). We must be watchful to spot leaven and purge it. The only way to combat error is by the WORD OF GOD! (v.16)

5) The Promise of Christ for the Victors (v.17)

As in every letter, the Lord promises a reward for heeding His command. This reward included 'hidden manna' which is the Bread of Heaven, the presence of the Lord Jesus. This could also refer to the Word of God. The victor would also receive a white stone. In Greek civilization, a white stone signified acquittal; a black stone meant condemnation. The Lord promises acquittal and justification to all those who believe in Him! On that stone there would be a new name, a name no one knew but the believers. This speaks, I believe, of the special and intimate conversion of every believer, an experience that is known only to them.

Unto the Church in Thyatira

The city of Thyatira was a commercial city that was known for its many trade guilds. The most lucrative business of that city was the dyeing of wool and cloth in scarlet.

{Consider the first convert from this place: **Acts 16:14-15**}

EPHESUS HATED EVIL BUT WAS LOSING LOVE; THYATIRA WAS GROWING IN LOVE AND TOLERATING EVIL!

1) The Lord's Description of Himself (v.18)

2) The Commendation (v.19)

3) The Condemnation & Exhortation (vv.20-29)

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Week Four

Unto the Church in Sardis

Sardis was the ancient capital of Lydia. It was situated in a very fertile valley at the foot of Mt. Timolus. This town suffered greatly during the devastating earthquake of the first century. It is speculated that the Apostle John founded this church because of ruins that have been recently uncovered which have the inscription, *The Church of St. John*.

The name 'Sardis' literally means "escaping ones" or "those who come out." This church has been identified by most Bible scholars as picturing the time of the Reformation (1517 A.D.).

The Lord's Description of Himself

We have discussed already how that the Lord describes Himself in a different manner to address the specific needs of that particular church. Here, He calls Himself:

"he that hath the seven Spirits of God"

This undoubtedly speaks of the Holy Spirit and all His fullness (seven is the Divine number for completion). The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and Son and does the Lord's work on this earth. In short, the Lord was reminding this church that He alone had Sovereign power in the church through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

"and the seven stars"

The Lord Jesus also reminds them that their rulers (pastors) were in His hand as well and were to take their orders from Him.

Their Fault

Christ tells them that He knows their works and how they have a name that they are living, but are in fact, dead. What does all this mean? The word the Lord uses for 'works' literally means "toilings." This church was probably very busy in their labor. They probably had a name in the community for being socially involved. But they were in fact, DEAD! (Nekros=corpses)

The Lord admonishes them to strengthen the things that remain. Obviously, there were still a few smoldering embers in the church at Sardis that the Lord was concerned about. Christ tells them that He had not found their works perfect "complete" before God. If they did not repent, the Lord would come upon them quickly and remove their influence. This warning is not connected with the Rapture.

The Approval

The Lord then stated that there were a 'few' in Sardis that had not defiled their garments. The word 'garments' here is used in a figurative sense to symbolize the lifestyle of these believers in Sardis, consider:

Colossians 3:8-14 Cf. Romans 13:14

These few believers were living the Resurrected Life and had 'put on' Christ. To these alone was a reward promised.

"They shall walk with me in white."

This verse DOES NOT speak of salvation. Rather, it speaks of fellowship. John uses the same word for 'walk' here as he does in **I John 1:7** where he teaches the believer how to have FELLOWSHIP with Christ. So the reward for clean and pure believers is the ability to enjoy fellowship with Christ.

The Lord then closes this letter with another promise for those who overcome or "have faith in Him." They all shall be finally and fully saved "I will not blot out his name." The Lord will confess those to His Father who have confessed Him before men.

Unto the Church in Philadelphia

This is by far the warmest and most tender letter the Lord dictated to John. This letter carries the idea of a loving Father giving tender instruction and encouragement to a son who is undergoing difficulty.

Philadelphia was located thirty miles southeast of Sardis also in a fertile valley. The city was named after its founder *Attalus Philadelphus*. The name literally means "brotherly love." The city was known largely in the first century for its cultivation of fine grapes.

The Lord's Description of Himself

Christ calms this true and faithful church by reminding them of Who they served.

"He that is Holy" "He that is True"

These are both eternal attributes of the Triune God, holiness and truth.

"He that hath the key of David"

What does the Lord mean by this? (Isaiah 22:20-23) This is a picture of the Lord as the coming King to reign over the house of His father, David. The Lord would have this church to trust in His power and in His ability to keep His Word. The Lord reminds them that His work cannot be undone, for He is "The Door."

This group of believers were praised for their 'little' (micros = micro) strength. We should be thankful that the Lord sees and blesses us even when our strength is small.

Their Reward

Because of their faith, they would be kept from the "Hour of Temptation." I believe this hour speaks of the time of Great Tribulation. Consider:

Revelation 14:6-7 "hour"; the Lord is Rev.3 says this time will be UNIVERSAL, no such time of testing has ever been.

To be kept 'from' the hour, they must be taken from time. The true church of God WILL BE KEPT FROM the HOUR!

Unto the Church of the Laodiceans (3:14-20)

This is by far the saddest of all the letters. This letter is written to a church that was utterly corrupt. This church was forty-five miles southeast of Philadelphia. This city lay in the intersection of three heavily traveled roadways. Because of its locations, it attracted many of the wealthy. The city was full of bankers and financiers who built it up to be one of the most lavish cities of the second century.

The city was indeed materially rich, thus, they 'thought' they had need of nothing! Compare 3:17 with 2:9. Jesus knows who truly is wealthy.

This church greatly characterizes the church age of today beginning around the turn of the century. This is a day when men have denied the basic and historic truths of Christianity and have replaced them with Social Reform.

The Lord's Description

He calls Himself the "Amen" or "the truthful one." Amen = *it is truth*. No matter how man may call God a liar, He is truth!

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Week Five

Here we come upon a pivotal point in this book. At chapter four, we see a change in the time element as well as the viewpoint from which John is given this revelation. Here, we leave the earth and are called upward into heaven. We also are looking forward into the future to see the things "which shall be hereafter."

"The Rapture of the Church" (4:1-2)

It is quite clear from these verses that John is giving a description of the Rapture, or the 'calling away' of the true church of God on earth. To understand this concept, let us compare this passage with other Bible passages that relate to the Rapture.

Revelation 4:1-2 After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in

Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Corinthians 15:51-52 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

It is apparent that these passages are parallel. They contain the same basic elements.

-A VOICE

-A TRUMPET

-A SWIFT CHANGE

The Trumpet (4:1)

In all three accounts, we find the mention of the word 'trumpet.' It was the trumpet of ram's horns that Israel took their marching orders from. The trumpet was used in O.T. times to signal armies to move or to halt. This trumpet referred to in these verses WILL BE THE LAST TRUMPET TO SOUND DURING THE DISPENSATION OF GRACE. It will not be the last trumpet to sound as far as the world is concerned, for there will be yet seven more trumpets after the church is taken away that will signal judgment. However, this is NOT a trumpet of judgment, but rather a trumpet of BLESSING.

John was Immediately in the Spirit (v.2)

Notice carefully the Scriptures here. There was a sudden change in John. No longer was he in the body, but he was now in the spirit. This is exactly what will happen to us at the last trump. Notice, too, that John still had all his mental faculties after his change.

The Throne (v.2)

The first vision John sees when he is transported to Heaven is the throne of God. The book of the Revelation begins with a throne (1:4) and it ends with a throne (22:3). The entire book can rightly be called, the book of thrones. A throne is a place where judgment is executed. We know that the Book of the Revelation is indeed the book of God's judgment upon the Jews and the World through Christ. But let us consider this; in this present age (Church Age) God's throne is not a throne of judgment, but rather a throne of grace.

Hebrews 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

When the church is called home, His throne will once again be turned into a throne of Divine Judgment. Notice verse 5. The Apostle John describes the throne as a terrible sight to behold. From it came lightnings, and thundering and voices. This signified the "storm of judgment" that was soon to come upon the earth. Consider at what other time do we read of God being surrounded by such things.

Exodus 19:16-19 And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.

This occasion was under the Dispensation of Law, before Grace. God's throne will turn again to this.

The Description of Him that Sat on the Throne (v.3)

John uses words and terms He is familiar with to describe the majesty of that world. He says that He that sat on the throne had the appearance like jasper and a sardine stone. The jasper is further defined for us in (Rev.21:11) it is a stone, or rather mountain of stones that possesses immense light. This jasper stone shines forth in several colors. John also describes the throne as its surroundings as a sardine stone. This stone is of a bright red and gives the appearance of fire and intense burning. Everything about this throne and He that sat upon it speaks of judgment and impending wrath.

The Rainbow Around the Throne (v.3)

The significance of this sight is very clear. Consider why God gave the rainbow to man, namely, as a token of His covenant never to again destroy the earth by water.

(GENESIS 9:12-17) Read.

The bow was in heaven before it was on earth; I believe this bow has always been around the throne of God to signify that Jehovah was a God of Covenants. It is interesting to note a few things about this bow and its placement. First, it was completely circling the throne. Here on Earth, we see only partial bows, but in Heaven, things appear in their fullness. Notice too that this bow was around a THRONE OF JUDGMENT. This signifies that God, even in the midst of judging the earth, would remember His covenant (with regards to flood and Israel (Gen.12)). Let us remember that this bow was also around the throne when it was a throne of GRACE (now) to signify that God had entered into a covenant with His Son to grant eternal life to all that believed on Him.

*Psalms 111:5 He hath given meat unto them that fear him:
he will ever be mindful of his covenant.*

The Twenty Four Elders (v.4,10-11)

There has been some debate as to the identity of these twenty four elders around the throne of God. However, if we consider the Scriptures here, we will find clues as to their identity. Consider what we know about them:

- They occupy thrones beside God's throne
- They are clothed in white. In every instance in the book of Revelation, those clothed in white represent those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ. (7:14)
- The songs they sing throughout the book reflect the fact that they have been redeemed (5:8-9). This signifies that they are not angelic, for angels never were redeemed.
- They wore crowns on their head. This speaks of reward they received. By this, we may infer that the Judgment Seat of Christ had already taken place in Heaven after the Rapture of the Church. The crowns were of gold which speaks of a two-fold distinction. Gold is the mark of royalty (5:10) and the gold represents purity as that which has survived the fires of judgment (1Cor.3).

From this passage, we can discern that these elders represent the Redeemed of God from ALL AGES. This body of elders is representative of saints from all dispensations. We know this by considering their number; there were twenty four of them. This takes our mind back to Old Testament Israel and to the Levitical Priesthood. In First Chronicles twenty-four, we find that King David chose out twenty four Levites to represent the whole body of Levites. These twenty four representatives were to serve in the Temple of Solomon in courses (2 wks. each). Since all the priests could not come together, they were represented by twenty four. So, God's way of representing all priests (we are priests also) is to have twenty four representatives of the whole. Consider the number twenty four in another respect.

-There were 12 patriarchs in Israel (12 tribes).

-There were 12 Apostles in New Testament Christianity.

I believe this shows that these elders represent believers who have died in faith under both Testaments.

The Living Creatures

We can also discern the identity of these creatures by comparing Scripture with Scripture.

Before we look at the creatures, let us consider a beautiful truth given to us in verse six. The Bible teaches that there was a sea in front of the throne made of glass and had the appearance of crystal.

We find another "sea" in the Old Testament Temple.

2 Chronicles 4:1-6 Moreover he made an altar of brass, twenty cubits the length thereof, and twenty cubits the breadth thereof, and ten cubits the height thereof. Also he made a molten sea of ten cubits from brim to brim, round in compass, and five cubits the height thereof; and a line of thirty cubits did compass it round about. And under it was the similitude of oxen, which did compass it round about: ten in a cubit, compassing the sea round about. Two rows of oxen were cast, when it was cast. It stood upon twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east: and the sea was set above upon them, and all their hinder parts were inward. And the thickness of it was an handbreadth, and the brim of it like the work of the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies; and it received and held three thousand baths. He made also ten lavers, and put five on the right hand, and five on the left, to wash in them: such things as they offered for the burnt offering they washed in them; but the sea was for the priests to wash in.

This sea in the Temple was the place of cleansing before the priests could go into the presence of the Lord, or the ALTAR OF THE LORD (Mercy Seat). This sea corresponds to the laver of the Tabernacle. A believer could not come into God's presence until he had washed himself from his defilement.

Consider that there still is a sea in Heaven that stands in the way of getting to the throne of God. But notice what it is made of, GLASS...NOT WATER. It is a solid sea. The teaching is clear, when we receive our new bodies and when we enter into Heaven, we will have no more need of washing; we will be perfectly righteous and able to go directly into the throne of God!

Back to the Creatures—Around the throne of God there are FOUR beasts (or living creatures). John is very descriptive of these creatures.

- They are four in number
- They are full of eyes
- They are characteristic of four kinds of creatures: **LION, CALF, MAN, EAGLE.**
- They each had six wings (3 pair)
- They sang Holy, Holy, Holy unto the Thrice Holy God

Upon looking at John's description of these beasts, we remember that we have heard a description of this nature before.

Ezekiel 1:5-12 Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings. And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot: and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass. And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and they four had their faces and their wings. Their wings were joined one to

another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward. As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle. Thus were their faces: and their wings were stretched upward; two wings of every one were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies. And they went every one straight forward: whither the spirit was to go, they went; and they turned not when they went.

These beasts are Angelic Beings. (Is.6) "holy, holy, holy"

These beasts give a four-fold witness to the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

LION- King of the Jews (Matthew)

OX (calf)- Suffering Servant of Jehovah (Mark)

MAN- The Perfect Man (Luke)

EAGLE- The Divine Son of God (John)

In heaven, forever, there will always be a witness to the work of Redemption that Christ accomplished for us on this Earth!

The Worship of the Elders and Creatures (vv.9-11)

This chapter closes with both of these groups praising God for His work of CREATION. No song of evolution is sung in Heaven! The crowns of the elders are cast down in tribute to their unworthiness and Christ's worthiness.

Notice too, in heaven, all will finally realize WHY we were created...not for our pleasure...BUT FOR HIS PLEASURE!

AMEN!

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Truth Baptist Church School of the Bible

Brad Ingram, *Pastor*

Week Six

Chapter five continues with John giving to us the vision of the throne room. Here we are introduced to a strong angel who commences this chapter with an announcement that will lead to the beginning of Tribulation.

The Sealed Book (5:1)

We are brought face to face here with the vision of the throne of Heaven and of God the Father seated in it as we shall discover (Cf.5:7). To get a right understanding of this chapter and the rest of the Revelation, we must look at the central theme of this chapter, that it, namely, Redemption (5:9). The song of heaven here is one of redemption, the character of the Lord as a Lamb speaks of Redemption, the entire chapter is a memorial to the Lord's redemptive work. Knowing this, we must consider the Old Testament idea of redemption to understand this sealed book. According to O.T. law, three things could be redeemed or 'bought back.'

- 1) **A Servant** (Lev.25:47-55)
- 2) **A Wife** (Deut.25:5-10)
- 3) **Land** (Lev.25:25)

By the time we reach chapter five in the Revelation, the Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, has already redeemed the first two of these. He has redeemed us as His servants when we received our new bodies at the Rapture. He has also redeemed us as His Bride (wife) when the entire Church was called away out of this world. Now, the only thing left to be brought back into His authority is the earth (land), and He will redeem it also.

Romans 8:22-23 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

Redemption's plan will not be finished until all three of these things are redeemed to God.

Having this foundation, let us now consider the sealed book. This book is literally a scroll 'biblios' is the same Greek word from which we get our word 'bible.' This scroll is written on within and without and is rolled together and sealed with seven seals. So then, this scroll is the TITLE DEED to the earth. This deed was originally committed to Adam in the beginning, he was to have dominion over it and keep it. However, Satan took this from Adam and now only the Second Adam has the power to take it back.

This scroll contains the blueprint for the earth during the Tribulation. This scroll possesses to the minutest detail the events of the end time upon the earth.

The Strong Angel (v.2)

After giving us this picture, John records for us a proclamation and question given by a strong angel. The angel cries out, "Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?"

The key to understanding the identity of this angel lies in an Old Testament passage that identifies an angel with another sealed book (Cf. Daniel 9:20-24). There can be no doubt as to the identity of this strong angel; it must be Gabriel the messenger angel of heaven who told Daniel to 'seal up' the prophecy. He is now crying that one comes and 'loose the seal' of the prophecy.

The Search (vv.3-4)

Upon Gabriel's question, there was a search made by John, his search was vain. The reason no one in heaven or earth or under the earth could open the book was a matter of authority and right. To understand this, we must consider the Old Testament idea of sealing documents. Once a document was sealed, only the sealer OR the recipient could break the seal. We gather from the text that since it was God the Father Who held the scroll, He was obviously the sealer, but Who would be the Recipient?

This apparent tragedy brought John much grief. His much weeping signifies that he obviously knew the importance of what was contained in that scroll and he knew that it must be opened for Redemption and Judgment to go forth.

The Lamb is Worthy (vv.5-7)

Before John is allowed to continue weeping, one of the elders brings him a message of hope. There is One Who is worthy to take the book and open the seals! Notice how the elder describes this One Who is worthy:

"The Lion of the tribe of Judah" This title refers back to: *Genesis 49:8-10 Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.*

This is from Jacob's prophecy foretelling that Christ would come from Judah's lineage. This title speaks of Christ's RIGHT to rule by virtue of His RELATIONSHIP to David.

"The Root of David" This title also refers to Christ as He relates to the THRONE of David and His KINGLY office.
Isaiah 11:10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.

When the elder thus describes Christ by the use of these titles, he informs John that Christ has prevailed to open the book and to loose the seals. Over whom did Christ prevail? He prevailed over the Devil and now has right to rule over what Satan took by craft and deceit.

When John heard these words, he immediately turned to see a glimpse of this LION of Heaven. But, instead, John sees a LAMB. Is there a contradiction here? Are not these two animals exactly contrary to one another? Not at all! In fact, these two animals give us the perfect and complete picture of Jesus Christ's work and character.

The Lamb- This speaks of Christ's 1st Coming. During this advent He was meek and committed Himself to the judgment of others. He reviled not and cursed not. He was the SACRIFICE for His people.

The Lion- This speaks of Christ's 2nd Coming and His eternal state. He will return with power and fury and will rule with a rod of iron. He will return as the One Who Fights!

Let us consider John's description of this Lamb Who stood in the midst of the heavenly congregation.

'as it had been slain' This statement reminds us that in Heaven now, Christ still retains the cruel marks of the cross on His body. He showed these marks after His resurrection to the doubting Thomas as a proof of His death. All through eternity, we will look upon Christ and remember His sufferings for us.

'having seven horns' In the Scriptures, the horn speaks of power and authority. These seven horns represent the completeness and eternality of Christ's power. (Mt.28:18)

'and seven eyes which are the seven Spirits' This describes Christ's Omnipresence through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Christ is NOW everywhere present through the witness of the Holy Spirit.

Notice carefully what this Worthy Lamb does next. He takes the book (scroll) from the hand of God the Father. Notice that this move is completely uncontested. It has always been God's will to commit all authority and judgment to the Son. Consider these references:

John 5:22-23 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

*Daniel 7:13-14 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. **(this is a parallel passage describing the same account of the Father giving dominion to the Son)***

The Worship (vv.8-14)

From the moment the Lamb takes the book until the Lamb opens the book, there is worship. The balance of this chapter is devoted to nothing but worship and adoration of the Lamb. Let us quickly notice a few things about this heavenly scene:

- ***The elders and beasts all have harps.*** This is to signify that every creature in heaven possesses one. This tells us that heaven is a MUSICAL place. This also suggests that Heaven is a place of continual PRAISE. The harp in Scripture is associated with praise.
Psalms 33:2 Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings.
Psalms 98:5 Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.
Psalms 147:7 Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God:
- ***The elders and beasts all have vials (bowls) made of gold.*** This word for 'vial' is found only in Revelation and refers to a bowl-like container. These are made of gold which speak of their precious nature. They are full of odours which speak of their pleasantness. We are told these are the prayers of the saints. Odors and incense are used in relation to prayer in Scripture.
Psalms 141:2 Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. We learn here how God sees the prayers of His people. He sees them as precious and very costly. He not only values them, but He stores them up in Heaven so that none of our words to Him are lost. *[I personally believe this is done so that when we arrive at home, He can show us our prayers and exactly HOW He DID answer them when at times it seemed He turned a deaf ear!]* (Jeremiah 33:3) "I Will Answer Thee..."

The Song of the Redeemed (vv.9-10)

Their song was a 'new' song because they could not sing it until the Lamb had taken the book thus signifying complete redemption. Praise is here given by all for the Blood of the Lamb that was shed for men of all walks of life and origins. Notice what these men were made by the blood of the Lamb...KINGS and PRIESTS! That means we were given AUTHORITY and ACCESS by the blood!

A note of expectation is also here as the redeemed look forward to the Kingdom of God established UPON the earth.

The Praise of the Angelic Band (vv.11-12)

John here records the praise of the angelic band around the throne of God. In trying to describe their number, John says there were ten thousand times ten thousand = One Hundred Million. He finally just says and thousands of thousands...this is an allusion to the fact that their company is truly innumerable.

John then tells us that the entire heavenly company explodes into a sevenfold doxology to the Lamb.

The Universal Chorus of Praise (vv.13-14)

John is careful to tell us that before this worship segment is concluded EVERY member of CREATION joins in praise of the Lamb of God! This is fulfilling the Apostle's prophecy (Philippians 2:9-11). NOTE: all of creation DOES NOT sing the song of the REDEEMED, this is reserved for those in heaven. All, however, sing praise to Him Who occupies the throne!

The four beasts close this symphony by saying, 'AMEN', or "SO IT IS." After this the elders fall down again and worship throughout eternity!

Chapter Six

In chapter five, we saw the Lamb of Glory was found worthy to take the seven-sealed book and loose the seals thereof. Now, we see Him, after accepting praise from Creation, opening the seals.

The opening of these Seven Seals marks the BEGINNING of TRIBULATION upon the earth.

(Put Tribulation in Perspective as it Relates to Other Eschatological Events)

The Seal Judgments (vv.1-17)

This is the first series of troubles that Christ will pour out upon the earth. Note: This series of judgments is initiated with the sound of THUNDER. Thunder speaks of a coming storm; that storm is one in which the likes have never before been seen!

These riders and horses are to be taken symbolically.

1) The Rider on the White Horse (v.2)

- this is not to be confused with the White Horse of Rev.19
- we are not given the name of this rider
- he has only ONE crown
- he goes forth to conquer (bloodless)
- this is the Anti-Christ (A COUNTERFEITER)
- his appearance will mark the beginning of Tribulation
- he is given a bow with no arrow, representing he will come with a plan for peace with no way of enforcing it

2) The Rider on the Red Horse (vv.3-4)

- this I believe is the same rider as on the White Horse once his identity is revealed
- he will break his treaty with Israel
- he will be a man of war; this will be a blood-bathed world (**Matthew 24:4-8**)
- peace will be completely gone from the earth

3) The Rider on the Black Horse (vv.5-6)

- this is again the same rider as his hellish plan progresses
- after war there naturally follows famine
- the color black in Scripture is used to denote famine (Lamentations 4:8-9)
- this rider has no weapon, but scales, this speaks of food rationing
- the measurements are striking to note: "a measure of wheat" symbolized what it would take to feed one man for one day "a penny" was the day's wage for the working man. So, in essence, a man would work all day just to have one meal and that would have to be divided among his family.
- Jesus warned of this also (Mt.24:7)
- the oil and wine would be in abundance, these are not necessities, but luxuries
- Divine justice says if you reject the necessities now in favor of the luxuries, some day you shall have your fill of luxuries without necessities ("Not by Bread Alone")

4) The Rider on the Pale Horse (vv.7-8)

- this horse logically follows the other three
- this is the bringing in of death and hell
- the pale color is corpse-like and horrible
- this rider claimed $\frac{1}{4}$ of the earth's population
- Why was Hell riding behind? To claim the souls of those Death had taken!
- This last rider naturally follows all that the Anti-Christ has promised...DEATH AND HELL!
- Jesus warned that many would be deceived by his treacherous ways... (Mt.24:11)

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

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Week Seven

We now come to the fifth of the seal judgments of the Tribulation. Keep in mind, the first four seals deal with the revelation of the Antichrist upon the earth and all the terror that he will bring. During this time, those who profess faith in Christ will be persecuted and killed for their profession. The Antichrist will heavily track and punish all these Tribulation saints. In keeping with this thought, remember the words of Christ,

Matthew 24:7-9 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

It is with this reference that we see the Lamb opening the fifth seal. This fifth seal seems to leave off from the destruction of the earth and takes its course in Heaven.

The Altar and the Martyrs

Upon the opening of the fifth seal, John sees an altar in Heaven. Under this altar, he sees the souls of martyrs that cry out unto God. It is probable that these martyrs span all ages beginning with Abel and coming up to those recently killed in Tribulation. The souls cry out to God as did the first martyr's, *Genesis 4:10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.*

Notice what they are crying for, they are pleading for JUDGMENT to be executed upon their tormentors on earth.

What a strikingly different message than what we are told to proclaim in this DISPENSATION of GRACE. *Matthew 5:44*
But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.

The reason for this change is simple, at this time God has turned the page upon a NEW DISPENSATION, the DAY OF JUDGMENT, not of GRACE! From the wording of this text, we get the idea that even God Himself is hesitant to begin His work of judgment, this speaks of His longsuffering character, not willing that any should perish.

In response to the cry of the martyrs, God gives them all white robes to signify their eternal blessedness and security with Him. They are thus assured that God will avenge them for vengeance truly belongs to Him. After the giving of the white robes, these martyrs are told to rest or wait until more of their brethren are martyred as they were. This signifies that the Antichrist would not stop his vicious slaughter of God's people until every last one had been killed.

The Sixth Seal: Cataclysmic Geographical Change

Now we proceed to the opening of the sixth seal of the Apocalypse. This may well be the most visually terrifying of them all. Please consider what Christ reveals to His servant John about the events on earth after the breaking of this seal:

***There was a great earthquake** (God had caused monumental earthquakes before at epoch points in history (giving of Law at Sinai, death of Christ on Calvary).

***Sun was blackened**

***Moon became as blood**

***Stars fell to the earth**

***Heavens departed as a scroll (1st and 2nd Heaven)**

-Apparently these heavens were rolled away to allow men upon the earth to peer, to some degree into Heaven. This was not the first time this had happened (Stephen's stoning).

***Mountains and islands were moved** (probably the result of this great, world-wide earthquake)

This cataclysmic event HAD BEEN FORETOLD:

Isaiah 13:13 Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.

This massive destruction shall cause world-wide panic to fall upon everyone. Men shall run into caves and cry for the rocks and hills to fall upon them so they might not have to endure the face of Him Who is now their Judge!

Luke 21:25-26 And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

Notice those who are affected by this seal...EVERYONE!
Rank, status, age, or wealth will make no difference when God turns to JUDGMENT.

Chapter Seven

This is the MERCY CHAPTER of the REVELATION. This entire chapter is a parenthesis, or a BREAK in God's Judgment. This chapter is actually the answer to Habakkuk's prayer, "In wrath, remember mercy." (Hab.3:2)

In the midst of judgment, God here seals up a number of men that He will use to yet again show mercy to the earth in the midst of Tribulation.

The 144,000 Sealed Jews (vv.4-8)

There is no reason whatsoever that we should regard these sealed individuals as anything other than physical and literal Jews. We find that there are 12,000 from every tribe listed here, with one exception. The tribe of Dan is NOT mentioned in Revelation chapter seven. The reason for this could lie in the fact that the tribe of Dan was an idolatrous tribe. (Lev.24:11; Judges 18:1-2; 1 Kings 12:28-30) God had told Israel that idolaters would be cut off from the nation (Deut.29:21). Some Rabbinical authorities claim that the Antichrist will come from the tribe of Dan (Jeremiah 8:16).

We do know that these 144,000 will be sealed with the seal of the Living God in their foreheads.

The Saved Gentiles of the Tribulation (vv.9-17)

Immediately after introducing us to these Jewish preachers, the Revelation turns to a vast number of saints who were SAVED DURING TRIBULATION and consequently KILLED. We know these are not primarily Jews because of v.9. It is logical that these saints should be mentioned after the sealed Jews for it is the message of these sealed Jews that will bring salvation to this great number.

Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

Notice what we find out about this multitude in heaven:

- **They were clothed in white with palms in their hands.**
These white robes speak of the righteousness of Christ in which they stand before God. The palms are an instrument of praise. There was another time when men and women held palms before Christ, but that was vain worship (John 12:12-13). However, these will be true worshippers around the throne.

- They were all praising God for their Salvation.
- They had all endured the Tribulation for some period of time.
- They were forever freed from the torments they suffered upon the earth.

-**"They shall hunger no more"**

this relates to the famine of 6:5-6

-**"Neither thirst any more"**

obviously, their tormentors had denied them water

-**"Neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat"**

speaks of the fact they were probably made homeless because of their faith

-**"God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes"**

this speaks of the finality of their suffering, they never again shall shed tears of suffering or persecution

Chapter Eight

We will continue here just long enough to conclude the seventh seal of judgment.

The Seventh Seal

This last seal is unique in that it is actually bringing in the next set of more severe judgments, the trumpet judgments.

At the opening of this last seal, there is complete silence in heaven for half an hour. This, I believe speaks of the ominous battle that is coming against the earth from heaven. The angelic host knows what is next, God Jehovah knows what is next...all are silent. A certain solemnity rests upon everything. *What horrors yet await the earth?*

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Week Eight

We are now in the eighth chapter of the book and we are embarking upon the next series of judgments to fall upon the earth. Here, we see the opening of the seventh seal. In the seventh seal are contained the seven trumpet judgments.

The Silence in Heaven (8:1)

This is a remarkable revelation seeing that all we have seen of heaven thus far has included praise to the Lamb and extreme activity. Yet now, all seems to fall deathly quiet for the space of half an hour. Thirty minutes is not a very long span of time when you are engaged in an activity you enjoy, but when impending doom and suspense hang over you, it can seem like an eternity.

It is as if the whole company of heaven is unable to speak for what is coming upon the earth. The righteous judgment of God is indeed enough to stop the mouths of men.

The Seven Angels (8:2-6)

We have already seen how extensively angels are used in the Apocalypse. We now see them again as they are given power to unleash judgment upon the earth. These angels are now given SEVEN TRUMPETS.

Trumpets in Scripture were used extensively in the Old Testament to signal worship and warfare. (Ill. Jericho, etc.) These trumpets are not to call anyone to worship, but rather to summon the angelic to declare war as it were on the earth.

The Angel and the Censer (8:2-5)

Just before the outpouring of God's wrath through these trumpet judgments, we are introduced to the angel that stands before the golden altar of God. Let us notice a few characteristics of this angel:

- he had a golden censer
- there was given to him much incense
- he was to offer this incense with the prayers of the saints

If we compare Scripture with Scripture, it is fairly easy to determine what all this means. Look carefully back at chapter six, verses nine through eleven. After the opening of the fifth seal, John sees the martyred saints under the altar praying to God for vengeance to be executed upon those that tormented and killed them. God postponed judgment upon these wicked men then and instructed the saints to wait. Here, however, it appears God is about to answer the prayer of these martyrs through the use of these trumpet judgments.

After the angel has offered up these prayers to God, he does something very interesting. The angel actually fills the censer with coals from the altar. Remember, this altar is one of judgment, not grace. So the picture is clear. The angel is filling the censer with coals of judgment and casting the censer of judgment upon the earth; this represents the judgment of God that is about to fall upon the earth. The voices, thundering, lightning, and earthquake all speak of an impending storm (Cf. 4:5).

Now all is set and we see the seven angels take their places and prepare to sound the trumpets.

The First Trumpet (8:7)

The first judgment upon the earth is hail and fire mingled with blood. There is no need to symbolize this as the Scriptures make no reference to symbolism at all. This judgment corresponds to the similar plague on Egypt, which was literal (Ex.9:22-26). The only difference between this judgment and that of Egypt's was this: in Egypt, the hail was sent to free the Israelites, now it is sent to punish them.

After this judgment falls, one third of the world's vegetation is burnt up. Imagine what this would do to the global economy.

The Second Trumpet (8:8-9)

This judgment comes with a "burning mountain" being cast into the sea. We can suspect symbolism here because of the wording. John said he saw "as it were a great mountain." Most scholars agree that this is some meteoric mass falling from space. After impact, a third part of the sea will become blood (Ex.7:19-21). Along with this, there is the death of the third part of sea creatures. Also, a third part of the ships in the sea were destroyed. This could possibly be due to a tsunami type wave caused by such a massive impact (Spanish Armada).

The Third Trumpet (8:10-11)

The third trumpet involves a literal star falling from heaven and smiting the earth with great force. This star strikes the freshwater whereas the last trumpet struck the saltwater. Since freshwater is used for drinking, the star carries with it a unique name, "Wormwood." We find the name 'WORMWOOD' 8 times in the Bible. It literally means "BITTER." This falling star is actually named BITTER. We should not marvel at this since God has created all stars and knows their number and has named them all. **Psalms 147:4**
He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names.

Upon crashing to the earth, this star turns a third of all freshwater bitter. We are told also that many men died because of this bitter water. We can look back at a time when evil men gave our Lord bitterness to drink when He thirsted (John 19:28-29).

The Fourth Trumpet (8:12-13)

This trumpet judgment will bring great changes to the earth as a whole. On this fourth trumpet, the third part of the sun, moon, and stars will be smitten. In other words, the days shall be shortened by a third (16 hour days). This will affect seasons and vegetation.

Consider this; on the fourth day of creation God brought forth the sun, moon, and stars to light the earth. On this the fourth seal, He withdraws the very light He created.

After this fourth trumpet, an angel appears with a solemn warning to those living on the earth. The next three trumpets are to bring a triple woe. The triple woe could speak of this terrible judgment coming for the violence done to each member of the Trinity by wicked men.

Chapter Nine

"HELL COMES TO EARTH"

In this chapter, things get worse for the earth. The angel has just announced that a series of three woes are in store for the inhabitants of the earth.

The Fifth Trumpet: The First Woe (9:1-12)

Up to this point, the trumpet judgments have involved judgment coming from Heaven above. Now, we see judgment coming up from Hell beneath. This represents the fact that all of God's Creation is involved in the time of His wrath.

During this judgment, we meet an unnamed personality. John says that he saw a 'star' fall(en) from heaven unto the earth. Scripture has referred to angels as stars (Job 38:7)

This angel is most likely the angel of Revelation 20:1-3.

The angel proceeds to open the bottomless pit accompanied by great smoke and torment.

The Pit Itself

The bottomless pit or ABYSS. Is a place created for the Devil and His angels (demons). Evidently, all demons fear this place above all else (Luke 8:31). The locality of this pit is in the lower parts of the earth (Eph.4:9).

When Satan unlocks the pit, the demons who now occupy it will be free to roam the earth punishing men, who they also hate.

The demons take the awful shape of horse-like locusts who also have the characteristics of the man, woman, lion, and scorpion! These beasts are unleashed on men to inflict pain for five months. We can see the deceptive nature of these demons by the fact that they are given women's hair. Consider how they looked from behind, but wait until you turn them around. The demons are using deception today...things are not always what they appear!

During this time, death will not be possible to men. Men will try all ways to die and will not be able! Can you imagine what torments will be given to men who desire death as a means of escape?

These demon monsters are led by their king, the king of the pit. His names are here given in Hebrew and Greek:

-Hebrew : Abaddon

-Greek : Apollyon

This signifies that Jew and Gentile will be the recipient of this torment. The name means "Destroyer" **ONE WOE IS PAST**

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Truth Baptist Church School of the Bible
Brad Ingram, *Pastor*

Week Nine

We come now to the sixth trumpet judgment. In the fifth trumpet judgment, scores of demons were released from the abysmal pit of hell, in this judgment, only four are released.

The Four Fallen Angels (9:13-14)

From this passage, we learn that judgment is still proceeding from the golden altar in heaven. This is the same altar as was seen in chapter six and verse nine. Judgment coming from this altar is the result of the prayers of the martyrs for God's vengeance to fall upon their tormentors.

We learn of a voice coming from the altar at the sounding of this sixth trumpet. The voice instructs the angel to loose the four angels (demons) from the Euphrates River. These angels are obviously fallen angels as we never read anywhere in Scripture of righteous angels being bound. These angels may have had some major role in the rebellion of Satan against God in Isaiah chapter fourteen. We can only speculate as to why some angels were allowed to roam free until judgment and why some were immediately bound under chains. Neither are we told why these angels were bound in the Euphrates River.

The Demonic Army (9:15-19)

We learn here that these angels were being reserved by God Himself for this very purpose. These angels were prepared for this in the providence of God from eternity past. God knew the exact hour, day, month, and year these angels would be loosed. The destruction these angels (demons) will leave in their wake will be magnanimous. The Bible says that one third of the world population will be killed by them.

These four angels, however, will not work alone. At the same time as their release from the river, a demonic army apparently appears on the scene with the four fallen angels. Some have taken this army of roughly 200,000,000 warriors to come from an Eastern nation. However, the words of Scripture set forth evidently that these warriors are not human at all. Most likely, they ascended from the pit in the last trumpet and are now engaging war upon a third of the population.

It should be no marvel to the Bible student to find angelic forces occupying such positions. Consider the vision of Elisha's servant: **2 Kings 6:17** *And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.*

There is no hint of symbolism here in the words of Scripture. John is clear to tell us that he plainly saw the horses and those that sat upon them. They had breastplates of fire and brimstone. Fire and brimstone are the elements of judgment (Sodom and Gomorrah).

The Unrepentant (9:20-21)

Even after such extreme acts of God's judgment, those left alive will refuse to repent of their evil. This passage shows clearly the hardness of men's hearts during this time of Tribulation. We must keep in mind that a great many of these men will be under the strong delusion sent by God and will believe the Devil's lie (2 Thess. 2:11).

The Scriptures then catalogue the sins of men that will prevail in that day.

Chapter Ten (Parenthesis)

Just as there was a break in judgment between the sixth and seventh seal, there is also a break between the sixth and seventh trumpet.

The Mighty Angel (10:1-7)

The identity of this mighty angel can be easily discovered if we compare Scripture with Scripture. Note the comparisons made between the Mighty Angel and the Lord Jesus Christ:

MIGHTY ANGEL	JESUS CHRIST
<i>"come down from heaven"</i>	<i>"for I came down from heaven" (John 6:38)</i>
<i>"clothed with a cloud"</i>	<i>"Behold, he cometh with clouds" (Rev.1:7) Clouds have always been the attire of deity.</i>
<i>"a rainbow was upon his head"</i>	<i>This signifies God's covenant. God then, could rightly wear it. This speaks of Christ's mercy to His own in the midst of Judgment.</i>
<i>"his face was as it were the sun"</i>	<i>Revelation 1:16 ; "His face did shine as the sun" (Matthew 17:2)</i>
<i>"his feet as pillars of fire"</i>	<i>Revelation 1:15; THIS SIGNIFIES HIS JUDGMENT</i>

Upon the introduction of this mighty angel, John proceeds to tell what the angel does.

*He has in his hand a little book. We are not told explicitly what the book contains, but all agree that it is the WORD OF GOD.

*The Angel places one foot on the land and the other on the sea. We know that the whole earth is summed up in the words

land and sea. This action symbolizes Christ's rule over all creation...land and sea. The setting down of His feet is in fulfillment to:

1 Corinthians 15:24-25 *Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.*

We are then told that He cries with a loud voice. The voice is described as when a lion roars. Compare this with: **Joel 3:16** *The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.*

Hosea 11:10 *They shall walk after the LORD: he shall roar like a lion: when he shall roar, then the children shall tremble from the west.*

Also, when the Angel cries, John hears SEVEN THUNDERS UTTERING THEIR VOICES. Thunder implies coming judgment and the number seven speaks of finality. These unknown utterances speak of the finality and completeness of God's judgment.

John is forbidden to write what he heard in these thundering. It would be foolish to speculate as to what he heard, God has left this sealed for a definite reason.

The mighty angel then does a strange thing, he raises his hand toward heaven and swears by God the Father that time shall be no more (Heb. 6:13). The literal rendering here is simple, there will be no more delaying of judgment. When the seventh angel sounds, evil will be put down fully.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

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Week Ten

We have now advanced to the eleventh chapter of the Apocalypse. This chapter is perhaps the most difficult of all prophetic chapters. It is in so many ways still mysterious to us the reader. Known only to God are the clearest facts of this prophecy and He will surely bring them to pass in His time.

The Temple and the Times of the Gentiles (11:1-2)

To understand these verses, we must realize that there will be a Tribulation Temple built in Jerusalem. This must come to pass for such Scriptures as

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

We are not told exactly when this Temple will be rebuilt, but the fact of its construction is clear.

John was given a reed (approx. 10 ft.) and told to measure the Temple with it. We are not told expressly why he was given such a command. This is purely a Jewish Temple. John was told to measure the inner temple and the altar. He was, however, told not to measure the court of the Gentiles. After this command, we see that the Gentiles will yet exercise rule over Jerusalem "the holy city" for 3 and ½ more years...or forty and two months. This will fill up Daniel's seventieth week and bring an end to the 'Times of the Gentiles.' This time period will be brought to a sudden end with the return of Jesus Christ in glory AFTER the Tribulation.

The Two Witnesses (11:3-12)

Now we come to a portion of prophecy that has given way to more speculation than perhaps any other. The Bible speaks here of the ministry of two very unique witnesses.

Why are there two?

Judgments in the Law and the Gospel times were both to be confirmed by at least TWO WITNESSES.

Deuteronomy 17:6 At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. (LAW)

2 Corinthians 13:1 This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. (GOSPEL)

These two unnamed witnesses preach for almost three and one half years (1,260 days). During their preaching campaign, they are clothed in sackcloth, representing the need for repentance and mourning.

The Bible calls these men OLIVE TREES and CANDLESTICKS. We can compare this verse to ZECHARIAH 4:1-2. In this book, Zerubbabel and Joshua were called lamps and olive trees. These two men were God's messengers upon earth. So this symbolic reference is simply stating the fact that these men are God's messengers of light to a dark world.

The Power of these Witnesses (vv.5-6)

No one will be able to hurt these witnesses as long as they are working in the timetable of God. If any attempts are made to hurt them, the enemies are destroyed by fire that proceeded out of their mouth.

(Cf. 2 Kings 1:7-14) There is no need to attempt to spiritualize these passages. Consider again the extreme change in the dispensations. Under the Dispensation of Grace, we do not retaliate against those who oppose us and our message. *Matthew 5:39-40 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also.*

The sons of Zebedee wanted to do something like this in the Gospels and Jesus forbade them. **(LUKE 9:51-55)**

Not only do these men have power to destroy life, they also have power over nature (v.6). The atmosphere will be under their rule for these three and one half years.

The Death of the Witnesses (vv.7-10)

After God's message has been proclaimed, the Beast will arise and make war against these witnesses. They will be permitted to die and the whole world will be ecstatic over this hushing of these troublesome fanatics!

The Resurrection of the Witnesses (vv.11-12)

Imagine what horror must overtake the inhabitants of earth as they watch before their very eyes life come back into the bodies of these witnesses and see them ascend bodily into heaven!

The Effect (vv.13-14)

After seeing this miraculous sight, there was a great earthquake in Jerusalem. Such an earthquake accompanied the death of Christ as well. In this literal quake, seven thousand men were killed. The remnant here then glorifies God. Do not be deceived into thinking this event has caused a revival. Men, when faced with calamity may call on God for a brief time until calamity is passed. But no true repentance is mentioned here else God would not have continued on in His judgment. (I.e. Pharaoh, Judas)

The Trumpet Judgments Resume

The Seventh Trumpet Judgment (vv.15-19)

This trumpet involves the host of heaven praising Christ for His great power. Here before us is the announcement that Christ is taking back what rightfully belongs to Him. The kingdoms of this world are presently under the rule of Satan. *2 Corinthians 4:4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.* But the Lord will take back all that He owns. This causes great praise throughout heaven.

The Bible says here that the 'nations were angry.' This word 'nations' speak of the Gentile nations and their inhabitants. Of course they are angry; they have lived for greed and gain. They have labored to build themselves a kingdom...now however, Christ has come to take it all away forever and they are left empty handed and hell bound.

This picture coincides with PSALM 2.

Verse nineteen begins with the temple in heaven and the ark being opened. This Ark of the Covenant is particularly Jewish; it has no relation to Gentiles. This speaks of God remembering Israel in the midst of Judgment.

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Week Eleven

We now come to the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse. This chapter is highly important and symbolic.

The Wonder - Sign in Heaven (12:1-17)

The word used here in verse one for 'wonder' is the same word as 'sign'. So, we can rightly call this entire vision a sign. In this chapter, because of this word distinction, we may take these things symbolically.

The Woman (vv.1-2)

There has been some debate as to who this woman is:

- 1) Some have called her as representing the Church
- 2) Mary Baker Eddy said this woman pictured herself and the man-child was her system of Christian Science!
- 3) The biblical truth is that this woman represents **ISRAEL**.

By comparing this woman with the dream of Joseph, we can make a solid case for her identity. Notice, the woman is said to be clothed with the sun, the moon, and the stars. *Genesis 37:9-10 And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?*

This dream involves the FIRST FAMILY OF ISRAEL. The TWELVE sons of Jacob compose the twelve tribes of Israel. So this reference to the heavenly bodies makes a parallel to the fact that this woman is tied into the nation of ISRAEL.

This woman is said to be with child.

THIS IS NOT REFERRING TO THE VIRGIN MARY! There is not one bit of proof that Mary ever ascended into Heaven bodily as Christ did, this is a Catholic doctrine.

This child is the Lord Jesus; He came through the line of the JEWS. So it could be rightly said that ISRAEL gave birth to the MESSIAH.

The Dragon (vv.3-4)

This dragon is identified as Satan in verse nine. His heads and horns and crowns speak of the temporary power that he has been given in the earth.

Ephesians 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

John 14:30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

Most scholars agree that this drawing away of the third part of the stars refer to the original revolt in heaven and the number of angels that accompanied Satan. The Scriptures have referred to angels as stars before.

Job 38:7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

This Dragon was especially intent on destroying the child of the woman as soon as it was born. This corresponds to the life of the baby Jesus.

MATTHEW 2:13-18

John 8:59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

John 10:31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.

BUT IT WAS NOT GOD'S PLAN FOR CHRIST TO DIE THIS WAY!

The Child (vv.5-6)

The woman delivered the child and it was said of Him that He should rule the nations with a rod of iron. This parallels with what is said of Christ as King.

Psalms 2:9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

Revelation 2:27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

Revelation 19:15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

GAP BETWEEN VERSES 5 & 6 → This Gap is the Church Age. It begins with the Ascension of Christ and concludes with the Rapture at which time this war begins (Tribulation).

In verse six, AFTER the Church has gone upward and the Tribulation has begun, the woman is said to go into the wilderness for 1,260 days and be sheltered by God. This is the last 3 and ½ years of Daniel's Seventieth Week (Daniel 9:24).

The War in Heaven (vv.7-12)

This war must be put into its proper place in biblical prophecy. THIS IS NOT THE CASTING OUT OF SATAN AND HIS ANGELS BEFORE THE CREATION OF MAN. EVEN THEN, SATAN WAS PERMITTED TO REIGN IN THE HEAVENLIES, THE ATMOSPHERE. THIS BATTLE WILL OCCUR DURING THE GREAT TRIBULATION.

Michael, the Protector of Israel (Daniel 12:1-2), will now be permitted to do battle with the Devil and his fallen angels. Of course, the angels of God prevail and Satan and his host are cast out of the heavenlies and down to the earth to make their abode. The saints in Heaven rejoice over this victory for this reason...Satan had been coming to the presence of God daily to accuse the brethren. Now he is permitted NO MORE ACCESS to God in any way possible! (Snake pit in your backyard)

The inhabitants of earth are now warned...WOE UNTO YOU!

The Dragon and Israel in the Tribulation (vv.13-17)

When the Dragon is cast to the earth, he makes Israel the special object of his wrath and fury. The last half of the Tribulation will be especially harsh on the people of Israel.

The nation of Israel is said to have been given two wings of a great eagle whereby she may escape the Dragon. The LORD has always provided an escape for Israel from the mouth of the Dragon.

FROM EGYPT: *Exodus 19:4* Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

The text then tells us that Satan cast a flood out from his mouth in hopes of sweeping away Israel. This 'flood' could speak of an enormous plan of destruction concocted by the Serpent...but it will be to no avail!!

Isaiah 59:19-20 So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him. And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD.

The Remnant of verse 17 could refer to the sealed 144,000 or to the converts made by the preaching of these men.

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Week Twelve

After having witnessed Satan and his angels thrown from heaven and confined to earth in chapter twelve, John now tells us of Satan's fury unleashed upon the EARTH. No longer can he operate from the heavens, his sinister work must now go on in planet Earth.

We must remember, Satan is a spirit being and he can only accomplish his plans as he works THROUGH SOME HUMAN INSTRUMENT.

Luke 22:3 *"Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve."*

Knowing this, we find the devil working through TWO POWERFUL AND WICKED HUMAN BEINGS IN CHAPTER THIRTEEN. These two men are called 'beasts' in Scripture. They are given this name not because they are animals, but because they are fierce and as cruel as beasts. The Bible has in other places referred to men as 'beasts.'

Titus 1:12 *"One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are alway liars, evil beasts, slow bellies."* The Greek word 'beast' here has to do with being venomous and hateful.

Consider now the math here; in this chapter we will be introduced to two Satan-controlled men. With the devil as their leader, they form an UNHOLY TRINITY. See how the great imitator attempts to mock the thrice holy God of Scripture.

The First Beast (vv.1-10)

Consider this first beast, this puppet of the Dragon. Consider from where this first beast comes. It is my opinion that here the Bible is speaking symbolically. This beast is seen as rising from the sea. God has in other places of Scripture used the sea as a symbol of the restlessness of nations, or of populations.

Isaiah 17:12-13 *"Woe to the multitude of many people, which make a noise like the noise of the seas; and to the rushing of nations, that make a rushing like the rushing of mighty waters! The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters: but God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing before the whirlwind."*

I take this verse to mean this beast will arise on the scene at a time when the nations are in Great Confusion and restlessness, just as they will be during the time of Great Tribulation.

He is said to have SEVEN HEADS AND TEN HORNS! The seven heads speak of wisdom and the horns speak of power. Upon his horns were crowns which symbolize the authority over the earth that he has been given by Satan, the prince of this world. He is also characterized by blasphemy, this is the Bible word for anything evil spoken of against the Deity. We will learn in a few verses just how hostile this beast is toward God and the saints.

John now gives us three animal references to help us understand the nature of the beast.

A LEOPARD

A BEAR

A LION

These animals coincide with Nebuchadnezzar's image (Daniel 2:32-33).

To understand this, we must refer back to Daniel 7:1-7. The three kingdoms leading up to the Roman Empire as described using the above animals symbolically.

In Daniel 7, however, they are given in reverse order:

A LION (Babylonian)

A BEAR (Media-Persian)

A LEOPARD (Grecian)

A fourth beast appears that is too dreadful for words, this beast is the Roman Empire. The meaning is this, the beast of Revelation thirteen is directly related to the Old Roman Empire which was never totally destroyed. This revived Roman Empire has characteristics of the first three empires. The reverse order is to show that Daniel was looking to the future empires while John was looking back upon them...how precise is the Authorized Text!

We now come to the deadly wound that was healed.

The deadly wound that is restored is speaking of the revival of the 'dead' Roman Empire. This is seen by some as a Political Healing.

This view needs little explanation as we will see later in this book that it is unmistakably clear that the Roman Empire will be revived in its political form.

"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." (2 Thess. 2:8-10)



THE ROMAN EMPIRE AT ITS HEIGHT OF POWER AND INFLUENCE. ONCE AGAIN ROME WILL RISE INCLUDING A FEDERATION OF KINGS LED BY THE BEAST FROM THE SEA.

Whoever this may be, this first **Beast** is the man known as **Anti-Christ** (2 Thess. 2).

This Beast works in such a way as to bring praise to the Dragon, or Satan. This has always been the desire of Satan...to be worshipped as God. Notice again the striking illustration: Christ Jesus came that men would glorify the Father God. The Anti-Christ will come that men will glorify the Devil.

The power or authority of this beast was for three and one half years. During this time, he speaks continually against the Lord and those in heaven with Him. He will also turn against the Jews and make war with the saints of Israel. He will accept no worship but Satan worship through himself.

The tenth verse points toward the destruction of the beast through the sword (Rev. 19). Even in this great reign of terror, there is hope from the Lord!

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Week Thirteen

(Review Unholy Trinity)

Summarize and Review 1st Beast of 13:1-10

This week we come to discover the second beast John sees in the Apocalypse. This second Satan-filled human being will be the religious brain behind the false worship of the end times.

It is important to remember that this second beast is synonymous with the "False Prophet" and is referred to as such three times in the Revelation (16:13; 19:20; 20:10). This false prophet will have a similar ministry to that of the Holy Spirit, only with far different ends in mind. Remember, Satan is a master duplicator.

This Second Beast Arises out of the Earth

Whereas the first beast is seen coming out of the 'sea' which is symbolic of Gentile nations, this beast is coming out of the 'earth' or land. The land here is symbolic of the Land of Palestine, the land John was seeing in this apocalyptic vision. So from this, we see that the False Prophet will arise out of the nation of Palestine, the Holy Land. We must remember that the land of Palestine is the focal point of this Revelation; all of God's dealings with men have their origin here. It is no wonder then that Satan's prophet will come from among the ranks of the Palestinians.

The Beast had Horns Like a Lamb and a Voice as a Dragon

Consider the deception that lies within this second beast. He has characteristics like a LAMB and a BEAST. These are two completely opposite creatures in almost every conceivable way! Here we see his outward demeanor at first is gentle and inviting...his true inward nature is ravenous and deadly!

This Beast is the Last Ecclesiastical Ruler

This man, whoever he may be, will be the religious wing of Satan's master-plan. Whereas the first beast was the last great political leader, the second beast will be the last great religious leader.

It is important to note here that POLITICAL and RELIGIOUS power UNITE! In church history, whenever this has happened, it has spelled doom for the purity of the Church of God. This occurred in Pagan Rome when Constantine legalized Christianity and made it the official religion of the Empire. We cannot elaborate here as to the amount of evil and unjust persecution that was done against the true church when POLITICAL and RELIGIOUS power UNITED. (Note: the Lord Jesus nor ANY OF THE APOSTLES (incl. Peter) ever were involved in the political arena of their days)

What a tragedy it is therefore to see CHURCH and GOVERNMENT again join forces. However, this time the purity of the true church WILL NOT BE AFFECTED by this union since the true church is safely in heaven with her Groom, the Lord Jesus Christ. This world religion under Satan is now a false and harlot religion doomed for Hell.

The primary activity then of this second beast is to direct ALL WORSHIP to the FIRST BEAST or ANTICHRIST. By doing this, Satan himself will be the one who is truly worshipped since it is the dragon who gives power to the first beast (13:2).

We can now clearly see the devil's final piece added to the puzzle of iniquity. This false prophet-beast corresponds to the work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said concerning the Holy Spirit, *"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."*
John 16:13-14

The Holy Spirit of God is now directing all worship to the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. However, this False Prophet will direct all worship to the son of Satan, the son of perdition, the Anti-Christ.

This beast will compel men to worship the Anti-Christ by using two different methods.

THE USE OF MIRACLES AND WONDERS

To convince men to believe 'the lie,' the second beast will perform supernatural miracles in the sight of all men. Remember, the Lord Jesus also performed miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit to authenticate Himself and His message before men.

Matthew 12:24 But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

Matthew 12:31 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

(These verses show that Christ Himself testified to the fact that it was through the power of the Holy Ghost, not Beelzebub, that He had done these miracles)

So as the Great Pretender, Satan will use his prophet to do miracles to convince the people of the earth and especially the Jews that their Messiah has come.

Consider: One of these miracles will be to send FIRE FROM HEAVEN. This miracle had been done several times in the Old Testament to vindicate Jehovah and His messenger. To the Jew, this miracle is always linked with ELIJAH THE PROPHET.

Knowing this, and remembering that Satan himself is a student of the Scripture, the reason for this miracle being wrought by the Second Beast is easily seen. Before the Old Testament closed, the Lord left one last promise to Israel, *Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.*" Malachi 4:5-6.

Could it be that Satan chose to work this miracle in the Middle East to deceive the Jews into thinking that their Messiah had indeed come in the person of the Anti-Christ? What clever deception the Old Dragon uses upon those who loved unrighteousness! **(2 Thessalonians 2:9-12)**

It is interesting to see today how so many people are rejecting the Written Revelation of God (the Bible) and are crying after some SIGN or WONDER! Preachers of the Bible who teach people to live by faith and not feeling are regarded as dry and dead and are accused of limiting the POWER OF GOD! Such is the case today as the stage is being set upon which the False Prophet will give men all the SIGNS and WONDERS they can stand!

But this is not the only method the False Prophet will use to direct worship to the Anti-Christ..

THE THREAT OF DEATH

If men will not voluntarily worship the beast, the False Prophet will compel them by pain of death. Verse fifteen tells that 'as many as would not worship...should be killed.' This is an old trick from the bag of the Dragon, consider the orders of such devil controlled kings as:

-Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 3:6)

-Darius (Daniel 6:7-9)

These Bible instances were but foreshadowing the world-wide threatening that will come during the Tribulation. The devil has always desired the worship and adoration of men, if he cannot deceive his way into their worship, he will force himself. **Global devil-worship will characterize the age of the Apocalypse.** Such things are being put into place even now, consider the inspired words of the Apostle, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils"
1 Timothy 4:1

An Image to Be Set Up

To aid in the worship of Anti-Christ, the False Prophet orders an image to be erected to Anti-Christ. This image will be made and set up by the multitudes under the guidance of the False Prophet. We cannot give detail as to the image, but we know it will be the very replica of the Anti-Christ, whoever he may be. Again, image worship is no new thing. The Mystery Religions of Babylon practiced it and even today it is prevalent in world religions. This practice even goes on in the Roman Catholic Church, a supposed Christian religion. However, Jehovah has condemned any depiction of Deity in the form of an image.

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me" Exodus 20:4-5

There will be a wonder attached to this image; the False Prophet will have the power to give life to this image insomuch that it will actually SPEAK! This idea of speaking idols comes from ancient Greek and Roman mythology in which an image of Hera supposedly spoke and pronounced a curse upon all those below her.

Again, Nebuchadnezzar prefigured this idea. He also set up an image and demanded men to worship it. Consider how true the Word of God is on this subject:

"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things." Romans 1:22-23

No One Exempt From the Worship of the Beast

(13:16) We learn here that no one is excluded from the compulsory worship of Satan. All men are equal in their unholy duty of bowing down to Satan. (Cf. Phil. 2:9-11)

A Mark Required to Buy or Sell

Just as Jehovah God had placed a mark on His servants (7:3), the Devil will place a mark on his. Every move of God is checked and countered with a move by the Dragon...until God has the last move... *"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."* Revelation 20:10

This mark, whatever it is, will tell who are able to buy and sell during the time of Tribulation. This mark is another method of compelling worship. This mark will be your pass to life on earth, rejecting the mark means certain death.

From the words of the text, it appears that there are three marks from which man may choose during this time (13:17).

- 1) *"the mark"*
- 2) *"or the name of the beast"*
- 3) *"or the number of his name"*

We must confess here that we DO NOT KNOW what these first two marks are...no one outside of God does. However, this third mark is defined from the text and this mark has been the subject of much speculation.

This number is 666. We know that 6 is the number of man. God made man on the sixth day and rested on the seventh. So seven is the number of completion and perfection...six is one short of seven...so man at his best is still short of the perfection that God requires. Only in Christ, the perfect man, can we be complete!

When a man or woman receives this mark, they are instantly damned for all eternity in the sight of God. (Rev.14:9-11)

There will, however, be those who refuse this mark and put faith in Christ during this awful time...they will be martyred. (Rev.20:4)

This closes the visions concerning these beasts; the next vision is that of the TRUE LAMB of GOD!

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Truth Baptist Church School of the Bible
Brad Ingram, *Pastor*

Week Fourteen

After having left a most terrible and wicked scene in chapter thirteen, we now come to a bright spot in the Revelation. As the last chapter closes with the Anti-Christ and the False Prophet, this chapter opens with the TRUE LAMB OF GOD.

Chapter fourteen is a most intriguing and perplexing chapter if not viewed correctly in regards to time. It is most helpful if we regard chapter fourteen as a Table of Contents for the Tribulation. This chapter CONTAINS SEVEN SEPARATE VISIONS THAT ARE EACH IN THEMSELVES COMPLETE. A simple sketch of major events in the Tribulation are given in this chapter and are more fully elaborated on in later chapters.

This chapter can best be studied as individual visions.

First Vision: "The Lamb on Mt. Zion" (14:1-5)

John sees here the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ is pictured as a Lamb several times in this book to show His ultimate purpose in intervening in the lives of men...REDEMPTION.

John sees Christ as standing on Mt. Zion. This speaks of Jerusalem, the earthly capital of Israel. This vision points not to the Rapture of the Church (for in that event, Christ DOES NOT come to the earth, but in the clouds) but to the Revelation of Christ when He comes back after the Millennium and stands upon the Earth to begin His 1,000 year rule.

Compare this scene with: PSALM 2:6.

The Lamb here is seen standing with 144,000 sealed ones who have the name of the Lamb's Father in their forehead. There can be no doubt that this throng corresponds to the 144,000 sealed Jews of chapter 7.

Upon seeing this vision, John hears the voice of many waters (denoting a large number of voices) singing a new song. We are told that no man could learn the song except the 14,000 sealed Jews. This most likely points to the exclusiveness of this group and the special privileges they enjoy because of their position. Whatever the words, the theme of the song is redemption by the Blood of the Lamb.

Consider this: harps in the O.T. were instruments of joy and consolation. After the Babylonian captivity, the people of Israel laid down their harps because their joy was gone (Psalm 137:1-4). However, at this time in the Revelation, they pick up the harp again and sing to their God!

This group of sealed ones are denoted as being PURE and UNDEFILED. I believe the fact they are called virgins does not necessarily mean they have remained physically celibate but that they have not COMMITTED FORNICATION with the HARLOT of that day...namely BABYLON. They are called first fruits due to their Jewish nationality (Romans 1:16).

These sealed ones are also TRUTHFUL in a day of mass DECEPTION. We learn that no guile was in their mouth. How perfectly are they following their Master, the Lamb of whom it was also said that no guile was in His mouth (1 Peter 2:22).

The Second Vision: "The Angel Proclaiming the Everlasting Gospel" (14:6-7)

The next vision shows an angel flying through the air proclaiming the EVERLASTING GOSPEL. It is called this because the Gospel has always been in the Heart of God...it is His "Good News." This angel also warns of coming judgment and directs all praise to God.

These two elements must be found in the TRUE GOSPEL MESSAGE: Judgment and Adoration. Today, the righteous judgment of God is omitted from the Message and men seek to be adored rather than God.

The Third Vision: "The Fall of Babylon" (14:8)

Next we see another angel proclaiming the victorious news of the FALL OF BABYLON. This is not speaking of the literal city of Babylon, for it has been fallen for some time. This refers to the modern-day revived Babylon in its spiritual form. This is that Apostate form of religion that made all nations drink of her fornication. Babylon's fall is detailed greater in chapters 16 & 17.

The Fourth Vision: "The Doom of the Satan-worshippers" (14:9-11)

A most solemn scene unfolds here as we see the Divine Judgment fall upon those who so eagerly accepted the mark of the beast as detailed in chapter 13.

The Fifth Vision: "The Blessedness of the Saints" (14:12-13)

We now see what becomes of those who refuse to bow to Satan during the Tribulation...they suffer martyrdom. Great patience will characterize those who refuse Anti-Christ and endure his cruel torments. These Tribulation saints will BE RAISED AT THE CLOSE OF THE TRIBULATION AND WILL REIGN WITH CHRIST DURING THE MILLENNIUM (20:4-6).

The Sixth Vision: "The Reaping of the Earth by Christ" (14:14-16)

This is a vision of the Lord Jesus Christ returning visibly to the earth at the close of Tribulation to judge the nations that follow wicked leaders. This scene is one of judgment. This judgment must be differentiated from the Great White Throne Judgment which occurs AFTER the MILLENNIUM, this one OCCURS BEFORE.

The Lord is said to have a sharp sickle, one which with mightily do its work. (Cf. Jeremiah 51:33)

The Seventh Vision: "A Preview of Armageddon"
(14:17-20)

The last vision John sees in this chapter is that of the Battle of Armageddon which takes place in the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:10-14; Zechariah 14:1-4).

Two angels are seen as executing this order to reap the "clusters of the vine of the earth."

Consider again Satan's deception. Our Lord said that He was the "TRUE VINE" and we were the branches (John 15:1). However, the great counterfeiter, Satan, has his vine at work in the world...the Anti-Christ. Nations who follow him in the Tribulation are called the branches and the individuals with their wicked deeds are the clusters of grapes that are cast into the vat of the righteous wrath of God! Great will be the slaughter at this battle with blood in certain areas measuring more than two feet deep.

In the next chapter we are brought face to face with the VIAL JUDGMENTS OF THE TRIBULATION.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Truth Baptist Church School of the Bible

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Week Fifteen

We now come to the fifteenth chapter in which the wrath of God is soon to be poured out upon the earth to the uttermost. This chapter can be thought of as introductory. This chapter merely introduces the vial judgments and sets the scene for this awful time.

A Sign In Heaven

John's wording here suggests that we may expect some figurative language to follow. We must remember, however, that when symbolic language is used...it does represent a literal truth.

A Scene of Judgment

This entire chapter is one of impending judgment upon the inhabitants of earth. Every verse here spells doom and ruin. Our merciful God has been longsuffering with sinful man and now His wrath is filled up...and is soon to be poured out.

A Complete and Perfect Judgment

The number 'seven' occurs eight times in this brief chapter. This suggests completion and perfection. The judgment of God is perfectly righteous. Also, the wrath of God is complete here. This is the setting of the fifteenth chapter.

The scene before us in chapters fifteen and sixteen is the fulfillment of Zephaniah 3:8:

"Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy."

The Sea of Glass (15:2)

Notice the wording here, this is a sea "as it were of glass." We have seen something like this before in the Apocalypse (4:6), but now, however, it is mingled with FIRE. Fire is symbolic of JUDGMENT. The final judgment upon the world is to be done by FIRE (1 Thess.1:3-10). This is but yet another way that we see Heaven's throne turned to a Judgment Throne to vindicate the righteousness of God!

The Tribulation Saints (15:2)

John saw a great company standing on this sea. His description of them gives us positive proof as to their identity.

"they had gotten victory over the beast and over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name" This clearly speaks of them rejecting the false worship of Anti-Christ and becoming martyrs for the name of Christ.

Their Song of Praise (15:3-4)

John sees these redeemed ones singing. It is interesting to note that throughout this book, the redeemed ones are singing...saved people indeed DO HAVE A SONG!

"He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD." Psalms 40:2-3

Notice what they were singing...THE SONG OF MOSES! What exactly is the song of Moses? We will recall that after God had brought the people of Israel through the Red Sea and had destroyed the armies of Pharaoh, the people sang!

(Exodus 15:1-13)

Also, consider the words of another SONG OF MOSES as found in **Deuteronomy 32:1-4** (Cf.32:44).

Whatever the song was exactly, it was no doubt a song of deliverance, these Tribulation saints had indeed been delivered from the Arch-Enemy, Satan.

Consider the last line of this song in Rev.15: ***"Thy judgments are made manifest."*** This is in reality the theme of this and the next chapter.

The Temple of the Tabernacle (15:5-8)

John now sees in heaven the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony. This is the most holy place wherein the Ark of the Covenant was kept in ancient Israel. The Ark speaks of the FAITHFULNESS OF GOD IN KEEPING HIS COVENANTS. In old Israel, this room was shut up to the common man, no eyes were permitted to look upon it except the High Priest...it was all very mysterious and dark. All that has changed now, the Temple is opened for all to see, the mystery is finished and the judgment of God is about to fall.

Next we see seven angels come from the Tabernacle having the last seven plagues. The angels have been the mediators of judgment so far in this book and will continue to be so.

Further, we see one of the beasts give seven vials to the seven angels. These vials are golden, denoting royal prerogative. The idea behind these vials is that they will surely and swiftly be poured out upon the earth.

John records for us also that smoke filled the Temple. This is yet another sign of the Judgment of God. Consider these Old Testament instances when smoke accompanied God.

*On Mt. Sinai at the giving of the Law. God was pronouncing JUDGMENT upon those who did not keep the Divine Law.

*In Isaiah's vision of the Lord in the Temple. This was due to the fact that God was commissioning the prophet to go forth with a message of JUDGMENT.

This chapter closes with all eyes on earth as the most severe judgments of God begin to be poured out.

Chapter Sixteen

This is indeed one of the most sobering chapters in the Bible. It is with no great delight that we read these lines. When we come to such severe judgment, we are brought face to face with this question...*"Why such great and terrible judgment?"*

For the answer to this, let us consider the first two commands given to Moses on the Mount.

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me" Exodus 20:3-5

This is that day of visitation by God Himself. He is visiting the earth in judgment because men have bowed themselves down in other gods, namely, Satan and his Anti-Christ. Our God is a consuming fire and WILL NOT SHARE HIS GLORY WITH ANOTHER!

The Use of the Word "GREAT"

In this one chapter, the word 'great' is used some eleven times. This is very significant. The English word 'great' comes from the Greek word 'megas' from which we get our word MEGA. This has the idea of massiveness or severity. The judgments of God in this chapter are both MASSIVE and SEVERE!

The Command to "Go"

A voice of authority is heard giving the command to the seven angels to go and pour out the wrath of God upon earth. Could this be the voice of God Himself sending forth this righteous sentence? Notice the difference in the dispensations, now men are told to "go" with the Gospel. Then, angels will be told to "go" with judgment! One message will keep you from the other.

The First Vial (16:2)

This judgment is a physical one in which men are plagued with a noisome and grievous sore. God warned of these plagues if His people were found in disobedience to His law:

"The LORD will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed."

- Deuteronomy 28:27

"The LORD shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch that cannot be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head."

- Deuteronomy 28:35

A similar plague came upon Egypt in the sixth plague (Exodus 9:8-12).

Also, a similar plague was brought upon Miriam (Numbers 12:10).

God plagued His people when they worshipped the golden calf:

"And the LORD plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made." Exodus 32:35

When men worship other false gods, Jehovah yet again plagues them.

(It is interesting to note that when the TRUE MESSIAH was upon the earth, He healed such things. During this time, the FALSE MESSIAH has neither POWER nor DESIRE to heal.)

The Second Vial (16:3)

At the sounding of the SECOND TRUMPET in (8:8), a third part of the sea became blood; this SECOND VIAL will affect the remainder. All saltwater life will die. This will break the back of the fishing industry and coastal economies. The stench will be unbearable.

The Third Vial (16:4-7)

In this judgment, the freshwater meets the same fate as the saltwater. As soon as this judgment is made, the hosts of heaven praise God for His righteous judgment. We have in this passage the reason for the freshwater being turned to blood. It was the blood of the innocents that these earth-dwellers had shed...so now they are forced to drink of blood!

John hears another voice out of the altar echo this same praise. Who could this one out of the altar be? I believe it to be the collective voice of the martyrs that we were introduced to in (Rev.6:9-10). These are finally seeing vengeance taken on their tormentors.

The Fourth Vial (16:8-9)

This plague involves a massive heat-wave that will claim many lives. This horrible heat will only make the previous plagues worse.

- Bodily sores will be burnt

- The rotting carcasses of the dead in the sea and in the freshwater will be further putrefied by the heat.

The Fifth Vial (16:10-11)

This judgment includes great darkness. Notice that God now strikes a blow directly at the Beast. It is throughout the Beast's kingdom, his seat (throne), that great darkness is made to fall. This is representative of the spiritual darkness that he has held people in.

All of the followers of the Beast will now watch as their leader is POWERLESS to stop the judgment of God upon himself. His weakness will now be made manifest just as God's power is made manifest.

Notice the hardness of men's hearts during this time. After having seen all the lies of the devil and after seeing the awesome power of God, men still blaspheme His holy name. Even in their defiance, they are made to punish their own tongues, that instrument whereby they offend God!

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Truth Baptist Church School of the Bible
Brad Ingram, *Pastor*

Week Sixteen

We now continue in this series of terrible vial judgments that are being poured out upon the inhabitants of a God-hating, devil-worshipping world.

The Sixth Vial (16:12)

This sixth vial closely resembles the sixth trumpet as they both have to do with the Euphrates River (9:14).

I understand this vial judgment to be literal. It would not be a new thing for God to literally dry up a great body of water. There are two O.T. examples to substantiate this: Red Sea & Jordan River. Could this vial judgment be the fulfillment of ISAIAH 11:15-16?

This river is dried up to allow Eastern hordes of soldiers to invade Jerusalem. Until then, the Euphrates River had served as a natural barrier. The Eastern people have always been travelers by foot and horseback. Through this vial, there only land obstacle will be dried up that they may rush headlong to their doom!

Parenthesis (16:13-16)

We are now given a glimpse of the greatest stage for war that has ever been set. Keep in mind, the Euphrates River has just been dried up so that these next verses could occur.

John sees THREE UNCLEAN SPIRITS; no doubt, demon spirits come forth out of each member of the evil trinity. These demonic spirits will be used to rally support throughout all the earth for the last great battle...the Battle of Armageddon!

Notice by what means these spirits seduce the rulers of the world to make war against Christ...MIRACLES! It was the witchcraft of Jannes and Jambres that blinded Pharaoh and these three evil spirits, no doubt aided by countless others, will blind the rulers of this world with black magic in order to persuade them to make war.

Why, do you suppose John likens these evil spirits to frogs? Could it be that both are nocturnal creatures? Only during the blackness of this world's day do these evil beasts appear and croak.

Next, we see a warning given by the Lord Jesus Himself concerning His Second Coming. This is not the Lord addressing the Church because of what Paul had earlier said to the Thessalonians (I Thess.5:4).

This warning is going out to all those Tribulation Saints who will be on the earth when He comes again prior to the Millennium.

The Seventh Vial (16:17-21)

This seventh and last judgment commences with the words, "IT IS DONE!" When Christ died on the Cross, He cried, "IT IS FINISHED!" and there was a great earthquake. Then, He was BEING judged by God for our sake. When this last phrase is spoken, the world is being judged for their own sin.

This last vial was the ultimate judgment of God upon a world that had shut Him out!

(Keep in mind that a talent is equal to roughly 75 pounds!)

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

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Week Seventeen

Immediately after the vial judgments, we are brought face to face with one of the most incredible visions of the Apocalypse, the Great Harlot.

In studying this chapter, we MUST REMEMBER THAT THIS CHAPTER, LIKE THOSE PRECEDING IT ***IS A CHAPTER OF FUTURE JUDGMENT***. Some Bible teachers have attempted to make this chapter HISTORY instead of PROPHECY...this is ERROR.

Here are a few more KEYS TO UNDERSTANDING this chapter:

1) In the Book of Revelation, a WOMAN represents RELIGION.

- Jezebel represents paganism & idolatry (2:20)
- The Woman clothed with the sun represents the religious system of Israel (12:1)
- The Bride of Christ represents the True Church (19:7-8; 21:9; Eph.5:25-26)
- The Great Whore represents the apostate church (17)

2) This Great Whore of chapter seventeen is a picture of the ONE WORLD UNITED RELIGION.

- This is an imitation of Christianity
- This is the final product of ecumenicalism
- "*The harlot is Christendom estranged from God and become thoroughly secularized and degenerated.*" -Professor Moorehouse
- She is called a whore because her system gives lip service to God while courting the world's corrupt political system.

The Judgment of the Harlot (17:1)

It is interesting to note the order in the Revelation. The harlot must be judged BEFORE the bride can be blessed (19:7-8).

The Members of the United Religious System

Before we delve into the details of this chapter, let us consider who exactly will make up this system of false religion.

We know that the Scriptures teach that the last days will be characterized by UNBELIEF and APOSTASY.

-1 Timothy 4:1 ; 2 Timothy 3:1 ; 2 Timothy 3:5 ;
2 Peter 2:1-2

When Christ shall come for His Church, He will remove all TRUE BELIEVERS from the earth. Those left behind will be those who have never experienced the NEW BIRTH, however religious they may be or have been. Therefore, a system of religious people will be composed by the False Prophet to UNITE man together in a common cause. This is the makeup of the harlot. We can now, however, see the seeds of this tree of unclean birds being planted in the modern day ecumenical movement.

The Harlot to be Political as well as Religious (17:2)

Notice the words of the text, "*with whom the kings of the earth...*" This suggests that she has been politically affiliated in her actions. Whenever the church has mingled in politics, error has resulted. Christ NEVER aligned Himself with any political movement, He simply taught men to be good citizens, to remain within the civil law (as long as it did not contradict the divine law), and to pay tribute (taxes).

According to this verse, the harlot will have WORLD-WIDE influence.

The Descriptive Vision of the Woman and the Beast (17:1-7)

*** "that sitteth upon many waters"**

- we have the interpretation of this for us in v.15
- this is nations and people of all races
- this demonstrates the UNITY in the harlot
- "We are gratified at the growing area of agreement among leaders and peoples of the Judeo-Christian heritage, and of other religious faiths on basic matters affecting the peace of the world and the well-being of God's whole family."* -J. Irwin Miller, president of the National Council of Churches 4/12/63

*** "sit upon a scarlet colored beast"**

- this beast is the Anti-Christ of 13:1
- he aligns himself with her in order to control nations...this world church will have the force of Satan working behind it

*** "full of names of blasphemy"**

- this most likely refers to the blasphemous doctrines that will be spewed forth by the corrupt church
- consider such doctrines in our time:
 - Mary to be worshipped as Co-Redemptress
 - Purgatory
 - Penance to absolve sin, etc.

*** "having seven heads and ten horns"**

- the ten horns are the ten kings of the federated kingdoms under the Roman Empire (revived) (17:12)
- the seven heads are the seven mountains upon which the system is founded and has its center of power (17:9)
- "the city of seven hills"

*** "and the woman was arrayed..."**

- verse four speaks of the wealth of this system
- the true church has always worn rags ("silver and gold have I none")
- consider the wealth of some religious leaders today...how unlike the Master!

★ **"drunken with the blood of the saints"**

-while false religion has put to death countless believers in history, John here is viewing the Tribulation saints put to death by her
-Sir Robert Anderson of Scotland Yard claims Rome has been responsible for the death of 50 million believers!!

The Title and Name of the Harlot (17:5)

The title that John sees on the forehead of the harlot is the KEY to her identity, past, present, and future!

**MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS
AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH**

The question is raised.. "Is the Roman Catholic Church the Harlot?" Not particularly. While this system makes up a large part of it, the origin of the harlot is OLDER THAN ROMANISM. Some have claimed the beast to be the POPE...however; this title says she is the MOTHER OF HARLOTS, so we must go back further. Also, there was NO POPE BEFORE THE FOURTH CENTURY!

Q. Where does all this begin???

A. In the MYSTERY religion of ANCIENT BABYLON!

Let us identify the OLDEST SYSTEM OF RELIGION KNOWN TO MAN...BABYLONIANISM.

In Genesis 10, we are introduced to a man named NIMROD. He is a fourth generation descendant from the time of the FLOOD. Nimrod's grandfather was HAM, meaning "the swarthy one." His father was CUSH, meaning "the black one." Ham was the evil son of Noah who uncovered his father's nakedness.

Consider what the Bible says about this man Nimrod. **"The beginning of his kingdom was Babel..."** (Gen.10:10)

They called their city and tower "BAB-EL" meaning, "THE GATE OF GOD." However, God judged it and turned it to mean "CONFUSION." This was the beginning of false religion under Nimrod.

From the beginning, it attempted to look like the real thing while being a COUNTERFEIT! (11:3)

The spirit of Nimrod reared itself in NEBUCHADNEZZAR who also attempted to formulate a ONE WORLD RELIGION with his image to be worshipped. This spirit came again with Constantine. It is alive and well now in the Roman Church. Old Babylon has not died!

{Nimrod set himself up as a god, when he dies, his wife told the world that he had come back in the person of their son. Thus, she had herself worshipped as the MOTHER-OF-GOD! In ancient ruins, there have been images uncovered of a Mother and Child being worshipped...SOUND FAMILIAR?}

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

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Week Eighteen

After having been brought face to face with a most intriguing sight in the first half of chapter seventeen, the Lord now gives John the full interpretation of what he just saw.

The Mystery to Be Explained (17:7)

The Bible word for 'mystery' is 'muusterion', meaning, 'to shut the mouth.' In other words, a Bible mystery is something that God has previously been silent on, but is now revealing to men. God is now going to reveal the identity of the harlot to man.

Not only is the mystery of the harlot to be explained, but also the mystery of the beast.

The Mystery of the Beast Explained (17:8-14)

The beast that John had seen the woman riding upon can be none other than the FIRST BEAST of Revelation 13:1. Again, we will remember that this first beast is synonymous with Anti-Christ and his program of political rule by deception and force. WE MUST KEEP IN MIND, IN THE TRIBULATION AGE, RELIGION WITH JOIN HANDS WITH POLITICS ON A WORLD-WIDE SCALE (this explains why the woman is seen RIDING the beast). Notice a few things that Scripture says about the beast:

-the beast WAS..and IS NOT (v.8)

-the wording here suggests to us that this beast has appeared before somewhere in history and then has gone away for the present time

- shall ascend out of the bottomless pit (v.8)**
 - this, of course, points to the Satanic origins of the beast (Judas??)
- they that dwell on the earth shall wonder**
 - it will be such an amazing occurrence to behold this 'once dead' beast come back to life, the Bible says that the world will wonder (marvel) at him
 - the only ones that will wonder are those not written in the Lamb's Book of Life, the unsaved
 - notice the FOREKNOWLEDGE of GOD here in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world
- the seven heads are seven mountains**
 - this must obviously be speaking of Rome, the 'city on seven hills'
 - from this, we gather that this beast will be in some way tied to Ancient Rome
- there are seven kings**
 - these seven heads also represent seven kings
 - of these, five had fallen by John's day
 - Julias Caesar
 - Tiberius
 - Caligula
 - Claudius
 - Nero
 - AND ONE "IS"
 - Domitian (the last of the Caesar's)
 - THE OTHER IS NOT YET COME
 - This is Anti-Christ to come
- there are ten horns (ten kings)**
 - this is the Revived Roman Empire
 - the TEN TOES of Nebuchadnezzar's Vision
 - Daniel 2:41-44
- they have one mind**
 - they are a UNITED CONFEDERACY
 - they have ONE AGENDA
 - their allegiance is to the Beast
- they shall make war with the Lamb**
 - at the Revelation of Christ (19:11-16)

The Mystery of the Harlot Explained (17:15-18)

The Bible tells us clearly that this false religious system "the woman" sits upon many waters and these waters are people and nations. This gives us a clear picture as to how many of the nations will come under the umbrella of this false system...ALL OF THEM!

*The Confederacy Turns Upon the Woman

-We learn that God actually puts it into the heart of these kings to turn on the Ecumenical Church and destroy her. They realize they have been pawns in her hands and they wipe her out swiftly. The Judgment of God must surely come upon the Harlot!

-Do you suppose Almighty God/Christ would allow His Bride to endure such harsh treatment...NO! This shows clearly that this WOMAN was anything but the true church of God. The true Bride is safely in Heaven clothed in pure white raiment!

The Identity Settled (17:18)

At the close of this chapter, the Bible plainly states that the woman is the Great City that reigns over the kings of the earth.

Would it surprise you to know that in the Catholic Church's CONFRATERNITY edition of the New Testament, 1963, page 337, the Catholic Church actually claims to be BABYLON?

JEREMIAH 51:6-9

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Truth Baptist Church School of the Bible
Brad Ingram, Pastor

Week Nineteen

As we come to chapter eighteen, keep in mind that we are still dealing with the fall of Babylon, that false religious-political system that has its origins with Nimrod.

WE SAW THE COLLAPSE OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL ARM OF BABYLON, NOW WE ARE GOING TO WITNESS THE COLLAPSE OF THE ECONOMIC SIDE OF THE HARLOT.

We see a strong angel come down from heaven with a solemn announcement concerning Babylon; the time of her judgment has now come. The fact that the angel repeats the word "**fallen**" is of special significance, we have seen the fall of the religious movement, and we will now see the fall of the economic movement.

Consider the Angel's Testimony Concerning Who Inhabits the False System of Babylon (God's Perspective) (v.2)

"...is become the habitation of devils (demons) and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird."

The false religious system of the end times will be characterized by DEMON INFLUENCE. Consider the Apostle Paul's words to young Timothy:

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. 1 Timothy 4:1-3

The Scriptures also teach that this false system will be a CAGE FOR EVERY UNCLEAN AND HATEFUL BIRD.
To help us understand this idea, let us look at the kingdom parables our Lord gave in Matthew 13.

THESE PARABLES ARE CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN; IT IS MY CONVICTION THAT THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN INCLUDES EVERYONE WHO MAKES A "PROFESSION" FOR CHRIST.

Consider these words of our Lord:

1st PARABLE: Sower and the Seeds (13:1-23)

- not all were believers, some were unbelievers
- notice verse 4, the fowl came and ate up the seed (fowl depicted as being evil)

2nd PARABLE: Wheat and Tares (13:24-30)

- again, not all were true believers
- some were merely professors

3rd PARABLE: Mustard Seed (13:31-32)

- my interpretation is that the mustard seed growing into a "tree" was not normal; this was an abnormal growth (usually mustard seeds grow into bushes)
- when it grew so large, the birds were actually able to lodge in the branches
- I believe here, the birds are also evil, depicting the false church at the close of the age that will have unnatural popularity in the world
- remember, the true church of God has always been the minority and has been despised, this false church will be the majority and will be applauded

4th PARABLE: Leaven (13:33-35)

- the woman here represents 'false religion' as in Revelation 17, she spreads her leaven (false doctrine) until the whole of religion is polluted

Knowing this, we can accurately link the angel's words in Revelation 18 to the Lord's words in Matthew 13; they both speak of the same system.

The Harlot Has Made Many Rich (18:3)

The Bible says that the merchants of the earth also have been made rich through the abundance of her delicacies. Keep in mind, the harlot is upon the back of the government, she controls all commerce as well, for a while. She has the reigns of complete power; can you imagine the underhanded corruption that will take place in this day?!

The Lord Commands His People to Separate (18:4-6)

The primary application here is to Tribulation Saints, they are to have no part whatsoever with this false system. But there is also a ringing call to separation here for us today.

We as the people of God are not to yoke up with those that deny the Fundamentals of our faith no matter how 'moral' or 'good natured' they may seem. They are a part of the corrupt church and we are commanded to stay away for them.

Notice the Bible says that her sins **"have reached unto heaven."** It is interesting to note that in her inception, Babylon wanted to reach unto heaven through her evil tower of stones. That did not make it, but here sins did!

God hath remembered her iniquities because she herself has never repented of them; such is not the case with us who have trusted Christ!

"And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

Hebrews 10:17

The Economic Collapse of Babylon Will Be Swift (18:7-8)

In one HOUR the Bible says she will fall! This has the idea of swiftness. All the security of the world will be pulled out from under them in a moment. The most tragic aspect of it all is that she herself was so deceived by Sin that she never saw it coming! (v.7) This is how blind sin can make a person or a movement.

Her Fall Will Be Accompanied By Great Mourning
(18:9-19)

We will not go in to detail here. But the fact is that merchant men the world over will wail because the system they trusted in to make them rich is gone!

The shipmasters are said to mourn also, the transportation industry will fall as well due to no one buying or selling any more!

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

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Week Twenty

The Heavenly View of the Collapse of Babylon (18:20-24)

Whereas the fall of Babylon is tragic news to the wicked dwelling upon the earth, it is cause for great joy for the saints in heaven.

Notice the apostles and prophets are rejoicing at her destruction because it was her that persecuted them on the earth and put them to cruel death.

The 'candle' of Babylon is put out (v.23) because she would not accept the Light of Divine Revelation, the Lord Jesus.

Chapter 19:1-6 "The Four Alleluias"

At this falling of Babylon, all of heaven, elders and beats fall down in praise to God for His righteous judgments. Four times we see this word "Alleluiah" repeated; this word simply means 'praise the Lord.'

The Marriage of the Lamb (19:7-10)

We are not given many details about this heavenly marriage but we do know it will consist of Christ as Groom and the Church as Bride. Old Testament saints will not make up the bride, but will be bidden as guests, or friends of the Bridegroom. Consider the words of John the Baptist (John 3:29).

The Second Coming of Christ (19:11-16)

This coming to earth by Christ is NOT to be confused with the Rapture of the Church, this has already happened. This coming to earth is often referred to as the "Revelation" of Christ to the earth when all eyes shall see Him. The titles

John uses here of this Conquering One can refer to none other than the Lord Jesus. His name is called 'The Word of God' (Cf. John 1:1,14).

The Great Battle of Armageddon (19:17-19)

This probably should not be called a battle at all. There is no fighting that takes place here at all. The Lord Jesus comes again and simply speaks the destruction of His foes. A parallel passage to this is Psalm 2.

The Feast of the Fowls (19:17-19)

Such a great slaughter is made here of the wicked that the angel from heaven calls ALL the fowl under heaven to eat of their flesh.

The Last Stand of the Beast, False Prophet, and kings of the Earth (19:20-21)

Here, the henchmen of Satan are cast alive into the Lake of Fire. Their reign of terror is over but their ruler is permitted to live for yet a little season longer.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

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Week Twenty-One

We now come to the twentieth chapter of the Apocalypse. Much information is given here concerning the resurrection of the dead and of the Millennium.

The Serpent Bound (20:1-3)

After Christ's return to earth, he puts down the False Prophet and the Anti-Christ. They are cast alive into the lake of fire. However, such is not the fate of the Devil. Whatever the Lord's reasoning, the Devil is permitted to stay out of the burning lake for another one thousand years, however, he is not permitted to roam free.

We must understand that in this age, Satan is NOT BOUND. Some Bible teachers who deny a LITERAL KINGDOM want to tell us that Satan is actually bound NOW as the Gospel is being preached on the earth. A couple of arguments could and should be made against this idea:

1) *Why would the Scriptures say such things about Satan if he is bound?*

-Ephesians 2:2 "Prince of the Power of the Air"

-2 Corinthians 4:4 "God of this World"

These descriptions suggest to me that Satan has a somewhat free hand in the world as he exercises a great amount of control in it.

2) *Why is wickedness so rampant if Satan is bound?*

-One need not look far to see the signs of the deception that Satan is spinning around the globe.

-If he is bound now, how can such demonism and doctrines of devils be accounted for?

3) *The Scriptures teach the opposite*

-The greatest proof against this idea is what the Bible says concerning Satan now (1 Peter 5:8)

No, we do not believe Satan is bound now, we believe, just as the Scriptures teach that this is a FUTURE event that must occur prior to the literal millennial reign of Christ on earth.

Consider what names the Bible gives to this Archenemy of God:

- *"**that old serpent**" this refers back to Satan's first form in the universe at it relates to man
-this title suggests subtlety (Genesis 3:1)

- *"**Devil**" this name comes from the Greek word 'Diabolos' and literally means 'slanderer'
-who do you suppose the devil is slandering?
-he is slandering us before God the Father NIGHT and DAY (Cf. Job 1:8-11)

- *"**Satan**" this name comes from an old Chaldean word which means 'accuser'
-this is not exactly the same things as 'slanderer', a slander is not necessarily true, as was the case with Job, but an accusation made by Satan concerning our sins and our unworthiness to be called sons of God IS TRUE
-when Satan accuses us before God, he is right, we have no cause to be privileged with relationship with God as we do, but this is when our Advocate speaks us and claims our acceptance on the basis of HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS!

John sees next an angel come down from heaven with a 'great chain' in his hand. The word 'great' is 'megas' which corresponds to the devil being called the Great Dragon (Rev. 12:9). Note here: the chains forged by men are no match for the devil and his legion host (Mark 5:1-4). However, when God Almighty forges a chain, it cannot be broken by even the prince of the devils!

This angel takes the Dragon and binds him and casts him into the abyss, or bottomless pit. He is put there so he cannot 'deceive the nations' anymore. That is his greatest work in the world now, deception. He is convincing nations that they may have a utopian government without the presence of God, however, this practice of government has

been cursed of God. **"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."** Psalms 9:17

This same verse tells us that even though he is bound for a thousand years, we will see him again in the apocalypse.

The Resurrection of the Dead (20:4-6)

We have before us a foundational passage concerning the resurrection of the dead. We see the term "FIRST RESURRECTION" used here in verse six. This distinction necessitates there being MORE THAN ONE GENERAL RESURRECTION. Consider the Bible's teaching on these TWO RESURRECTIONS:

John 5:28-29 *Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*

Jesus Himself here affirms TWO RESURRECTIONS, the resurrection of LIFE and the resurrection of DAMNATION.

Now, we must be clear here, the first resurrection OR the resurrection of life takes place in THREE SEPARATE PHASES:

- 1) ***The First Fruits*** (this occurred when some saints were raised at Christ's resurrection)
(Matthew 27:52-52)
- 2) ***The Full Harvest*** (this will occur at the Rapture when all the dead in Christ shall arise)
(1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)
- 3) ***The Gleanings*** (this will occur just before the Millennium in which the Old Testament saints will be raised and allowed to enter into the Millennium)
(Revelation 20:4)

{This first resurrection concurs with the Feast of First-fruits in the Old Testament}

Now what about the Second Resurrection, OR the resurrection of damnation? This occurs at one time in which ALL the unsaved of EVERY AGE will be raised AFTER THE MILLENNIUM and IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT (Rev.20:5; 11-15)

The Thousand-Year Reign (20:6)

Much debate has taken place over the words "a thousand years." The question is whether or not this statement can be taken literally.

There are three major schools of thought on the Millennium:

1) **Amillennialism**- this actually teaches there will be NO LITERAL millennium. These advocates hold that Christ will come and everyone will be raised during a general resurrection and the earth will be consumed by fire thus ushering in eternity.

This is the Roman Catholic view precipitated by Augustine.

2) **Postmillennialism**- this view teaches there will be a literal kingdom, but that the church will bring it in and Christ will return to earth AFTER it is completed.

This view was popular at the turn of the twentieth century when major advances were made in technology. It was thought the world was moving toward perfection. However, this view was dealt a death blow with the TWO WORLD WARS and the GREAT DEPRESSION. Relatively few hold to this view in present day.

3) **Premillennialism**- this is the Scriptural doctrine that states Christ will return to earth PRIOR to setting up a literal, one thousand year kingdom in which He will assume the throne of His father David in fulfillment to the Covenants made to Abraham and David.

This is the historic view held by the Apostles, the first century Christians and the early Church fathers.

NOTE: Almost all Bible scholars that deny the literalness of the thousand years accept the literalness of Satan, the resurrection, and the last battle. It is dishonest Bible interpretation to accept these literal and not the whole.

The majority of the Bible's teaching on the Millennium is found in the prophets of the O.T. (Jews' expectation).

The Last Battle (20:7-9)

Contrary to popular thought, Armageddon is not the last battle recorded in Scripture. There is yet the Battle of Gog and Magog. This occurs after the Millennium and consists of Satan, after his release, deceiving the nations once more and amassing an army to besiege Jerusalem. God makes quick work of the Devil here and his armies and destroys them all with fire from heaven.

It is interesting to note here the utter depravity of man. After seeing Christ execute a perfect rule for one thousand years, scores of people will yet buy into the devil's lie and follow him to their final doom.

The question has been raised, "Who will make up this evil army?" The answer is relatively a simple one. Only the righteous will enter into the Millennium (Isaiah 60:18-21). Saved people, who have not died, will enter the Millennium, they will have children. Those children will grow and choose Satan over God. It is from this pool that the devil will draw.

The identity of Gog and Magog is a subject of debate. Some believe it to be the same as Ezekiel 38 & 39. Whatever is meant here, a great number of men will be drawn.

The Destruction of Satan (20:10)

At this defeat, Satan is cast into the lake of fire which was created for him. No wonder he keeps men away from this book and its message...it is his undoing!

The Great White Throne Judgment (20:11-14)

After the overthrow of Satan, the wicked dead must be judged for God's holiness to be completely vindicated. The wicked are raised just prior to this Judgment. This is not a judgment concerning believers, for this judgment is based on the works of men, all of which are evil. All those not found in the book of life were cast into the lake of fire.

Thus, all evil in the universe has been judged and God now rewards His saints eternally.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

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Week Twenty-Two

When we come to the last two chapters of our Bible, we are truly coming upon a scene of refreshment and delight. Up to this point, we have seen the wreckage caused by Satan and the pain his deception has brought to the whole of the human race. Here, however, there is no more trace of the Dragon, his tracks in the sand have been covered over.

We have in these last two chapters what most Bible scholars refer to as "THE ETERNAL STATE." The events recorded here are outside the realm of time and therefore are limitless.

"All Things New" (21-22:7)

We are here covering a rather lengthy passage of Scripture. This entire portion of the Revelation centers on this phrase spoken by the Lord, "*Behold I make all things new*" (21:5). Only the Lord can do this. We see the Lord here making several things new.

1) A NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH (21:1)

We must remember the Bible's teaching concerning Heaven here if this passage is to be interpreted correctly. In the Bible, there are THREE heavens mentioned.

- 1) Our atmosphere (birds, clouds, etc.)
- 2) Outer space (planets, sun, etc.)
- 3) God's abode (2 Corinthians 12:2)

Now, we must use logic here to determine which of these heavens will be made new. We know it CANNOT refer to God's abode, for it is and has always been holy and undefiled. If the third heaven were going to be destroyed, why would Jesus make such statements as JOHN 14:1-3?

We can deduce that this new heaven must mean the first heaven, our present atmosphere. This is Satan's domain, he is the prince of the power of the air. The atmosphere has been defiled by his presence and by the presence of his demons for over six thousand years. God must purge out that influence by fire.

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." **2 Peter 3:10-13**

"And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree." **Isaiah 34:4**

The heat that will consume the earth will be so great as to dissolve the very elements out of the air. The Lord will 'wash' the atmosphere by fire.

The earth, or the land, will also be renovated by fire. I do not believe personally that the earth will literally pass away and cease to exist; I believe this same earth will be renovated by fire so that it is in reality a 'new earth.' I come to this conclusion by comparing the renovation by fire with the universal flood. Peter said that the old world 'perished' that word does NOT mean it ceased to exist, it was just destroyed outwardly and the face of it re-done (2 Peter 3:6). (Cf. 2 Corinthians 5:17)

We must realize that this present earth is under a curse and it is waiting to be redeemed and be made anew (Romans 8:22).

2) THE NEW CITIZENS (21:3-8)

Whereas the old world was inhabited by believers and unbelievers, the new population will be composed only of believers. To them, God has made very special promises.

-He will wipe away all tears

The Greek word used here for "wipe away" literally means 'to obliterate.'

This same word is used in our KJB in Acts 3:19, when Peter speaks of our sins being blotted out. They will NEVER come back!

-No more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, No more pain

All these things came as the result of sin. These things were not heard of in Genesis 1-2. When sin shall be destroyed, so shall its effects.

3) THE NEW JERUSALEM (21:9-21)

I take this to be a literal city, separate from the earthly Jerusalem. I believe it was to this that Christ was making reference in John 14. This is the place of the Bride. Notice what beautiful materials the Lord uses in the building of this city. Everything here speaks of royalty and riches. While the Bride of Christ was a pauper on the earth, she will reign as a rich queen in the heaven. Notice, too, that each of the twelve gates to that city are made of solid pearl. A pearl is only created through extreme pain and pressure. These pearled gates suggest the end of our suffering.

3) THE NEW TEMPLE (21:22)

This is no literal temple, but the very presence of God Himself. The temple on earth only represented the presence of God. There, He is the Temple!

4) THE NEW LIGHT (21:23-27)

The Uncreated Light will give light to that city.

5) THE NEW PARADISE (22:1-7)

We have seen paradise several place in the Bible; it is the Garden of God. The final destination of paradise is the Heaven of God. In it we find the TREE OF LIFE, the tree that was forbidden to man in Genesis is now opened to all.

Concluding Statements (22:8-21)

John, here, records for us his response at the Revelation he had just been given...he worships...he falls down in reverence. However, the object of his worship is wrong, this messenger will accept no worship, and he directs all glory to God!

(Should we not react in the same way to the abundant revelations God has given us through His Word?)

John is told NOT to seal up the words of this prophecy (22:10). Many Christians are in darkness regarding this book and this is simply not God's will. THE TIME IS AT HAND!

We learn here in vv.11-12 that whatsoever state a man dies in, he is confirmed in. We are given blessings and warnings concerning this prophecy.

**After all this, John was reduced to one line,
"EVEN SO COME LORD JESUS."
Jesus responds to John's request by promising a
SOON and SURE return!**