

DANIEL 2 AND 7
PART 1
“The Prophetic Key to Revelation”
Chapter 2

1. The situation:

2:1-26

- a. Daniel and his friends are among Judean captives taken to Babylon in the service of the empire. (See chapter 1 for the backstory). (Also 2 King 24:8-17)
- b. They are surrounded by a pagan culture that viewed itself as superior to those it conquered.
- c. The king (Nebuchadnezzar) had a dream that troubled him and robbed him of sleep.
 - He also had to deal with a priestly class, advisors, occult practitioners etc. of whom he seemed to be suspicious.
 - SO - he summoned them to do something:
 - * Tell him his dream (After all, they claimed to be in touch with the gods so that should not be a problem. Right? Ever wonder why spirit mediums don't win the lottery? Just saying.
 - * Interpret the dream. If they could reveal to him their knowledge of his dream then he could trust their interpretation.
 - * For the king it was a “win, win.” If they could reveal the dream and tell him its meaning then he'd know the answer to what had been troubling him.
 - * If they could or would not, then he'd just eliminate untrustworthy people.
- d. The advisors ET AL, tried to rebuke the king and ended up admitting that they were *not* in touch with the divine.
 - So the king ordered them all rounded up for execution.
 - Daniel and his friends were included.
 - * Daniel asked for time and he and his friends sought the Lord.
 - * God answered.

2. The vindication of God before the bankruptcy of idols.

2:27-28

- a. Daniel went to the king.
- b. He called out the pretensions of false religion and human ability.
- c. He testified to the true God (“But there is a god in heaven...”)

3. Daniel revealed the king's dream and gave the interpretation. (Gen 41:28) 2:29-49

- a. Human dominion has its limits.
- b. God's kingdom will crush human pretensions of power and last eternally.
- c. Human dominion will be crushed by the Kingdom of God and blow away like dust in the wind. (Is 40:15 - It was never of much consequence anyway!)

4 segmented statue represents human dominion (Which is in rebellion against God)

- Each succeeding segment is lighter, more brittle than its predecessor
- Ever since the fall, humanity has said, “I'll do it *my* way. It never works (Ps 2)

Where others saw mortal danger, Daniel acted on faith. Any guarantee he'd succeed?
Daniel trusted in God to work in *any* situation.
Daniel sought the fellowship of faithful people.
Daniel bore witness to God and claimed no agency of his own.
And, he acted on conviction not on any certainty that he would be spared.

THE ETERNAL KINGDOM

Now - about the king's dream:

- 1. The dream concerns what will happen in the latter days.**
- 2. Human dominion** (remember that head of gold when you read chapter 3) **is represented by a four segmented statue.**
- 3. The statue was destroyed by a "rock cut out of a mountain but not by human hands." (Ps 46*)**
 - a. What's the deal about human hands? (See Ex 3:5, Ex 20:24-26, Det 27:5-6, Jos Jos 5:15, 8:31; Tit 3:3-8, Eph 2:8-9)
 - We cannot bring in the kingdom. It is a work of God, not of people. (Is 64:6)
 - The coming kingdom will be a complete work of God.
 - b. God's kingdom is eternal and will replace forever, human rule. (Heb 12:28)
 - c. We are citizens of what is now to the world, an invisible kingdom. Yet this kingdom will endure when the kingdoms of this world have vanished. (Rev 11:15)

God alone will bring in the kingdom (Rev 13:10).

But...we have a role to play.

No-one ever promised us that we'd be spared from adversity. In fact, Jesus made it plain that quite the opposite will be true (Jon 16:33)

While we live and await His coming/our redemption we are His agents in a hostile environment. Got your "green card?" Mat 5:13-16, Rom 8:18-27, Phil 3:20

But...we are to wait in confidence!

DANIEL 2 AND 7
PART 2
“The Prophetic Key to Revelation”
Chapter 7

1. Daniel’s vision

7:1-14

a. This took place in the first year of King Belshazzar (decades after the King’s dream in chapter 2). **What follows are the main facts of his visions.**

b. Before him were the four winds of heaven churning up the great sea. Four different beasts, each different from the others, came up out of the sea.

- The 1st was like a lion, with wings like an eagle.
 - * As Daniel watched, its wings were torn off and it was lifted to the ground and stood on two feet like a man.
 - * The mind of a man was given to it.
- The 2nd looked like a bear.
 - * It raised up on one side and had ribs in its teeth.
 - * It was told, “Get up and eat your fill of flesh!”
- The 3rd beast looked like a leopard, with four wings on its back like those of a bird.
 - * This beast had four heads.
 - * It was given authority to rule.
- The 4th beast was terrifying and frightening and very powerful.
 - * It had large iron teeth.
 - * It crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left.
 - * It was different from the former beasts and it had 10 horns.

c. While Daniel was thinking about the horns, there was another horn before him, a little one, which came up among them.

7:8

- Three of the 10 horns were uprooted before it.
- It had eyes like that of a man and a mouth that spoke boastfully.

d. While I watched the court sat (See 7:26) and the Ancient of Days took His seat.

7:9-12

- His clothing was white as snow and the hair of His head white like wool.
- His throne was flaming with fire and its wheels were all ablaze. (See Ezk 1:13)
- A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before Him.
- Thousands upon thousands attended Him.
- Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him.
- The court was seated, and the books were opened.
 - * the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire. (The other beasts continued for a while but without power.)

e. In Daniel’s vision, he looked and saw before him “one like a son of man”, coming with the clouds of heaven. (Mat 24:30, Mk 13:26, Lk 21:27, Rev 1:7/Zec 12:10)

7:13-14

- He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into His presence.
- He was given authority, glory and sovereign power.
- All nations and peoples of every language worshipped Him.
- His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away.
- His kingdom is one that will not be destroyed.

2. The Interpretation of the vision

7:15-28

a. Daniel was troubled in spirit and disturbed by the visions so he asked one of the persons (in his vision) standing there what it all meant.

- The four great beasts represent four kings that will arise from the sea/earth. (See 7:16b-18, Rev 7:1, 13:1, 17:1, 15 - *the imagery is consistent*)
- But the holy people of the Most High will receive a kingdom and will possess it forever.

b. Daniel wanted to know the meaning of the fourth beast (The outlier - with iron teeth, bronze claws with which it crushed, devoured and trampled its victims.

- He also wanted to know about the 10 horns. Especially about the 3 that fell before the other (little horn - vs 8) before which 3 of them fell. It was more imposing than the others and had eyes and a mouth that spoke boastfully.
 - * Daniel watched the horn wage war against the holy people and defeat them (See Rev 13:5-10).
 - * This lasted until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favor of the holy people of the Most High and the time came when they possessed the kingdom. (See Rev 20)
 - * The 4th beast is a 4th kingdom that will appear on the earth.
 - * It will be different from all the others and will devour the whole earth, trampling and crushing it. *World dominion ... but only for a time.*
- The 10 horns are 10 kings who will come from this kingdom. After them another king will rise, different from the earlier ones.
 - * He will subdue 3 kings.
 - * He will speak against the Most High. (Rev 13:6)
 - * He will oppress God's holy people. (Rev 13:7)
 - * He will try to change the set times and laws.
 - * The holy people will be delivered into his hands for a time, times and half a time.
 - * But - the court will sit, its power will be taken away and the sovereignty, power and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be handed over to...God's people. His *holy* people. (See Rev 11:15-19)
 - * His kingdom will be everlasting and all rulers will worship and obey Him.

3. That's all folks! Daniel was deeply troubled by his thoughts and his face turned pale. He kept the matter to himself. A case of 1 Pet 1:3-12.

Think of 1 Cor 2:6-10, Jn 18:1-14, Phil 2:5-11, 2 Thes 2:8

Our Lord was always in complete control - And He didn't mind saying so: Mat 24:30, etc.

Dan 2

The King's Dream

A four-segmented statue

- Head of gold
- Chest and arms of silver
- Belly and thighs of bronze
- Legs of iron, feet of iron/clay

Human dominion destroyed by God's kingdom

- (Rock cut out of mtn., not by human hands)
- Smashed statue and supplanted it.

God's eternal kingdom victorious

Dan 7

Daniel's dream/visions

Four beasts

- Lion w/ eagle's wings (torn off)
- Bear raised up on one side w/ ribs
- Leopard w/ 4 wings
- Beast w/ iron teeth, 10 horns
 - * 10 horns
 - * 1 horn replaced 3, eyes & spoke boastfully

Fourth Beast destroyed/judged

(God's rule will end man's 2 Thes 2:8)

- Ancient of Days sits in judgment
- One like a son of man comes (Jn 5:27)
 - * *Granted* auth., sov. power, glory
 - * Worshipped by all. (Phil 2:10-11)
 - * Possessing eternal dominion.
 - * Ruling an indestructible kingdom.

God's kingdom (His saints) will rule forever

A COMPARISON

DAN 2

Human dominion (Rep. by a statue with four segments) will be crushed and ended by God's kingdom.

This will take place in the future (vs 29/45)

DAN 7

Human dominion (Rep. by four beasts) will be judged and God's holy people will receive His eternal kingdom and possess it forever.

This will take place in the future (7:17)

The beast w/ 10 horns that crushed/devoured and trampled its victims:

- 4th kingdom that will appear.
- unique and world-wide in scope (7:23)
- 10 horns = 10 kings/rulers)
- Little horn (more imposing, w/ eyes and mouth that spoke boastfully)
 - * Would subdue three kings.
 - * Waged victorious war against the holy people
 - * Speak against Most High
 - * Oppress God's people.
 - * Try to change the set times/laws.
 - * Would prevail for time, times and 1/2 time.
 - * Court will sit, judgment executed.
 - * Sov., power & greatness of all kingdoms will be handed over to God's holy people.

God's kingdom everlasting and supreme.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

I. Introduction

1:1-8

1. The revelation from ("of") Jesus Christ which God gave Him to show His servants what must soon ("speedily/quickly") take place.
 - a. He made it known by sending His angel to His servant John who testifies to everything he saw ("as much as he saw") - that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.
 - b. Blessed is:
 - the one who reads [aloud] the words of this prophesy,
 - And [blessed are] those who hear it,
 - And **take to heart** what is written in it (See Det 29:19-21, 28-29) because the time is near. (Rom 13:11, 2 Pet 3:8-9, Rev 22:6)

II. The Greeting:

1. John, to the 7 churches in the province of Asia. *These were churches in the major cities of the province and likely their surrounding regions.*
 - a. Grace and peace to you from Him who:
 - is
 - was
 - who is to come
 - b. And from the seven-fold Spirit before His throne (Holy Spirit, see also Is 11:2, Zec 3:9, 4:10).
 - And from Jesus Christ who is
 - The faithful witness
 - The firstborn from the dead (Act 26:23, 1 Cor 15:20-23, Col 1:15-20, Heb 1:1-3)
 - The ruler of the kings of the earth (Dan 7:13-14, 26-27, Lk 1:33)
2. To Him who loves us ("to the One loving us") and has freed ("loosed") us from our sins by His blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve His God and Father - (Re: His making us to be a kingdom and priests - see Ex 19:6, 1 Pet 2:5,9; Rev 5:9-10, 20:6)
 - a. To Him be glory and power ("dominion") forever and ever! Amen
 - b. Look, He is coming in the clouds (Dan 7:13, Mat 26:64).
 - c. Every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him (Zech 12:10/Jhn 19:37)
 - d. And all people on earth will mourn because of Him. So shall it be! Amen. (His coming will be a two-edged sword. Salvation for His own, and judgment for those who have rejected Him.
3. "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." (Heb 13:8, Rev 22:12-16)

So - what do we know from Rev 1:1-8?

It is the revelation of Jesus Christ that was given to John for the church.

It concerns the future.

Those who read it, hear it and take it to heart (act on the information) will be blessed. (See 2 Pet 3:1-18)

Grace and peace comes from the godhead. (Father = Who is, was, is to come, Spirit = 7 fold spirit, faithful witness, firstborn from the dead, ruler of the kingdoms of the earth = the Lord Jesus Christ.

What has Jesus done for His people?

- loves us
- has freed us from our sins by His blood
- made us to serve His God and Father as a kingdom and priests (See Lk 1:68-75)

He is coming - Dan 7:13 and Zec 12:10 will certainly be fulfilled.

He is God Almighty - from start to finish He is it!

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Key Verse: 11:15

II. The Setting

1:9-20

1. **John (their brother and companion in the suffering (“*tribulation*”), kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus... Where do we get the idea that believers will never suffer? (Jn 16:33, Act 14:22, Rom 8:28-39, 2 Tim 1:8).**
 - a. **He was on the isle of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.** This took place during the reign of the emperor Domitian in AD 95.
 - b. **On the Lord’s Day he was in the Spirit** (See also Ezk 3:12-14). The Spirit gave him a vision.
 - The Lord’s Day refers to the first day of the week. The early church met on that day in commemoration of the resurrection. (e.g., Act 20:7, 1 Cor 16:2, also the early leaders and writers of the church also bore witness to the early church meeting on the first day of the week - e.g., Ignatius, Chrysostom, Justin Martyr, Theodoret etc.)
 - He heard from behind him a loud voice like a trumpet (loud and clear?) which said: “Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches.”
 - John turned around to see who had spoken to him. When he did he saw:
 - * Seven golden lampstands.
 - * Someone among them like a son of man, brilliant, and dressed regally with a voice like rushing waters (So also Ezk 1:24, 43:2, Dan 10:6).
 - This son of man held seven stars in his right hand and a double-edged sword came out of His mouth (The word of God - e.g., Hos 6:5, Eph 6:17, Heb 4:12, Rev 2:12,16)
 - John fell at His feet as though dead (See Dan 8:17-18, 10:4-11)
 - The one speaking to him placed His hand upon John and said, “Do not be afraid. I am:
 - * The first and the last (See 1:8)
 - * The Living One (“I was dead and now look, I am alive forever and ever!
 - * And I hold the keys of death and hades.” (Is 53:11-12, Lk 16:19-31, Heb 2:9)”
 - * “Write therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later.” Write **therefore**: *this is connected to what John has seen - the glorified Lord Jesus. Because he has been shown it, John needs to write it down. The messengers are waiting! “Therefore,” because He holds the messengers in His right hand and walks among the churches, write! Because He holds the keys to death and Hades, write! Because He is the glorified Son of Man, Lord of all - write!*
 - * The mystery of the 7 stars that you saw in my right hand and of the 7 lampstands is this:
 - + The 7 stars are the angels (“messengers”) of the 7 churches,
 - + and the 7 lampstands are the 7 churches.

Look at the information given in this brief introduction:

- **John was their brother in the suffering, kingdom and perseverance that are ours in Jesus.**
- **John is conveying Jesus’ message to the churches. Churches (as we will see in the next two chapters), that were enduring persecution.**
- **Notice that the Lord Jesus appears in this narrative glorified and in charge.**
- **Our Lord walks among the churches (lampstands) and holds their messengers in his hand.**

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST
Key Verse: 11:15

III. A Message to the Churches

Chapters 2-3

“Do not forsake your first love”

1. Ephesus: “To the angel (messenger) of the church in Ephesus, write:

2:1-9

a. Our Lord identifies Himself: “These are the words (“*things*”) of Him who holds the 7 stars (messengers) in His right hand and walks among the lampstands (the churches).” *He is intimately acquainted with His people* (See Ps 139:1-6).

b. I know your deeds: (Heb 4:12-13)

- Your hard work (“*laborious toil*”)
- Your perseverance (“*patient enduring, steadfast*”)
- That you cannot tolerate (or, “*endure/bear*”) wicked (“*bad, rotten, malicious*”) people
- *That you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false.*

Note:

(The things that marked an apostle were observable - see 2 Cor 12:12 and 2 Cor 13:3. And while many apparently made a claim of apostleship, the criteria was fairly narrow: One had to be chosen by the Lord Jesus - Act 1:2, as far as can be discovered in scripture they were all Jewish men - 1:11, Peter, in leading the apostles to choose a replacement for Judas took the criteria farther in stating that such a person had to have been with them “the whole time the Lord Jesus as living among us, beginning from John’s baptism o the time Jesus was taken up from us.” 1:21-22)

- That you have persevered and have endured [hardships] for my name, and have not grown weary.

c. Yet I hold this against you: you have forsaken the love you had at first.

- Consider how far you have fallen!
- Repent and do the things you did at first.

Repent! If you only went to work when you felt like it, would you have a job?

Repent! Do not wait until you feel like it, start cultivating your relationship with God and with your loved ones now.

- If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. *When is a church no longer a church? The Lord Jesus admonishes them and warns that if they do not repent He will “pull the plug” and shut them down.*

So, the Ephesian believers were “game on,” but despite their commendable faithfulness had grown cold in their love for God and it showed. (See Rom 12:9-13). They were “on a rail,” spiritually just “keeping on keeping on,” putting on foot in front of the other, day in, day out, “same old” rhythm.

* This can happen easily and affect not just our relationship with God but with people.

* Husbands, wives, don’t adopt the idea that “if things are not broke, don’t fix them.” Love is a word that demands action. Never stop showing each other appreciation, kindness and forgiveness. Remember those days when you were first together - things do not merely go stale. We allow them to.

d. But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

There is a good bit of information concerning the Nicolaitans. But nothing definite. Their chief error seems to be that they advocated eating food offered to idols and practicing sexual immorality.

e. Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. “Listen up!”

- To the one who is victorious I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God. *And how are we victorious? By standing firm in our faith and seeking God.*

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Key Verse: 11:15

III. A Message to the Churches

Chapters 2-3

To this church and the church in Philadelphia only our Lord offers unqualified commendation

2. Smyrna: "To the angel ("messenger") of the church in Smyrna write:"

2:8-11

a. **Our Lord identifies Himself:** "These are the words of Him who is the First and Last, who died and came to life again." (Is 44:6, 48:12; Rev 1:18; Jhn 5:25).

b. **I know your affliction** (or, "*tribulation, distress*") **and poverty** ("*destitution*") - **yet you are rich!** (Many who are materially wealthy are spiritually impoverished and many who are materially poor are spiritually wealthy - see 1 Sam 2:8; Prv 11:28; Hos 12:8; Mat 6:19-25; Lk 16:1-15; 1 Tim 6:17-19; Jas 2:5).

- I know about the slander ("*coarse, abusive language*") of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. (Jhn 8:31-47; Rom 2:28-29; 9:6; 2 Cor 11:26, Gal 6:15).

* *In the same way, mere outward conformity to religious forms does not a believer make! In the words of evangelist Billy Sunday, "Going to church does not make you a Christian any more than going to a garage makes you an automobile."*

* Eph 2:11-22; 1 Cor 7:19/Jhn 6:28-29; 1 Cor 12:12-13; Gal 3:25-29)

- Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. (Jhn 16:33; Act 14:22; Phil 3:10-11; 2 Thess 3:1-5)

* I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days.

* Be faithful, even unto the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor's crown.

c. **Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.** (See Ps 32:8-10; Mtt 13:9; Lk 6:46-49)

- *Many hear, but do they listen? In my time in the military, it was not uncommon to see a notice on a bulletin board titled, "Read and Heed." Do not allow what is described in Jas 1:22 be true of you!*

Some things to take away from this passage:

- He knows us and our situations intimately.
- He wants us to be rich in faith. He sees us far differently than this world does. (E.g., Lk 16:15)
- He wants us to be unintimidated by those who oppose and revile us (and not to be surprised that it happens!) See Php 1:27-30; 1 Pet 3:14; 1 Jhn 3:13; Jhn 17:14.
- Live out your faith! 1 Pet 2:9-12; Phil 1:6; 2:12-17 - It matters!
- Pay heed to His Word.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST
Key Verse: 11:15

III. A Message to the Churches

Chapters 2-3

3. Pergamum: “To the angel (“messenger”) of the church in Pergamum write:” 2:12-17

- a. Our Lord identifies Himself:** “These are the words of Him who has the sharp (or “*swift*”) double-edged sword (See also Eph 6:17, Heb 4:12, 2 Thes 2:8, Rev 1:16, 2:16) He has us in His hands and rules by His powerful word.
- b. I know where you live - where Satan has His throne. Yet you remain true to my name.**
Pergamum was a center of pagan worship. The worship of Zeus, Athena, Dionysius, Aesculapius and notably, emperor worship. Politics and religion were closely allied in Pergamum. Remember, our Lord does not taking sides-He is taking over!
- c. You did not renounce your faith in Me, even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was put to death in your city - where Satan lives.** Persecution had broken out, even claiming the life of a faithful believer. (Jhn 15:18). God may deliver us from trouble or *through* it. E.g., Dan 3:18.
- d. Nevertheless, I have a few things against you:**
- You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught the Israelites to sin (“*casting a snare*”) by eating food sacrificed to idols
 - * Eating food sacrificed to idols (1 Cor 10:14-24, 1 Thes 4:1-8)
 - * and by committing sexual immorality. *Idol worship and sexual rites were a part of the false religion promoted by idolatry. The pressure the world exerts is to force conformity. Yet our faith directs us to live differently - to live in such a way as to shine the light of God on the darkness of culture (See Eph 5:11). It is dangerous to “skate close to the edge.” It is treason against heaven to do it to avoid inconvenience or persecution (Mat 10:33)*
 - Likewise, you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.
- e. Repent therefore!** (See 2:4-5) - *Change your mind and actions. Don’t merely think about it but act.*
- Otherwise I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. (Heb 12:6-7, 1 Pet 4:17)
- f. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.**
- To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. *God sustains His people. We are not speaking of physical food (See Jhn 6:49). Look to Jhn 6:26-27*
 - I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it. (2 Tim 2:19 - God knows His own and they know Him. And...their lives show it.)

Some things to take away from this passage:

- **He knows us and our situation.**
- **He can deliver us from trouble or through it.**
- **Compromise with the world to avoid being identified with Jesus is dangerous.**
- **Compromise to indulge our flesh is equally dangerous.**
- **God sustains His people.**

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST
Key Verse: 11:15

III. A Message to the Churches

Chapters 2-3

4. Thyatira: "To the angel ("messenger") of the church in Thyatira write:"

2:18-29

- a. Our Lord identifies Himself:** "These are the words of the Son of God, whose eyes are like blazing fire and whose feet are like burnished bronze. (See 1:12-16, 19-20)
- b. I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first.** *Again, as He states to each church, He knows them, He walks among them and holds their messengers (their pastors?) in His hand.* (See Jn 1:43-51, 2:23-25)
- c. Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophet.** *"Jezebel" is likely as name given to this woman by our Lord. The woman named Jezebel to whom this person is likened was an idolater.* (See Col 3:5)
- By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols. *Similar to the Nicolaitans and compromisers with the culture, she advocated "going along to get along" - which can never work.* (Rom 12:2, Jas 4:4, 1 Jhn 2:15-17, Jde 1:3-5)
 - I have given her time to repent of her immorality but she is unwilling. (Gen 15:16, Rom 2:5-6, 2 Pet 3:9 - and Gal 6:7-8)
 - So I will cast her on a bed [of suffering] and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer (affliction, pressure, distress) intensely, unless they repent of her ways. (Heb 12:4-13)
 - I will strike her children dead (See 1 King 14:12-13, 1 Cor 11:27-29, 1 Cor 3:10-15). *By "children" it likely means her adherents/followers. However, it is possible that her actions have resulted in her and her offspring being afflicted with a venereal disease (which at that time might likely have been incurable).*
 - Then all the churches will know that I am He who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds. (See Acts 5:11) - Where does judgment begin? 1 Pet 4:16
- d. Now to the rest of you in Thyatira, to you who do not hold to her teaching and have not learned Satan's so-called deep secrets.**
- I will not impose any other burden on you, except to hold on to what you have until I come. (Rev 3:11, 16:15)
 - To the one who is victorious and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations -
 - * That one will rule them with an iron scepter and dash them to pieces like pottery -
 - * Just as I have received authority from my Father.
 - I will also give that one the morning star. (Num 24:17, 2 Pet 1:19, Rev 22:16)
- e. Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.**

Are we in the world or of it?

Can we discern truth from error?

Are we willing to stand for the truth?

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST
Key Verse: 11:15

III. A Message to the Churches

Chapters 2-3

5. Sardis: "To the angel ("messenger") of the church in Sardis write:"

3:1-6

- a. Our Lord Identifies Himself:** "These are the words of Him who holds the seven spirits (or "Seven-fold Spirit") and the seven stars. (See also Is 11:1-9, Jhn 15:26, Rom 8:9, 11)
- b. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead ("lifeless").**
- wake up! ("be watchful")
 - Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God. (See also 2:4-5)
 - Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard;
 - * Hold it fast ("keep it") See Col 4:17, 2 Tim 4:5
 - * Repent ("change your mind/purpose")
 - * But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief and you will not know at what time ("hour") I will come to ("upon") you. (See Lke 12:35-40, 1 Cor 3:10-15)
- c. Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes** (See Isa 64:6, Zec 3:3, Rev 3:4-5, 18).
- They will walk with me [dressed] in white, for they are worthy.
 - The one who is victorious will, like them, be dressed in white.
 - I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life, but will acknowledge ("confess") that name before my Father and His angels.
- d. Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.** (Exo 32:32-33, Psm 69:28, Phil 4:3, Rev 13:8, 17:8)

Some things to take away from this passage:

It is not those who begin a race but those who complete it who are rewarded. Seek to finish well.

As mentioned in Rev 2:1-9, attempting to serve God without seeking Him is to rely on our own strength and wisdom. It can be a subtle form of idolatry.

Are you going through a dry time spiritually? "Coasting," and just going through the motions? Repent. One day you will stand before Him - it could be today!

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST
Key Verse: 11:15

III. A Message to the Churches

Chapters 2-3

6. Philadelphia: “To the angel (“messenger”) of the church in Philadelphia write:” 3:7-13

- a. Our Lord identifies Himself:** “These are the words of [Him who is] holy and true (“*made of truth.*” *that is, genuine*), who holds the key of David. (See Jhn 14:6-7, 17:17)
- What [He] opens no one can shut
 - and [what He] shuts no one [can] open. (See Gen 49:10, Psm 2, Isa 22:15-25) *He is Lord.*
- b. I know your deeds.**
- See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. (See also Act 14:27, 1 Cor 16:8-9, 2 Cor 12:12 - *our testing/trials can be unrecognized times of opportunity*).
 - I know that (“*because*”) you have little strength [yet] you have kept my word and have not denied (“*disavowed, denied, rejected*”) my name. (*How do we overcome this world and the powers of darkness? See Jer 4:6, Zec 4:6, Jhn 15:5*)
 - [Behold] I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars - (Rom 2:28-29, 9:6-7, Gal 3:7-9)
 - [Behold,] I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you. (Is 60:14, 1 Pet 2:9-11, 1 Cor 1:18-25). *A time is coming when justice will prevail, when this world’s veil will be stripped away and everything made plain. God’s people will be revealed clothed in His glory. Every knee will bow (Is 45:20-24/Phil 2:5-11).*
- c. Since you have kept my command to endure patiently (“*The word of my patience*”), I will also keep you from the hour (“*time*”) of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth. (God may save us *from* it or *through* it - Dan 3, Rev 13:10)**
- I am coming soon, hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown. (1 Cor 3:10-15, 1 Cor 9:25, 2 Tim 4:8). *Let us make it our ambition to finish well.*
 - The one who is victorious (“*overcoming*”) I will make a pillar in the temple of my God.
 - * Never again will they leave it. (See Jn 10:29)
 - * I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God. (Psm 48:8, Jer 17:25)
 - * And I will also write on them my new name. (Rev 2:17)
- d. Whoever has ears, let them (“him”) hear what the Spirit says to the churches.**

Let the nations rage, Jesus reigns! His word alone stands.

There is a difference between the visible church and the true church.

God knows our trials and will preserve us from and/or through them.

The church, like Israel has a role to play in this world drama. Jer 51:20-23, Dan 2:35, 44-45, 7:13-14, 27, Rev 11:15

God does not promise that our lives will be an easy journey, but at the end we have a safe harbor. Jhn 16:31

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST
Key Verse: 11:15

III. A Message to the Churches

Chapters 2-3

7. Laodicea: “To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:”

3:14-22

a. Our Lord Identifies Himself: “These are the words of the Amen (“*true, trustworthy*”), the faithful and true witness (Det 18:18/Jhn 8:28), the ruler of God’s creation” (or “*beginning*”; See also 1:8, 11; 21:6).

b. I know your deeds, that you are neither cold (“*chilly*”) nor hot (“*boiling hot*”).

- I wish you were either one or the other! (Jas 4:17)

- So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. (See Rev 2:5; 3:19) (“*Spit out*” here describes doing so with disgust. Kind of like biting an apple and seeing half a worm where you had just bitten and spitting out your mouthful.)

* You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ (Lit: “*I am rich. I have begotten/acquired riches.*”) Compare with Det 8:11-20; Lke 16:10-15; Mat 5:3.

* But you do not know that you are wretched (“*the afflicted*”), pitiful (or “*pitiful, in need of mercy*”) poor (“*impoverished*”), blind and naked (“*poorly clothed*”).

- I counsel you to buy from me:

* gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; (See Is 55:1-3; Rev 2:9/Gal 5:22-23). *Laodicea was wealthy and self satisfied. See this quote from Tacitus ... “One of the most famous cities of Asia, Laodicea, was in that same year overthrown by an earthquake and without any relief from us recovered itself by its own resources.”* (Tacitus: Annals 14: 27)

* and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; (Rev 16:15; 19:8,14).

* and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. (*An ear and eye salve was manufactured in Laodicea. But physical sight does not equate spiritual perception. See Jhn 9:35-41.*)

2 Pet 1:3-11

c. Those whom I love (“*regard with affection*”), I rebuke and discipline. Lest the Laodiceans suppose He has cast them aside God reminds them of one way that He shows His love - chastisement. And if they did not respond, He makes it plain that it was coming. (Heb 12:4-13)

- So be earnest (“*desire to and act*” - “*fervently*”, “*boiling*”) and repent. (Rom 12:3-21; Rev 2:5, 16)

- Here I am! (“*Behold, look*”) I stand (“*have stood*”) at the door and knock(ed).

* If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me. (*In the words of another - “If you feel God is far away, who moved?”* Jhn 14:21)

- To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on His throne. (See also Rev 2:26-29)

d. Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

The “lukewarm” state being addressed in this passage is not one of rejection. Rather it describes one who believes, is convinced and is disobedient and or apathetic. A 1 Cor 3:10-15 situation perhaps? Certainly 2 Pet 1:3-11 applies here.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST
Key Verse: 11:15

IV. Things to come - "What will take place after this."

Chapters 4-22

1. The Throne of God and of the Lamb (Or, "Who is worthy to reveal the future?") Chapters 4-5

Part 1: Chapter 4

a. The Throne. After this (*the giving of the messages to the 7 churches*) I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet (See 1:9-11) said,

- "Come up here and I will show you what must take place after this."
- At once I was in the Spirit (See also *Isa 6:1-13; Jer 1:4-19; 2 Cor 12:2-4*), and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it.
 - * And the one who sat there ("*sitting*") had the appearance of jasper (*a translucent stone that can be colored purple, blue, green or bronze*) and ruby ("*sardine stone*" could be flesh colored or blood red).
 - * A rainbow that shone like an emerald encircled the throne.
 - * Surrounding the throne were 24 other thrones, and seated on them were 24 elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads. (*righteous and victorious*)
 - * From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder.
 - * In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the 7 spirits (or, "the 7 fold Spirit") of God. (See also *Isa 11:1-3*)

b. The sea of glass. In front of the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass [clear] like crystal. Look at *1 Kng 7:23; Heb 8:1-5; 9:24; Rev 11:19; 15:5* - *this is a scene from heaven's temple.*

c. The four living creatures. And in the center ("*in the midst*") were four living creatures and they were covered with eyes, in front and back. (See also *Ezk 1:4-21; 10:1-22*). So, *what's with the eyes? God is omniscient, that is, nothing is hidden from Him. See Psl 139:1-18; Heb 4:13. All creation is naked before Him. We are known completely.*

- The 1st living creature was like a lion, the 2nd like an ox, the 3rd like a man and the 4th like a flying eagle. (See *Ezk 1:10*).
- Each of the 4 living creatures had six wings covered with eyes all around, even under its wings.
- Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."
- Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to Him who sits upon the throne and who lives forever and ever, the 24 elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say,
 - * "You are worthy our Lord and God, to receive glory honor and power
 - * for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."

A few things to remember:

John was called by our Lord to “come up here,” to be shown what “must take place after this.” He is being shown future events. Our Lord reveals the things to come.

John is shown God enthroned in glorious majesty on His throne. He rules! (Do what they may, the devil, his angels and the world are inconsequential - Isa 40:1-17; Dan 2:31-35, 45)

John is shown 24 elders also crowned and enthroned before Him. Believing Israel and the church victorious!

- They rule because He rules.
- They have overcome (See 2:7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3:4-6, 12-13, 21-22). How? The same as any of God's people do—through faith in Christ alone. Jn 14:6; Act 4:12; Rom 10:5-13
- * They will have the right to eat from the tree of life.
- * They will not be hurt at all by the second death.
- * They will be sustained by God (“hidden manna”) and be given a new name/white stone.
- * They will be given His authority over the nations. (Remember Dan 2:44-45; 7:27)
- * They will be dressed in white (reckoned righteous) and acknowledged by Jesus before the Father.
- * They will be made a pillar (permanent, we belong!) in His temple, and have new names written on them.
- * They will be given the right to sit with Jesus on His throne.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST
Key Verse: 11:15

IV. Things to come - "What will take place after this."

Chapters 4-22

1. The Throne of God and of the Lamb (Or, "Who is worthy to reveal the future?") Chapters 4-5
Part 2: Chapter 5

a. Then ("and") I saw in ("upon") the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals.

- And a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break ("loose") the seals and open the scroll?"
- But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could ("was able to") open the scroll or even look inside it. (*It has been sealed up until...revealed in God's time.* Eg., Dan 12:9, Isa 29:11, 1 Pet 1:10-12)
- I wept and wept because no one was found [who was] worthy to open the scroll or look inside it.
- Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep!"
- * See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed.
- * He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals."

b. Then ("and") I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing at the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders.

- The Lamb had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven (*or, "seven-fold"*) spirit(s) of God sent out into all the earth. (*Zec 3:9, 4:10*) *The 7 horns show perfect power, the eyes the omnipresent and watchful Spirit of God. Seven being the number of perfection.*
- He went ("came") and took the scroll ("it") from the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.
- And when He had taken it ("the scroll"), the four living creatures and the twenty four elders fell down before the Lamb.
- * Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God's people ("saints").
- * And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain and with your blood you purchased for ("to") God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. Mat 28:19
- * You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on earth." (See 1:6,2:27, 3:21, Ex 19:6, 1 Pet 2:5, Dan 7:15-18)

c. Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and the thousand times then thousand. (Lit: hundreds of millions. Likely an uncountable multitude).

- And they encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders.
- In a loud voice they were saying: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power, and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise." (See Phil 2:5-11)

d. Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying:

- To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power for ever and ever!
- The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshipped.

Some things to take away:

God alone knows and rules the past, present and future. Our call is to follow and trust.

In this passage we see the Father, the Son (Lamb) and the Holy Spirit. (e.g., 1 Cor 12:4-6)

The Lamb's victory is complete (Heb 1:1-4)

As the glorified representative of humanity, He reigns eternally.

The angels and saints share in His triumph and will reign with Him eternally. How should this affect us?

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST
Key Verse: 11:15

IV. Things to come - "What will take place after this."

Chapters 4-22

2. The Seven Seals are broken

6:1-8:5

Part 1 - Chapter 6

- a. As the Lamb opened the first seal John heard one of the four living creatures say in a voice like thunder say, "Come!"**
- There before him was a white horse!
 - Its rider held a bow and was given a crown, and he rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest.
- b. When the Lamb opened the second seal, John heard the second living creature say, "Come!"**
- Then another horse came out, a fiery red one.
 - Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth and to make people kill each other.
 - To him was given a large sword. See also *Mtt 24:4-14*
- c. When the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come!"**
- There before John was a black horse!
 - Its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand.
 - Then I heard what sounded like a voice among the four living creatures saying, "Two pounds of wheat for a day's wages, and six pounds of barley for a days wages, and do not damage the oil and the wine!" (Food scarcity; bread hard to come by and doled out by weight. See Lev 26:26, Ezk 4:16)
- d. When the Lamb opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!"**
- There before John was a pale horse.
 - Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him. They were given power over a fourth of the earth to kill by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts of the earth.
- e. When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained.**
- They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?"
 - Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the full number of their fellow servants, their brothers and sisters ("*brothers*") were killed just as they had been. *Look at Rom 11:25: Along with this verse there seems to be two prophetic events that act as "hinges" or waypoints in end time events: the completion of martyrdom and the salvation of the full number of Gentiles. Only God knows.*
- f. John watched as the Lamb opened the sixth seal.**
- There was a great earthquake.
 - The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the moon turned blood red,
 - The stars in the sky fell to earth, as figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind.
 - The heavens receded like a scroll being rolled up (See Is 34:1-4)
 - Then the rulers, movers and shakers, the wealthy, mighty, slave/free, and everyone else tried to hide from the Lamb and His wrath. Time was up! See also Isa 2:6-22, Hos 10:1-8, Lke 23:26-31, Hag 2:6/Heb 12:26, 2 Pet 3:10-12

So - what can we take away from this passage?

- Our Lord (the Lamb) rules the future. He was revealing future things to John (1:1, 3,19; 4:1).
- He is worthy to open the scroll (reveal the future). And the scroll revealed the following things:
 - * Conquest
 - * War
 - * Famine
 - * Death
 - * Martyrdom
 - * Earthly and celestial catastrophes

Compare these "seals" w/ Matt 24:36-51

God has not appointed the church to suffer wrath (1 Thes 1:10, 1 Thes 5:1-11). And these things are an outpouring of wrath (See Rev 6:15-17)

When time is up, it is up. God's timeline is precise. Nothing happens by chance or whim, early or late.

The powers of this world and of the enemy have a coming reckoning.

- The world was not ready in the days of Noah (Mat 24:36-51, 2 Pet 3:3-10)
- It will not be ready in the future and it never has been. (See Joel 3:9-16)
- But - God's people are secure.

Heb 12:18-29

A word about structure: From the 7th seal come 7 trumpets announcing 7 further judgements. And, from the 7th trumpet come 7 bowls/vials w/ 7 last plagues that will complete God's wrath.

Seals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

Trumpet 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

Bowls / vials 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

Many people ask me where the Rapture takes place in this book. Well, it isn't mentioned in Rev. If you want to look it up see 1 Thes 4:13-18.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST
Key Verse: 11:15

IV. Things to come - "What will take place after this."

Chapters 4-22

2. The Seven Seals are broken

6:1-8:5

Part 2 - Chapter 7 (A excursus between the 6th and 7th Seal). No time frame is given to this portion. It seems to show two things: First, God is absolutely *not* done with Israel. Israel figures prominently in future events. Second, there will be a vast amount of people saved during the Tribulation. Yes it is a time of wrath but also a time of salvation. Even in judgment, God extends mercy.

a. The sealing of the 144,000 (See also chapter 14:1-5).

- John saw four angels standing at the "four corners of the earth," (Likely the four main compass points) holding back the four winds of the earth so the wind could not blow. Jer 49:46
- * These angels had been given power to harm the land and the sea. (*The onset of these judgments*).
- * Another angel came up out of the East and passed on orders to the four - "Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God."
- * The number of those who were to be sealed was 144k. From all the tribes of Israel. (*Yes, I know that the tribe of Dan is missing. Also, Ephraim is called Joseph. Dan has the first allotment of Israeli land in the millennium (Ezk 48:1), so what does this mean? The best I can figure out is that it is a general statement that God has absolutely not abandoned Israel, He has a purpose for them and they figure prominently in His coming work. Is 41:9-21. And until they are sealed, the 7th seal will not be opened. God knows His own (Eph 1:13, 4:30, Phil 1:6 We are called on to live recognizing that He may return or we may be called home at any time).*) (1 Ths 5:1-11)

b. The great multitude of tribulation saints. See Matt 24:21- *the term is exactly the same.*

- "After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count."
- * From every nation, tribe, people and language.
- * Wearing white robes (righteous!). E.g., see Rev 3:5, 4:4, 19:14
- * Holding palm branches (Celebrating!). E.g., Ps 118:27
- * Crying out in jubilant praise: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." See Mrk 9:37, Lke 10:16, Jhn 5:19-23, 14:1
- * They are joined in worship by all the angels, elders and four living creatures around the throne saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!"
- Then one of the elders asked me, "These In the white robes - who are they, and where did they come from? John had no idea and responded, "Sir, your know."
- The elder responded, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore:
 - * they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple;
 - * and He who sits on the throne will shelter them with His presence.
 - + never again to hunger or thirst
 - + never again to be scorched by the sun or heat. (*That day is coming! Rom 8:18-25, 2 Pet 3:13*)
 - * For the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their Shepherd and sustain and comfort them. (See Jhn 10:1-18, Isa 25:8)

God's plan will not be derailed nor His promises broken.
God is just and His justice will stand as well as His mercy.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Key Verse: 11:15

IV. Things to come - "What will take place after this."

Chapters 4-22

2. The Seven Seals are broken

6:1-8:5

Part 3 - Chapter 8-11 The 7th Seal/7 Trumpets

8:1-11:19

- a. **When he opened the 7th seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.** The saints, angels and living creatures become hushed in expectant silence. (*The Son alone judges - Jhn 5:27*)
- b. **And I saw the 7 angels who stand before God, and 7 trumpets were given to them.** (E.g., Lk 1:19) Although there are extra-biblical sources for their names, all we have is Gabriel.
- c. **Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar.**
 - He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of the saints, on the golden altar in front of the throne (See Rev 5:8)
 - The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of the saints, went up before God from the angel's hand. *God hears and answers His people's prayers. "Yes," "No," and "Wait"* - 1 Cor 16:22, 1 Ths 5:1-11, 2 Pet 3:10-12
 - Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and hurled it on the earth; and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake. *Prayers answered!*
3. **The 7 trumpets** (The 7 angels who had the 7 trumpets prepared to sound them.) **8:6-11:19**
Part 1 - the 1st 4 trumpets - judgments affecting the natural world.
 - a. **The 1st trumpet sounded and there came hail and fire mixed with blood, and it was hurled down on the earth. 1/3 of the earth, 1/3 of the trees and all the green grass was burned up.**
 - b. **The 2nd angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a great mountain, all ablaze, was thrown into the sea. 1/3 of the sea turned to blood, 1/3 of sea creatures died and 1/3 of the ships were destroyed.**
 - c. **The 3rd angel sounded his trumpet, and a great star, blazing like a torch, fell from the sky on 1/3 of the rivers and on the springs of water - the name of the star was Wormwood. 1/3 of the waters (fresh) turned bitter, and many people died from the waters that had become bitter.**
 - d. **The 4th angel sounded his trumpet, and 1/3 of the sun, moon and stars turned dark. 1/3 of the day was without light and 1/3 of the night.**

And how will unbelieving humanity respond to God's judgements? Rev 9:20-21

These first four judgment are against rebellious humanity and are exacted against it through an assault on the natural world. The next ones will be directed against humanity directly. But...just as God made a distinction between Israel and Egypt when He sent the plagues (Ex 8:20-23, 9:1-7) so He will do so here between those who know Him and those who reject Him. For next week it would be good for us all to read Rev from chapter 1 through chapter 9.

Woe! Woe! Woe!

The first four judgments were against the earth itself, now they will come against unregenerate humanity. As John watched, he heard an eagle flying in mid air calling out in a loud voice, "Woe! Woe! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the trumpet blasts about to be sounded by the other 3 angels!"

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Key Verse: 11:15

IV. Things to come - "What will take place after this."

Chapters 4-22

2. The Seven Seals are broken

6:1-8:5

Part 3 - Chapter 8-11 The 7th Seal/7 Trumpets (Pt 1)

8:1-11:19

5th Trumpet 9:1-12

e. The 5th angel sounded his trumpet, and John saw a star that had fallen from the sky to the earth. It was given the key to the abyss. (Lit: "A star out of heaven that had fallen") **1st woe** (Satan? Likely). See 14:12-17, Lke 10:18

- When he opened the Abyss, smoke rose from it like the smoke from a gigantic furnace.
- The sun and the sky were darkened by the smoke from the abyss.
- And out of the smoke locusts came down on the earth and were given power like that of scorpions of the earth.
 - * They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any plant or tree, but only those people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads (See 7:3 where the angels holding back judgment "winds" were commanded to hold off until the 144k were sealed).
 - * They were not allowed to kill them but only to torture them for 5 months. And the agony they suffered was like that of the sting of a scorpion when it strikes.
 - * During those days people will seek death but it will not find it; they will long to die, but death will elude them. The possessed seem to have lost control over their will
 - * The "locusts" appeared to look like horses prepared for battle. Heads with something like golden crowns, human-like faces and hair, lion-like teeth, armored breasts.
 - * These "locusts" delivered a sting like that of a scorpion.
 - + People will long to die but death will elude them. E.g., see Mrk 9:22, Lke 9:22,
 - + The devil and his hordes hate and mock us (Job 4:12-5:27)
 - * Their sound as they exited the abyss was deafening. Akin to horse(s) drawn chariots.
 - * They had as king over them the angel of the Abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon and in Greek, Apollyon (that is, Destroyer).

This plague seems to clearly be describing a demonic attack on unregenerate humanity. In Lke 8:31 when Jesus cast the demons out of the man from Gadara, they (the "legion") begged Him not to order them to go into the abyss. Some demons are confined in the Abyss, and others are not. 1 Pet 3:17-20 sheds some light on this as does Gen 6:1-4, 2 Pet 2:4 and Jude 1:6-7.

Some things to remember:

- 1 Jhn 4:4b - "...greater is He that is in you, than He who is in the world."
- 2 Cor 1:21-22, Eph 1:13, 4:30 - Believers have been sealed by God.
- Rom 8:31-39, Eph 6:12 - Try as they might, the enemy and his servants cannot separate the child of God from their Lord.
- 1 Cor 6:3 - At some point in the future, God's people will judge angels (fallen ones).
- Notice here in the text that the demons were forbidden to attack those with God's seal on their foreheads (That is, believers). Again, just as in the plagues sent against Egypt, God makes a distinction here between His own and those who have rejected Him.
- God preserves His own. He may deliver us from trials / hardship, or through them. (E.g., Rev 13:10, 14:12)
- Satan and his followers are deadly enemies of humanity (Jhn 8:42-44, 10:10)

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST
Key Verse: 11:15

IV. Things to come - "What will take place after this."

Chapters 4-22

2. The Seven Seals are broken

6:1-8:5

Part 3 - The 7th Seal/7 Trumpets. (Pt 2)

8:1-11:19

6th Trumpet 9:13-21

f. The 6th angel sounded his trumpet, and I heard a voice coming from the 4 horns of the golden altar that is before God. *The golden altar is the altar of incense. This judgment comes in answer to the prayers of God's suffering church (See Rev 6:9-11, 8:3-5, Lke 18:1-11 - here God is shown patient with wrongdoers. Remember, if I demand God's judgment of those who wrong me, I must accept judgement for myself.)*

- It said to the 6th angel who had the trumpet, "Release the 4 angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." *These are "bound" and seem to be fallen angels who, up until this time, have been restrained. The enemy hates humanity. Never forget this. And he especially hates Israel and the church. (Rev 9:13-17, Eph 3:10-11, 6:10-11). God's restraint of the enemy's homicidal intentions will be lifted and humanity will experience the hatred from which they have long been sheltered. In effect, those who have rejected God, harmed His people and suppressed His word will learn who and what they have sided with in their rebellion.*

- And the 4 angels who had been kept ready for this very hour and day and month and year were released to kill 1/3 of mankind. *There is a time for everything. God is never early or late.*

* The number of mounted troops was twice 10k X 10k (200,000,000). I heard their number. *Unlike earlier descriptions of vast, uncountable numbers, this number is clearly stated.*

* The horses and riders I saw in my vision looked like this:

+ Their breastplates were fiery red, dark blue, and yellow as sulphur.

+ The heads of the horses resembled the heads of lions, and out of their mouths came fire, smoke and sulphur.

+ 1/3 of mankind was killed by the 3 plagues of fire, smoke and sulphur that came out of their mouths.

* The power of the horses was in their mouths and in their tails, for their tails were like snakes, having heads with which to inflict injury.

John is describing things that he has never before seen in terms of what he knows. Is this an Iron Age description of modern warfare? We cannot know from our vantage point. What we do know is that 1/3 of humanity will perish in a coming period of warfare. And that, because the restraint God has placed on evil will be removed. The ultimate fulfillment of Rom 1:18-32. See Gen 6:5-8, Mtt 24:37, Lke 17:26.

g. The rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues still did not repent ("did not even repent") of the work of their hands; *This does indicate the reason for the judgments - repentance. And it will produce a harvest - Rev 7:9-17! See also Ex 7:1-5, 14:4, 12:38. And Ezk 33:11 But those refuse to repent:*

- Did not stop worshipping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood - idols that cannot see, or hear or walk.

- Nor did they repent of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts. *Money, sex, the illusion of power, food, drugs etc., ad nauseam - cannot and never has granted anyone ultimate fulfillment. They cannot bring us into a right relationship with God. By putting such things first in life, people incur judgment. (See Eph 5:3-6)*

God answers the prayers of His saints. But with omniscient wisdom.

God's mercy to wrongdoers is the same mercy He has shown believers. Aren't you happy that you have not received what you deserve?

God's judgments are coupled with grace. The Tribulation will be a hard time, but also a time of salvation.

How do we/you look at those who oppose, revile or who work against us? Do we pray for them?

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Key Verse: 11:15

IV. Things to come - "What will take place after this."

Chapters 4-22

2. The Seven Seals are broken

6:1-8:5

Part 3 - The 7th Seal/7 Trumpets. (Continued)

8:1-11:19

An Interlude Before the 7th Trumpet (Or, "Woe #2") Part 1

Chapter 10

1. Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven.

- a. He was robed in a cloud, with a rainbow above his head; his face was like the sun and his legs were like fiery pillars.

Almost a reflection of the One he serves - see Rev 4:2-3.

- b. He was holding a little scroll, which lay open in his hand.

Again, our Lord has given us His word

- c. He planted his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land.

- He gave a shout like the roar of a lion.

- When he shouted, the voices of the 7 thunders spoke (I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven say, "Seal up what the 7 thunders have said and do not write it down.") (*The words of the 7 Thunders was for John and not for us*). See also Isa 48:6, Dan 8:26, 12:4,9, 1 Pet 1:10-12

- Then the angel I had seen standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven and he swore by Him who lives for ever and ever, who created the heavens and the earth and the sea and all that is in them and said:

* "There will be no more delay! (2 Pet 3:1-13 - God is never early or late)

* In the days when the 7th angel is about to send his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as He announced to His servants the prophets. (1 Cor 13:12-13, Rom 13:8-14)

This knowledge demands a response: How should our lives be different because of Jesus' lordship and ultimate victory?

- d. Then the voice that I heard from heaven (vs 21) spoke to me once more:

- "Go, take the scroll that lies open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and the land."

- So I went to the angel and asked him to give me the little scroll.

- He said to me, "Take it and eat it. It will turn your stomach sour, but in your mouth it will be as sweet as honey." *For a similar thought see Jer 15:16, Ezk 2:1-3:11*

- I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it.

* It tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth.

* but when I had eaten it, my stomach turned sour.

* Then I was told, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages and kings. *The world has a time set for judgment. God's word will be fulfilled at the right time. See Isa 30:27-33, speaking of God's judgment against Assyria. Time was up. Words of judgment, songs of praise.*

The gospel is a "two-edged sword," producing salvation for all who come to God by faith and damnation for all who reject Him. And we who know Him have the same "sweet and sour" effect on the world around us. See Lke 2:34, 2 Cor 2:14-16 Whether we are aware of it or not, we who know Him have a mission to discharge here:

To love God and our neighbor; to know Him and make Him known.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST
Key Verse: 11:15

IV. Things to come - "What will take place after this."

Chapters 4-22

2. The Seven Seals are broken

6:1-8:5

Part 3 - The 7th Seal/7 Trumpets. (Continued)

8:1-11:19

The Two Witnesses' Ministry

1. For 3.5 years the holy city (Jerusalem) will be trampled by the Gentiles (3.5 yrs/42 months/1260 days, can also be spoken of as "time, times and half a time.").

2. During this time, God's two appointed witnesses will prophesy for 1260 days.

- a. They will be clothed in sackcloth and bear witness to the world. In this it seems good to remember that God's judgment is coupled with mercy. Think of it as a call to repentance. I think of Noah who for 120 years warned the world of coming judgment and preached (Heb 11:7; 1 Pet 3:20; 2 Pet 2:5). But for all Noah's warning and preaching, only himself, his sons and their wives were saved. But the message went and will go out. Men are without excuse. Remember Rev 9:20-21.
- b. These are the two "olive trees" and "lampstands" that stand before the Lord of all the earth. (See Zec 4:1-14). What message can we derive from this? I suspect that it is the same as it was when Zechariah prophesied to Zerubbabel, Judah's prince) and Joshua the high priest — God's will is going to be accomplished "not by might, nor by power but by His Spirit." (Zec 4:6)
 - These two will confront the unbelieving world and proclaim God's truth. And they will have God's protection. See also Jer 1:7-8, 17-19; 15:20 God enables His servants to fulfill their calling.
 - They will have power ("authority") to inflict judgements on the earth. (Similar to Jas 5:17)
 - At the proper time (Similar to 2 Tim 4:6-8) they will be overpowered by the enemy ("beast out of the abyss") and killed.
 - * The world will rejoice, deny them burial.
 - * God will raise them to life after 3.5 days and take them home while the world watches. Mission accomplished!
 - * At that time a severe earthquake will occur destroying 1/10 of Jerusalem and killing 7k people. And the survivors will glorify God.

Woe # 2 has now passed.

3. The 7th trumpet will sound!

- a. Heaven erupts in celebratory praise! Jesus reigns!
- b. The sovereignty of the Son of Man is at hand! (See Dan 7:13-14, 26-27; Rev 6:15-17)
 - He reigns!
 - He is the Judge! (Jhn 5:19-23; Act 10:42; Heb 1:1-4)
 - He comes with reward! (Is 40:1-11)
 - His word stands! (Jer 44:28).
 - John sees the heavenly temple open and power emanating from it. He rules!

Never forget that we serve the Living God.

Never forget that His word is final.

Never forget that His victory is certain.

Live in light of this.

Of all those who dwell on earth, believers should be confident.

And finally, remember that all things will happen in His time and according to His will.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Key Verse: 11:15

IV. Things to come - "What will take place after this."

Chapters 4-22

3. The age-old conflict will end!

Rev 12-13

As you may have noticed, the narrative in this prophetic book moves back and forth through time. If you wish to understand revelation, look at the themes. It isn't chronological, and attempting to force that understanding on the book will likely cause you to miss the point and confuse the message.

a. John saw a great sign in heaven: A woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of 12 stars on her head. Who could this be? Israel! See the only other passage in Scripture that uses this word picture - Gen 37:9-11. **12:1-6**

- In the travail of labor and delivery, Israel gives birth.
 - * To a Son, a male child (See Isa 9:1-7)
 - * A Son who will rule the nations with an iron scepter/rod (Psm 2). With an unbreakable power/authority He will break, chasten, rule, and shepherd the nations. (See Gen 49:10; Ezk 21:27; Mic 5:1-3)
- John saw another sign in heaven: An enormous red dragon with 7 heads, 10 horns and 7 crowns on its heads. (See Also Dan 7:7-8, 23-28)
 - * Its tail swept 1/3 of the stars out of the sky and flung them to earth.
 - * It stood in front of the woman (Israel) so that it might devour her child at birth.
- God had prepared a place for Israel in the wilderness where she would be taken care of for 1,260 days.

b. Then war broke out in heaven

12:7-17

- Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and his angels (Who is this guy Michael? See Dan 10:13, 20-21; 12:1; Jude 1:9 - an archangel/chief angel - the "prince" or angelic guardian of Israel).
- The dragon and his angels lost and were hurled down to earth.
 - * That ancient serpent called the devil or Satan,
 - * Who leads the whole world astray. *He is in rebellion against God and desires the subjugation of humanity.*

c. Now have come the salvation, power and kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ.

12:10-12

- For, the accuser of our brothers (who accuses them before God day and night) has been hurled down. *He will no longer have access to accuse anyone.*
- They (our brothers/sisters) triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their Testimony. *He will be defeated by the gospel, believed, trusted and lived out.*
- They did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.
- Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them!
- But woe to the earth and sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury because he knows that his time is short.

d. God will care for and defend Israel

12:13-17

- God gave the woman the two wings of a great eagle so she might fly to the place prepared for her in the wilderness. *God has and always will preserve Israel.*
 - * There God will care for her for a "time, times and half a time," (3.5 yrs, or 1260 days, or 42 months).
 - * Satan will try to overwhelm Israel but will fail.
- Satan, seeing his efforts hindered, will go off to wage war on the church.

Some things to take away from this passage:

- Satan, the enemy of God and of the human race, is defeated. Col 2:13-15
- He is our accuser and enemy. His name means "adversary." He is also called devil which means "accuser/slanderer."
- Our Lord has broken his power. (See Heb 2:14-15; 1 Jhn 3:8)
- The Judge is our advocate (for the believer)! (Rom 8:1, 34; 1 Jhn 2:1-2)
- The enemy hates us and wants to destroy us (Mrk 4:15; Jhn 8:44; 2 Cor 2:9-11; 1 Pet 5:8)
- The enemy tries to keep unbelievers from Jesus (2 Cor 4:4)
- The Holy Spirit that indwells believers is (far) greater than the enemy (1Jhn 4:4)
- If God is for us, *who* can be against us? (Rom 8:28-39)

What is our recourse when we find ourselves wrestling with the world, our own flesh and the devil? (Jas 4:1-10). Ask for help. Submit yourself to God. Resist the devil, seek God and He will be found! Repent.

- Prayer.
- The Word
- Fellowship/community
- Obedience.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Key Verse: 11:15

IV. Things to come - "What will take place after this."

Chapters 4-22

3. The age-old conflict will end! (Pt 2)

Rev 12-13

The devil will make his move. *He has always sought to usurp the place of God. He desires to rule Creation. He desires to be worshipped. He hates God and those who worship Him. The day will come when he will go "all in" to exert control over this world. It is the same message we see in Daniel chapter 7, with more information added. And the end is the same - Jesus reigns!*

- a. The dragon ("He") stood on the shore of the sea.** Reading Dan 7:3, 17, 23; Rev 17:1-2, 15 it seems fairly clear that the "sea" is humanity. Satan wants to rule all.
- b. John sees a beast coming up, rising out of the sea.** The description of this beast seems to be a composite of the first three beasts of Daniel 7 and a description of the 4th beast. A powerful kingdom/nation and its leader.
- It had 10 horns and 7 heads and is characterized by blasphemy. (See the similarity with the 4th beast of Dan 7).
 - This nation and its leader will be empowered by Satan. The beast apparently refers to both the nation and leader. Him we call the Antichrist.
 - One of its heads survives a seemingly fatal wound. (Satan's attempt to duplicate Jesus? See Rev 5:6)
 - The beast is followed by the whole world. It causes them amazement, wonder and admiration.
 - The dragon (Satan) will be worshipped because he empowers the beast. (Eph 2:1-3, See Rev 13:4 and 2 Thes 2:1-12).
- * The beast will be given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and will exercise authority for 42 months. (See also Dan 7:8, 11, 23-25)
- * The beast will have the power to wage war against the saints (Dan 9:20-27).
- * The beast will exercise global power (See also Dan 7:23)
- * All who reject the Lamb / Lord Jesus will worship the beast.

c. To the saints who will go through this (brief) time of Satan's ascendancy, God has a message.

But it is really a message for the church that applies to all times:

- Pay attention! ("Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear!")
- "If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity they will go."
- If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword they will be killed."
- See Jer 15:1-2, Rev 1:9a, 14:12 - this calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of God's people.

No one (and certainly not God) ever promised us that we would not endure hardship or suffering.

We are to focus on what is eternal. Honestly, what actually lasts in this material world?

We are not to lose sight of how this all resolves: Jesus was, is, and will be Lord. And His victory will be ours as well.

- Through Him all things were made.
- By Him all things are sustained/maintained.
- For Him all things were made.
- By Him all things will be judged.
- By Him will all things be restored.

The message of Revelation is Jesus!

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Key Verse: 11:15

IV. Things to come - "What will take place after this."

Chapters 4-22

3. The age-old conflict will end! (Pt 2). *Continued*

Rev 12-13

d. Then John saw a second beast, coming out of the earth.

13:11-18

- It had two horns like a lamb, but it spoke like a dragon (See 12:9). *The text seems to indicate that the person/beast spoken of here presents themselves as a religious/spiritual leader, but speaks evilly, motivated by the enemy.*
- It exercised all the authority of the first beast on its behalf, and made the humanity worship the 1st beast, whose fatal wound had been healed.
 - * and it performed great signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven in full view of the people. See 2 Cor 11:12-15. *Just because someone is in the "ministry" doesn't mean that they are godly or a believer. Many evil people have led and are leading "ministries." It is so important for God's people to exercise discernment. That is why you should stay rooted in the Bible—so you can recognize falsehood when you hear it. Listening to media preachers and on-line messages can be beneficial, but discernment must be exercised. E.g., 1 Ths 5:19-22 and 1 Jhn 4:1. Our God works miracles. And Satan works counterfeit ones! Don't be dazzled by the sensational - hold everything up to the measure of God's truth.*
 - * Because of the signs it was given power to perform on behalf of the first beast, it deceived the inhabitants of the earth. See 2 Ths 2:1-12 *Again, hold everything up to the light of the Word!*
 - * It ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived. **For a similar thought see Dan 3. Rome required people to go on record as loyal to the emperor, by showing it through an act of worship to him as a "god."**
- The second beast was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that the image could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed.
- It also forced all people, great and small, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hands or on their foreheads,
 - * so that they could not buy or sell unless they had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of its name. *Coercive economic control. That capability potentially exists in the form of digital currency. But much of the world cannot use it...yet.*
 - * This calls for wisdom. Let the person who has insight calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and that number is 666. *The number 7 is a number associated with God's perfection. The number 6 is one short. Neither humanity nor Satan, try as they might, can ever by their own supposed strength and wisdom attain the perfection of God. See 1 Cor 1:18-25; 2 Cor 2:6-10 - Men and demons can be wise by the world's standards but they can never grasp God's truth. They do not have the indwelling Holy Spirit.*

Satan always seems to attempt to duplicate God and His works. Even in these chapters (12-13) we see Satan empowering the beast. We see the beast (its leader) miraculously preserved alive despite what should have been a fatal wound. Almost an attempted "copy" of Jesus' resurrection. And we see the beast out of the earth seeking to glorify the beast.

An unholy "trinity."

Satan seeks his own glory and aggrandizement

The beast (Antichrist) glorifies Satan

The beast out of the earth (false prophet) glorifies the Antichrist (beast)

OK, a brief summary and admonition for us:

At some future time, Satan, our adversary and accuser, will make a move to supplant God as Ruler. He has tried many times in the past. Babel and Adolf Hitler come to mind. He has always wanted to destroy God's people. He has always failed. Yet in a future time he will be allowed to partially succeed in attempting it again.

1. A Satanically empowered nation ("Beast") and its ruler (aka "Beast," "Man of Sin," "Antichrist") will rise to seek world domination.
2. A religion (maybe a "cult of personality") will rise to support the beast and his kingdom. Perhaps a state religion? Examples abound in history. Nebuchadnezzar tried to employ it (Dan 3), Roman emperors did, as have (and do) some dictators. (e.g., Kim Jong Un of North Korea). European kings claimed "divine right" and authority. Couple this with mass media and it can (and someday will) go global. A world religion.
 - a. This religion will glorify Satan and the leader of the Beast out of the Sea.
 - b. This religion will partner with the state to coerce worship of the leader and the devil who empowers him.
 - It will use the threat of punishment (prison, death, starvation) to force compliance.
 - It will attempt to exert economic control over all (maybe via a "digital currency?").
3. Despite all the efforts of unredeemed humanity and Hell to duplicate and supplant God, His worship and lordship, they will fall (very) short.
4. Believers need God's wisdom. (1 Cor 2:6-10)
 - a. How do we have it? Seek Him. Apply it — test everything against it (1 Jhn 4:1; 1 Ths 5:19-22)
 - b. Trust God to give you what you need when you need it.
 - Ask for it (Jas 1:2-8)!
 - Trust God in all situations — He is enough! God helped Moses (Exd 4:12), He helped His disciples (Lke 12:4-12), and He will help us to persevere under trial and opposition (1 Pet 2:9-12; 3:13-22).
 - * He may save us from hardship.
 - * He may save us *through* it. 1 Pet 5:8-9; Job 36:15. "Martyr" does not mean one who suffers but one who by standing firm, even at a personal cost bears witness to the Lord.

And remember:

1 Cor 6:3 — the time will come when we will have our say.

Jas 4:7 — By drawing near to God we can resist the devil and he will flee from us.

1 Jhn 4:4

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Key Verse: 11:15

IV. Things to come - "What will take place after this."

Chapters 4-22

4. God's will is unbreakable. (Prv. 16:9; 19:21; Isa 14:24-27; 55:9-11)

Chapter 14

a. John looked and saw the Lamb standing on Mt Zion and with Him the 144,000 who had His name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. (See 7:1-8)

- John heard a sound from heaven - Like roaring water, loud music and singing before the throne, living creatures and elders. The 144k erupting in jubilant praise!

* It was *their* song alone!

* They remained morally pure (Two options here - either they were faithful to their mates or had remained in virginity. Mtt 19:12).

* They follow the Lamb wherever He goes.

* They were purchased from among mankind and offered as firstfruits to God and the Lamb.

* No lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless. (Ps 19:13; 119:133)

b. Then I saw another angel flying in mid air, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth - to every nation, tribe, language and people.

- And he said in a loud voice, "Fear God and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come."

- "Worship Him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water." (Joe 2:28-32)

c. A second angel followed and said, " 'Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great,' which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries." (More about Babylon in chpts 17-18).

d. A third angel followed and said in a loud voice: "If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives its mark on their foreheads or on their hands they too will drink the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of His wrath.

- They will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb.

- And the smoke of their torment will rise for ever and ever.

- There will be no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name."

- This calls for patient endurance on the part of the people of God ["saints"] who keep His commands and remain faithful to Jesus (See 13:10b). "Yes," says the Spirit, "They will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them." Those stand firm in faith and pay the price are blessed.

e. I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one like a son of man with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. (See also Joel 3:9-16, similar to what we see in Rev 14, Joel describes God's judgment on the nations as a harvest of grain and as a harvest and pressing of grapes. This will be accompanied by signs in the heavens.

- Then another angel came out of the temple and called in a loud voice to Him who was sitting on the cloud:

* "Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe."

* So he who was seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested. (See also Matt 13:24-28/36-43, esp vs 39.)

- Another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle.

- Still another angel, who had charge of the fire, came from the altar and called in a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, "Take your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes from the earth's vine, because its grapes are ripe."

* The angel swung his sickle on the earth, gathered its grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God's wrath. They were trampled in the winepress outside the city and blood poured out of the press, rising up as high as a horse's bridle for a distance of 1600 stadia.

Wow, what a passage. Remember that John is using figurative language. He is describing what he was shown by our Lord in a vision. It is very easy to get caught up in the details and focus literally on the metaphor and by doing so, miss its meaning. So let's list the main points of this passage:

1. Our Savior's Jewish witnesses, who we first see mentioned in chapter 7, are seen in John's vision standing with our Lord on Mount Zion in triumph while they erupt in jubilant praise in a song that is theirs alone! They are the faithful firstfruits and have remained pure in their faith and life.
2. God's eternal ("everlasting, unending") gospel has been, is being and will be proclaimed to the world.
 - a. But there is a time when that door closes and judgment comes to earth.
 - b. Fear God and give Him glory! Worship Him only! Judgment day is coming. Now is the day of salvation (2 Cor 6:2; Heb 4:1-13)!
3. "Babylon the Great is fallen." All the text tells us here is that Babylon has made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries. Whatever, whoever Babylon is, it has led the world astray and its day of reckoning is certain. More about Babylon to come in future chapters. For now, we will leave it be.
4. Those who reject Christ and identify with the beast and submit to his system are eternally doomed. Consider Eph 2:1-3 — Those who join Satan in his rejection of God and rebellion, share his judgment. The saints must stand firm and endure the fury of this world and its evil spirit. Those who believe and and serve the Lord will be rewarded.
5. Just as "it is appointed for all men once to die," so there is a time for nations to (rise and) fall, so there is a time for the earth to be judged. When time's up, it's up. And just like a game of hide and seek, "ready or not," He's coming.
 - a. The figure of the harvest is used in two images: The harvesting of grain and of grapes.
 - b. We have already seen the harvest begin: E.g., in Rev 9:15 a third of mankind was going to be killed. In judgment, plagues and war will come and "harvest" humanity. "Swing the sickle."
 - The harvesters are angels (Matt 13:24-28/36-43).
 - The focal point of this judgment will be outside of Jerusalem.
 - It's going to be massive.

So, what message is God issuing in this to the seven churches and to us?

He is coming. As Victor and Judge, and will be accompanied by his faithful.

Today is the day to obey the gospel and trust Him. There may not be a tomorrow. Today is the day!

- To repent
- To trust
- To follow

This rebellious world will be judged. Its attitudes/culture and desires cannot stand. It will be crushed and blow away like chaff in the wind (Dan 2).

Those who join Satan in his rebellion will share his fate.

It's harvest time. (Mtt 3:11-12)

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST
Key Verse: 11:15

IV. Things to come - “What will take place after this.”

Chapters 4-22

5. The Completion of Wrath/The Seven Last Plagues “And I saw in heaven another great and marvelous (“evoking awe/wonder”) sign:”

Rev 15

a. Seven angels with seven last plagues—last, because with them God’s wrath (“*hot anger*”) is completed.

b. And I saw what looked like a sea of glass glowing (“*mixed*”) with fire and, standing beside (“*before*” or “*on*”) the sea, those who had been victorious over (“*from the power of*”) the beast and its image and over the number of its name. (Rev 12:10-12) - *We conquer by holding fast to Him.*

- They held harps given them by God and sang the song of God’s servant Moses and of the Lamb:
 - * “Great and marvelous (“*causing astonishment, astounding*”) are your deeds, Lord God Almighty (or “*ruler of all, the universe*”).
 - * Just and true are your ways, King of the nations (“*ruler of all, the universe, the almighty*”). See Psm 111:2-3; Jer 10:7
 - * Who will not fear (“*revere*”) you, Lord, and bring glory to your name?
 - * [For] you alone are holy.
 - * All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed (“*made known*”) Psm 86:10

A time is coming, even today, when our faith is proven.

c. After this I looked, and I saw in heaven the temple—that is (“*of*”) the tabernacle of the covenant law (Exd 38:21; Num 1:50, 9:15)—and it was opened. See Rev 11:19; 14:15-17; 15:8; 16:17.

- Out of the temple came the seven angels with the seven plagues.
 - * [They] were dressed in clean, shining linen
 - * and wore golden sashes around their chests.
- Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls (a shallow bowl/dish) filled with the wrath (“*indignation, hot anger*”) of God, who lives forever and ever.
 - * *Think back to Rev 5:8; 6:9-11; 8:3-5; Lke 18:6-8 - The bowls represent God’s answer to the prayers of His persecuted and murdered saints. Judgment is at hand. The word is sometimes translated “vials,” which is unfortunate. It describes a small, shallow bowl. The kind that is used for incense (representing the prayers of the saints in Rev 5:8).*
 - * *God has already called upon His people to endure patiently. His answers to prayer are never early or late. We may desire God’s immediate justice to “regulate” those who have wronged us but...if we demand justice for others, will we accept it for ourselves? God is not willing that any should perish (2 Pet 3:9). We are to entrust to God our burdens and expect Him to act both justly and mercifully.*
- And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed. See also Exd 40:34-35; 2 Chr 5:7-13; 7:1-3.

God’s judgments are right and His timing perfect

Our prayers are heard and answered

In the meantime, we are to seek and serve Him and trust His timing

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST
Key Verse: 11:15

IV. Things to come - "What will take place after this."

Chapters 4-22

5. The Completion of Wrath/The Seven Last Plagues: "The End of the Road" - When time is up, its up." The last judgments begin as the 7 angels come out of the heavenly temple.

- a. **The first bowl: ugly** (or "bad, evil") **sores break out on who?** God's people are protected but the followers/worshippers of the Satan and the beast are afflicted. (See also Exd 8:22, 9:8-12, 26; Rev 9:4).
- b. **The second bowl: the sea turned to blood and all in it die.** This will be catastrophic.
 - 50% of the oxygen in our atmosphere comes from the oceans.
 - In 2002 approximately 110 million tons of the world's food came from the oceans. (UNC-CH Marine Sciences Grad Student Blog)
- c. **The third bowl: fresh water turns to blood.** The angel in charge of the water (*there are apparently angels assigned over earthly things - see 14:18*) declares his agreement with God's judgment:
 - God, who is holy, true and eternal, is just in sending these judgments.
 - Why? Because the beast and his followers/subjects have shed the blood of God's people. They deserve all that is coming to them. Not only have they rejected God (See Heb 10:26-31) but they have waged war against His people. (e.g., Rev 12:17, 13:7-10)
 - John heard the altar respond in agreement (*of incense - where the prayers of God's people have been offered up*).
- d. **The fourth bowl: The sun is allowed to scorch the people with fire** (or "*heat*"). The people afflicted by the heat refused to repent and cursed the name of God (*Who had control over the plagues*).

It's not as if God hasn't given the world an opportunity: In Rev 8 the first 4 trumpets announce judgements against among other things, the sea, fresh water and the sun, moon and stars. 1/3 of the earth affected. But now the judgment is global.

- e. **The fifth bowl: The throne of the beast and his kingdom is enveloped in darkness.** As in the response to the fourth bowl, those afflicted (the followers/worshippers of the Satan and the beast) cursed God and refused to repent. Like Pharaoh, they hardened their hearts (See Ex 7:13, 8:15, 9:7, 9:34-35). People, like Satan make great boasts, claim control that we do not and cannot possess. For all our pride in technology, wisdom etc., we cannot control the weather, the sea, the earth. The 10 plagues that afflicted Egypt were judgments on its gods, (Exd 12:12, Num 33:4) so "modern" man's "gods" and pretensions will be shown for what they are - worthless.
- f. **The sixth bowl: the great river Euphrates will be dried up to prepare the way for the kings / leaders of the East.** (See 9:13-15)
 - 3 demonic spirits will come out from the "unholy trinity" of Satan, the beast and his false prophet.
 - * They will perform signs to persuade world leaders to gather for battle on the great day of God Almighty.
 - * Keep alert! He (The Lamb!) will come when He is least expected by this world. (Mtt 24:36-51, Lke 17:26-29, 1 Ths 5:2, 2 Pet 3:10). Watch and pray - be ready at any time for His return.
 - * The leaders and their forces will gather together at Armageddon. The valley of Megiddo

g. The seventh bowl: "It is done!" (Lightning, thunder, earthquake).

- Not the local quake mentioned in 11:13 - people gave glory to God after that one.
- This earthquake will be the most severe the earth has ever experienced - it will re-arrange geography - cities around the world will be collapse, the "great city" will be split into three parts. And what the earthquake leaves, the hail will finish off.

And - people will curse God.

Some people are genuinely seeking and are open to consider the gospel, others play at being "open minded" about it, but refuse to consider it. No one can convince the one who is determined not to believe.

How is it with you?

- ***If He were to call you home or return to earth today, would you be ready?***
- ***Do you know Him?***
- ***Yes, God will judge the world, but also His saints (1 Cor 3:10-15)***
- ***Are you praying for those in your circle who do not know Him?***

No one knows the day or the hour. Watch, pray and live for Him here and now.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST
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IV. Things to come - "What will take place after this."

Chapters 4-22
Chapter 17:1-19:10

6. Fallen is Babylon

a. A predicted demise (Rev 14:8)

- Babylon is going down.
- It intoxicated the nations with the wine of its adulteries. (*"Wine of the wrath of its fornication"*) *The idea here seems to be two-fold. Babylon "exported" the immorality of its intoxicating self-indulgence to the nations, and Babylon and the nations will share in together in her judgment.*

b. A call for God's people to come out of her.

- We are to be in this world but not of it (Jhn 17:15, 2 Cor 6:14-7:1, 1 Jhn 5:18-21)

b. A violent demise (Rev 16:19). The fury (*"passion, fierceness"*) of God's wrath will come to her. See also Psm 75, Rev 18:21 - *its end will be sudden, violent and irreversible* .

c. John is shown the punishment of the great prostitute "which sits on many waters" ("peoples, multitudes, nations, languages") - Akin to Dan 7:3/7:17; Rev 13:1 The sea = peoples, nations etc.

17:1-6

- The kings (leaders) of the earth committed adultery (*a metaphor for engaging in idolatry, of faithlessness toward God*) with her.
- The people of the earth were intoxicated with the "wine of her adulteries." *The world is sold on her "ethics" and "morality." A missionary in Central America once told me that even in remote jungle villages they had satellite dishes and western programming. Soap operas, network dramas, etc. What are we selling?*
- She rides the scarlet beast - I see two options: if the harlot represents the coming apostate world religion, she must exert some form of control. Or she represents a nation in league the beast with and strong enough to assert its wishes against her.
 - * The beast has 7 heads and 10 horns (See Rev 12:3, 13:1) - This is a satanically motivated entity and is covered with blasphemous names.
 - * The harlot held a golden cup full of evil indulgence and is dressed and adorned luxuriously. (See 13:1, 5-6). What are the consequences of rejecting God? Rom 1:18-32, Ezk 16:49-52)
 - * Her name written on her forehead is unveiled - "Babylon the Great, The Mother of Prostitutes and of the Abominations of the earth."
 - * She was drunk on the blood of the saints.

This entity is either corrupted religion, polluted by compromise with falsehood and alliance with the state.

Or

It is a coming persecutor nation that will be at once allied with and attempting to control the kingdom of the antichrist, the beast.

Either way there are some things we can know from the text that follows:

d. The Beast that "once was, now is not and yet will come up out of the abyss* and go to its destruction. For starters it *cannot* be a renewed Roman Empire as many commentators assert.

When this revelation was given, Rome existed and had for the better part of a thousand years. So what is the other option? A rebuilt Babylon? Maybe. Suffice it to say that it is a former world power that will make a comeback under a satanically empowered leader.

- It's rise will astonish the unsaved world. (13:1-4) The implication is that God's people will not be fooled. How does this happen? 2 Tim 2:15

- It sits on seven hills/mountains but...these are also 7 rulers.
- * Five have fallen, one is, one is on the way. But the one who was and now is not, is a coming ruler.
- * The 10 horns exist to give their power and authority to the beast (nation and ruler).
- * They will wage war against the Lamb - and lose badly because He is supreme - and we are coming with Him (called, chosen and faithful - His followers).
- * The abyss - the abode of fallen angels (See Rev 11:7)

e. The beast ET AL will hate her, bring her to ruin (“desolate”), leave her naked (“laid bare”).

- They will accomplish God’s purpose by their submission to the beast. The harlot destroyed, the beast and its ruler ascendant. (17:17, Is 37:29, 45:1-7)
- She is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth. Who or what is it?

f. Babylon:

Chapter 18

- A ruin and haunt for demons and everything unclean.
- A purveyor of (spiritual) adultery to the nations.
- A nation given to luxury and self indulgence, enriching those who traded with her.
- God’s people are warned to come out of her because her judgment will be harsh and appropriate.
- In her pride she doesn’t believe that she will ever fall.
- * But in one day her plagues will overtake her. (*Death, mourning and famine*).
- * She will be consumed by fire for mighty is the God who judges her.
- She will be mourned by the earth’s rulers. (Her 1 hour destruction will terrify them).
- She will be mourned by the world’s merchants (Who face economic ruin).
- She will be mourned by those who moved her goods by sea.
- BUT - heaven will rejoice at her downfall.

Does this sound like a religion? NO! But like a powerful and wealthy consumer society.

- Its end will be violent and final (18:21-24).
- * She will be held accountable for her crimes.
- * Her merchants were the world’s great men.
- * She led the nations astray by her “magic” (Sorcery)
- * She will be held accountable for the blood she has shed. (See 2 Kng 23:26, 24:3; Jer 15:4)

h. Heaven erupts in praise as the harlot is condemned and the saints avenged.

Chapter 19

- The elders and saints worshipped God.
- The multitudes of people in heaven roar in worship.
- * **The Lord God Almighty reigns!**
- * **The wedding of the Lamb has come!**
- * **Rejoice and give Him glory!**
- * **The church is radiant and holy.**
- * **Blessed are those invited (Mtt 22:2-14, Jhn 6:28-29/Rom 4:5-8).**

So what can we take away from this passage?

1 Jhn 2:15-17

- **Remember what and who endures and rules. (Ps 73)**
- **Live with eternal values in mind (Col 3:1-4)**
- **Come out of her and be separate! (Don’t buy into the culture! We can follow the Holy Spirit or the Spirit of the age but not both).**

This can be tough for us - we are creatures of our world. We live, move and interact with it. Its media saturates our lives, its passions and pursuits, fads and values come at us from all sides. How do we live by the dictates of another, permanent world? Word, Prayer, Fellowship, Service

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Chapters 4-22

6. The Return of the King

Chapter 19:11- 20:15

As the vision unfolded, John saw heaven open and before him, a man on a white horse whose rider was called, "Faithful and True." (See Jhn 17:17)

- a. **With justice He judges and wages war.** (e.g., Isa 11:1-9, Heb 1:8-9)
- b. **His eyes are like blazing fire.**
- c. **On His head are many crowns** (Symbolizing victory, royalty etc.)
- d. **He has a name written [on Him] that He alone knows.** (Jdg 3:18)
- e. **He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood** (That is, He is victorious. See Isa 63:1-6, Joe 3:9-16, Rev 14:14-20).
- f. **His name is the Word of God** (Jhn 1:1-18)
- g. **He is followed by the hosts (armies) of heaven** (See also Rev 17:12-14)
 - [Riding] on white horses (Yet they come not to fight but to witness the victory of the Lamb).
 - Dressed in fine linen, white and clean (See 19:8, 3:4, 4:4, 7:9). *They are clothed in His righteousness.*
- h. Coming out of His mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. (See Heb 4:12-13)
- i. **See Psm 2 - He will rule (or "*shepherd, tend*") them with an iron scepter** (Psm 2:9, Rev 2:27, 12:5).
- j. **He treads the winepress of the fury** ("passion") **of God Almighty's wrath.** *What is this wrath revealed against?* See Rom 1:18-32
- k. **On His robe (on the thigh) He has this name written: "King of Kings and Lord of Lords."**
- l. **And I saw an angel standing in the sun, who cried out to all the flying birds - "Supper time!"** ("The great supper of God"). **(vs 17-21)**
 - **Then John saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to wage war against the Rider and His army.**
 - **But the beast was captured along with the false prophet.**
 - * The two were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulphur (Where they will still be over 1,000 yrs later - see Rev 20:10)
 - * The rest were killed with the sword and the birds had a feast.
- m. **Remember Rev 12? Where Satan in rage went off to wage war against Israel and those who hold to the testimony of Jesus? I doesn't end well for him and his allies.**
 - **Zec 12-14** God will work through the people of Jerusalem and Judah to defeat the enemies.
 - Israel will repent and turn to the One they have pierced. Israel will be cleansed and healed.

Food for thought:

Jesus is Lord of heaven and earth. (Rev 1:4-8)

He is the source of everything - Jhn 1:1-18, Col 1:15-17, Heb 1:1-3

He is the architect / Founder and builder / completer of our salvation (Heb 12:1-13)

**Set your minds on things that are eternally durable - your ultimate reality. (Col 3:1-4)
And live accordingly (Col 3:5-17), with eternity's values in mind (Col 3:18-25)**

Remember that you, because of Him, will endure and eternally prosper. (Psm 56:4, 118:6)

Remember that we shall judge the world and angels (1 Cor 6:1-3).

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7. The Millennium

Chapter 20:1-6

The Bible speaks of a one thousand year block of time when our Lord and Messiah will rule the world from Jerusalem. His saints will rule with Him. So what will occur at that time?

a. Satan will be bound

20:1-3

- John saw an angel. *Not an archangel, not a cherub or seraph but...an angel. Satan will be completely defeated and powerless to resist.*
- The angel came down out of heaven with a "great chain" in his hand.
- * He seized ("took hold of") the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil ("slanderer"), or Satan ("adversary"), and bound him for a thousand years.
- * He threw him into the Abyss ("boundless" or "bottomless pit"), and locked ("shut") and sealed it over him. (See Isa 24:21-22; Eph 3:10; 6:12)
- * Why? So that he could not deceive the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be ("it is necessary" that) set free for a short ("little") time.

b. I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge

(Who has authority to judge? Those to whom God has granted it:

- First of all, all judgment is the Lord's (Jhn 5:16-30).
- Also, those who will reign and rule with (and under His Lordship) Him (Mtt 19:28; 1 Cor 6:2-3; Rev 3:21; 5:10).

c. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of [their] testimony about ("On account of, because of, for the sake of") Jesus and because of the word of God.

- They had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. (See 13:14-17; 14:9-13; 16:2)
- They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.
- The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended ("completed").
- This is the first resurrection. (See also 1 Thes 4:13-18)
- * Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection.
- * The second death has no power over them.
- * But they will be called priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years. (See Exo 19:3-6; 1 Pet 2:9-12; Rev 1:6; 5:10)

Someday, the struggle of this life will be behind us. That day will come.

Someday we will see our enemy exposed and justice rendered. That is certain.

Now we see imperfectly — but a time is coming when we will see with absolute clarity (1 Cor 13:8-13).

For the present we "lean in" to our Lord and seek to depend on Him.

For the present our goal remains: Love God and our neighbor, and stand fast in faith.

And remember - right now matters eternally.

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8. The final rebellion and judgment

Chapter 20:7-15

a. When the thousand years are over ("completed"), Satan will be released from ("out of") his prison and will go out to deceive ("cause to wander") the nations in the four corners of the earth - Gog and Magog- and to gather them for battle.

- In number they are like the sand on the seashore.
- They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city He loves. (See Heb 13:13)
- But fire came down from heaven and devoured them.
- And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur ("smoky burning rocks") where:
 - * The beast and false prophet had been thrown ("are also"). (Rev 19:20)
 - * They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

b. Then I saw a great white throne and Him who was seated on it.

- The earth and [the] heaven(s) fled from His presence, and there was found no place for them. (Isa 51:4-6, 2 Pet 3:10-11). *Everything is under the curse, held in bondage to decay. But the healing is coming!* (Rom 8:18-21)
- And the dead, great and small, standing before the throne. (*The term standing suggests that they are before God waiting for their sentence to be pronounced*).
- And books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life.
 - * The dead were judged according ("out of") to what they had done as recorded in the books.
 - * The sea gave up the dead that ("who") were in it, and death and hades gave up the dead that were in them. *All the unrighteous dead were resurrected and stood before the Lord for judgment.*
 - * Each person was judged according to what they had done.
- Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire
 - * The lake of fire is the second death.
 - * And if anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

Notes re: the Book of Life.

Exd 32:33 - God told Moses that those who sinned would be blotted out.

Psm 69:28 - David asked God to blot out the names of the wicked from the Book of Life.

Dan 12:1 - Daniel was told that during the end times all his people whose names were found written in the Book of Life would be delivered.

Lke 10:20 - Our Lord told His disciples to rejoice that their names were written in heaven.

Phl 4:3 - Paul's fellow workers whose names were written in the Book of Life.

Rev 3:5 - Those who overcome will never be blotted out of the Book of Life.

Rev 13:8 - Those who worship the beast are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Rev 17:8 - Those who are not written in the Book of Life from the creation of the world will be astonished by the beast. Implied here is that believers will not be impressed.

Rev 21:27 - The only residents of the holy city will those whose names are written in the Book of Life.

There is a coming judgment. Everyone will face it. Heb 9:27

Have you trusted the Lord Jesus as your Savior? Jhn 3:16, 14:6, Act 4:12, Rom 6:23

Those who die unbelieving are blotted out and enter into the judgment prepared for Satan and his angels.

Mtt 25:41, Heb 10:26-31.

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IV. Things to come - "What will take place after this."

Chapters 4-22

9. Creation Restored - A new heaven and earth Part 1

Chapter 21:1-8

John saw a new heaven and new earth. There was no longer any sea. This was predicted by God through the prophet Isaiah about 700 years before the birth of our Savior. See Psm 102:25-26; Isa 65:17 and 66:22. Why does the present world require restoration? See Gen 3:17-19; Rom 8:18-25 — When God's people are restored, creation will be as well.

a. The first heaven and earth passed away (2 Pet 3:11-14)

b. The holy city, the New Jerusalem was coming down out of heaven.

- It comes from God (See Exd 3:5;19:24-25; Det 27:5-6; Jos 5:13-15; 8:31 — this will be a total work of God, not of men. We do not bring in His kingdom, He does it.
- It also shows the certainty of God's plans — He has said He will not abandon Jerusalem but cause it to prosper. And it will.
- It will be beautiful, like a bride dressed in her wedding finery.

c. "Emmanuel" God's dwelling place is now among the people. He Himself will be with us and be our God. Sinful flesh cannot dwell with a holy God. (Exd 33:3-5, 20). For those who have been justified by faith in Christ, that time is already here — we are His temple.

- But we live in a world under the curse and wrath of God. That will be healed. (2 Pet 3:13)
- We have never experienced what we were created to enjoy. Like a person suffering illness who cannot imagine what health is like, we have no conception of what is coming. Isa 64:4; 1 Cor 2:5-10.
- * We will be His people and He will be our God and be with us. (*He will dwell among us. See Jhn 1:14*)
- * He will wipe every tear from our eyes. Isa 25, 51:1-6; Rev 7:17 — death will be eternally defeated, along with mourning and pain. *Things as we have known them will be over. And it began with our salvation — 2 Cor 5:17*
- He who is seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!"
- Then He said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy ("faithful") and true ("made of truth, genuine")."

d. Then He said, "It is done."

- I am the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end. See Isa 41:4; 44:6-7; Jhn 8:58; Rev 1:8, 17; 2:8; 22:13 — *God, the Father, Son and Spirt are eternal, outside of time. The source and end of everything. He is, and there is no other.* Isa 45:5
- To the thirsty He will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. Isa 12:1-3; Jhn 4:1-26; Jhn 7:37-39 — Isa 55:1-3 uses a different metaphor but the message is the same. No one, nothing else, can take His place. Although we often try. See Jer 2:13
- Those who are victorious will inherit all this.
- I will be their God and they will be my children. (*rightful heirs*)
- But the cowardly, unbelieving, vile, murderers, sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, idolaters and all liars — See 1 Cor 6:9-10; Gal 5:16-2; Eph:1-7; Tit 1:16; 1 Jhn 3:15
- * They will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur. *Their final, eternal destination.*
- * This is the second death.

What is our ultimate reality? Phil 3:20 — We are citizens of another world.

How should this affect our lives? Rom 13:8-14; Col 3:4

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

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IV. Things to come - "What will take place after this."

Chapters 4-22

10. Creation Restored - A New Heaven and earth Part 2 (New Jerusalem) Chapter 21:9-27

One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me,

a. **"Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain, great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. verses 9-14**

- It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a precious jewel, like jasper, clear as crystal.

- It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates.

* On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel (3 on each side). *God will never forget Israel and the promises made by Him to them.*

* The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. (Eph 2:20).

***God's purpose will be fulfilled
Isa 40:8, 46:10***

b. **The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls. verses 15-21**

- The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide.

* And he measured the city with the rod, and its dimensions were equal - 12,000 stadia in length and width and height (*Approx. 1380 miles*)

- The angel measured the wall using human measurements and it was 144 cubits thick (200 ft).

- The wall was made of jasper (a multi-colored stone) and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass.

- The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone (jasper, sapphire, agate, emerald, onyx, ruby, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, turquoise, jacinth and amethyst. For a similar thought see Exd 28:15-21, Isa 54:11-17 (which may refer to the millennium).

- The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl.

- The great street of the city was of gold, as pure as transparent glass.

Everything comes together in Christ and will be illuminated by His glory.

In the dark a diamond is just another piece of gravel. It is the light that makes it beautiful.

c. **I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. verses 22-27**

In the years before our Lord's incarnation, the temple was with in Israel. In the church age, we are the temple. In the age to come we will live with God. The temple (God) will be everywhere.

- The city does not need the sun to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light and the Lamb is its lamp. See Heb 1:3, Isa 24:23

* and the nations will walk by its (*The lamb's*) light.

* and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it.

- On no day will its gates be shut, for there will be no night there.

- Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful. But only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

***Sin's curse will be healed
This world and everything in it will be restored.***

In the word of an old hymn, "The bride eyes not her garment, but her dear bridegroom's face. I will not gaze on glory, but on my King of grace. Not at the crown He giveth, but on His pierced hand. The Lamb is all the glory, of Emmanuel's land."

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Key Verse: 11:15

IV. Things to come - "What will take place after this."

Chapters 4-22

11. The Restoration Completed.

Chapter 22:1-7

Then the angel showed me the ("a") river of the water of life, as clear as crystal (or "ice"), flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down ("in") the middle of the [great] street of the city ("it").

a. [One each side] of the river stood the tree of life, (See Rev 2:7)

- Bearing 12 [crops] of fruit(s), yielding its fruit every ("according to") month.
- And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. (See Gen 3:22). *And I find this curious: Prv 3:18; 11:30; 13:12 and 15:4 - Perhaps as we grow in our faith and the Spirit continues His regenerative work in our lives, we become agents of His healing? And will access to the Tree of Life keep us eternally healthy and youthful?*

b. No longer will there be any curse. (See Gen 3:17-19; 5:29; Rom 8:18-25)

c. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and His servants will serve Him.

- They will see His face, (Exd 33:20; Jdg 6:22; Jhn 1:18; 1 Tim 6:16)
- And His name will be on their foreheads. (Rev 3:12; 7:3; 14:1)

d. There will be no more night.

- They will not need ("have not") the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for ("because") the Lord God will give them light ("will illumine them").
- And they will reign for ever and ever (to "the ages of the ages").

e. [The angel] ("lit: and he") said to me, "These words [are] trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God who inspires ("the God of") the prophets, sent His angel to show His servants the things that must soon take place."

- "Look, I am coming soon! (2 Tim 4:8)
- Blessed [is] the one who keeps the words of the prophecy ("written in") this scroll."

God keeps His promises and will indeed live with us.

12. The testimony of heaven and of the apostle John

Chapter 22:8-11

a. I, John, am the [one] who heard and saw these things.

- And when I had heard and seen them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel [who had been] showing them to me.
 - * But He said to me, "Don't do that! I am a fellow servant with you and with your fellow prophets and with all who keep the words of this scroll."
 - * Worship God!" (See also Act 10:25-26; Rev 19:10) *No angel who serves God will ever accept human worship. That belongs only to God. (Ex 20:3)*
- Then he told me, "Do not seal upon the words of the prophesy of this scroll, because the time is near.
 - * Let the one who does wrong (acts or does wickedly) continue to do wrong; let the vile ("filthy, foul") person continue to be vile; let the one who does right continue to do right; and [let] the holy person continue to be holy."

Live with expectancy and keep God in the center of your life

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Key Verse: 11:15

IV. Things to come - "What will take place after this."

Chapters 4-22

13. A closing call to faith and a warning

Chapter 22:12-21

a. Look, I am coming soon!

- My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done. (Isa 40:10, Jer 17:10, Mtt 16:27)
- I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. (Isa 41:4, 44:6, 48:12; Rev 1:8, 17, 2:8, 21:6).

Jesus is the eternal Creator, Sustainer and Savior and Judge

b. Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city.

- Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood. *Those who reject Christ remain in their spiritual defilement. They will not be in the book of life nor enter the Holy City. Rom 6:23a*
- I Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. (See Rev 1:1)
- * I am the root and offspring of David, (Isa 11:1-16, 14:12; Rom 15:12)
- * And the bright Morning Star. (2 Pet 1:19, Rev 2:28) - *And Satan's failed effort at usurping Christ's rightful place - Isa 14:12*

Christ is the Way, Truth, Life and only way of Salvation

c. The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" *The Spirit through the church bears the gospel message. "Come!"*

- And let the one who hears say, "Come!"
- Let the one who is thirsty come. (Isa 55:1, Jhn 4:10, 7:37-39 - Isa 11:1-12:6) - Act 3:19)
- And let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life. (Act 2:21, Rom 10:13)

The door is open (for now)

d. I warn ("*testify, bear witness*") everyone who hears the words of the prophesy of this scroll:

- If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll. (Prv. 30:5-6)
- And if anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophesy, God will take away from that person any share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll.

Stand firm on God's word

Jude 1:3

He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon."

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen

Revelation Wrap Up The Majesty and Lordship of Christ

In chapter 1 our Lord identifies Himself and gives to John a message for the churches concerning future events.

In Chapters 2-3 He makes it plain that He walks among them, knows their situations and will judge sin and reward those who overcome.

In Chapters 4-5 He is enthroned with the Father and alone is worthy to open the scrolls and reveal the future.

In 6-8 the Lamb opens the scrolls, revealing earth's future: Conquest, war, famine, death, martyrdom, natural disasters and more.

- 144k Jews are sealed by the Lord
- A great, uncountable multitude is shown John. They are those redeemed during the Great Tribulation. And they are praising God in heaven. In Him they have conquered.
- The seventh seal is opened and seven further judgments are announced by trumpet blasts.

In Chapters 10-11 God's message goes out to the world in power

- His two witnesses declare God's judgments and are divinely preserved.
- The 7th Trumpet sounds and heaven erupts in praise because Jesus reigns!

In Rev 12-19 Satan's defeat is described.

- Despite his hostility, God's purpose prevails, His saints are protected and Satan's allies defeated.
- In Rev 14 we see the 144k rejoicing on Mt Zion.
- Babylon's fall is proclaimed.
- The earth is harvested (Joel 3:9-21)
- Our Lord reigns.

In Rev 15 seven final plagues are announced - God has answered the prayers of His saints. The angels bringing the plagues proceed out from the temple. The picture is of God's servants carrying out His decree. (Psm 2)

In Rev 16-19 Babylon the Great is destroyed. Human dominion will be shattered and God's kingdom will reign supreme.

In Rev 20-22 we see the Lamb triumphant, judging the world and inaugurating the New Heaven and Earth. The prophesy of Daniel 2 (vs 44-45) and 7:13-14 are fulfilled. His kingdom is eternal.

He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.