

1

People generally fall within one of two camps regarding the book of Revelation

- Even if they are completely ignorant of the scriptures, they are enthralled with the book because of the speculative and false claims made about it.
 - False teachers can make absurd claims that can't be sustained by context and get away with it because of the ignorance of their listeners.
 - Their interpretations of the book violate what is taught in the rest of scripture, but it catches the imagination of their students, because of physical conflict, fantastical conspiracies, and claims of upcoming global conflict.
- Others (too often faithful Christians) are intimidated by the apocalyptic language and are convinced that study of the book is futile and a waste of time. (Can't be understood).

The fact! The book is a glorious capstone to God's inspired word!

- It is well worth our study and time

- It has a grand, easily understood theme (which we will speak of in a moment).
- It serves to encourage Christians with thrilling language and images.
- While written to encourage the disciples at the end of the first century, it is as relevant to us today as it was to them.

WHAT IS THE THEME OF THE BOOK?

Consider the following passages:

1:7-8

2:7,17,26-28; 3:5,12,21

6:15-17; 7:16-17; 11:16-18; 14:13; 17:14

19:1,6,15-16; 20:10; 21:6-8; 22:5,16

2

What is the theme of the book?

- Consider the following passages, and then we will answer that question.

(Revelation 1:7-8), *“Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. ⁸ “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,” says the Lord, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.””*

(Revelation 2:7), **[to Ephesus]**, *“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will”*

give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”

(Revelation 2:17) [to Pergamos], “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 to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.”

(Revelation 2:26-28) [to Thyatira], “And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations— ²⁷ “He shall rule them with a rod of iron; they shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels’—as I also have received from My Father; ²⁸ and I will give him the morning star.”

(Revelation 3:5) [to Sardis], “He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.”

(Revelation 3:12) [to Philadelphia], “He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.”

(Revelation 3:21) [to Laodicea], “To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.”

(Revelation 6:15-17) [Opening of the sixth seal], *“And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains,¹⁶ and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!¹⁷ For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?””*

(Revelation 7:16-17) [A multitude of the persecuted], *“They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat;¹⁷ for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”*

(Revelation 11:16-18) [The 24 elders proclaim the victory of God], *“And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God,¹⁷ saying: “We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. ¹⁸ The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth.”*

(Revelation 14:13) [Rest for the Righteous at the defeat of the beast], *“Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, “Write:*

'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' ” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.”

(Revelation 17:14) [The forces of evil conspire to war against Jesus Christ], *“These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.”*

(Revelation 19:1) [Heaven at the fall of the Great Harlot, Babylon], *“After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God!”*

(Revelation 19:6), *“After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God!”*

(Revelation 9:15-16) [Christ on a White Horse, conquering the beast, the kings of the earth and their armies], *“Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶ And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”*

(Revelation 20:10) [Final defeat of Satan], *“The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”*

(Revelation 21:6-8) [Ultimate victory and judgment upon the wicked], *“And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. ⁷ He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. ⁸ But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”*

(Revelation 22:5) [The end for the righteous], *“There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.”*

(Revelation 22:16) [Our victory is sure because of who He is!], *“I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.”*

Question: What is the Theme

- The victory of God and Christ over Satan
- The ultimate victory of God’s people, and defeat of evil.

THE HERMENEUTIC OF THE APOCALYPSE

Because of its apocalyptic nature, its imagery and symbolism, and its many allusions to the Old Covenant writings, Revelation has through the centuries had a legion of widely differing interpretations. In the light of these vastly differing views, it ill-becomes any of us to be dogmatic in the positions we take.

(Homer Hailey, Revelation commentary, page 18)

3

Introduction:

- We begin our study with an important warning against dogmatism. [READ QUOTE ON SLIDE] While there are many obvious erroneous interpretations of the book of Revelation, (which we will expose), the symbols of the Apocalypse can be difficult to understand. The date of writing itself is under dispute. An adaptation of a particular date of writing will influence the resulting interpretation of the book.
- **The theme of the book (as we noted from the readings in the previous slide) is beyond dispute.**
 - “The grand theme of Revelation is that of war and conflict between good and evil resulting in victory for the righteous and defeat for the wicked” (Hailey, 51).
 - “Always keep I mind that the theme of Revelation is the victory of Christ and His church over Satan and his allies” (Robert Harkrider, The Book of Revelation, Truth Commentaries, *xii*).

- “The theme of this book is: **the victory of Christ and of His church over the Dragon (satan) and his helpers...**”
“Throughout the prophecies of this wonderful book the Christ is ever pictured as the Victor, the Conqueror, 1:18; 2:8; 5:9ff; 6:2; 11:15; 12:9ff; 14:1,14; 15:2ff; 19:16; 20:4; 22:3. He conquers death, Hades, the dragon, the beast, the false prophet, the men who worship the beast, etc. He is victorious; hence so are we! Even when we seem to be hopelessly defeated. Do you see that band of believers?” (More than Conquerors, W. Hendriksen, 12-13).

- Keeping the theme always at the front of our mind will help us to be both consistent in our interpretations of the signs of the book, and will also serve as a great encouragement to us as we struggle against our “*adversary the devil*” (cf. 1 Peter 5:8).

(1 Peter 5:8), “*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*”⁹ *Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.*”

- Note: You will see that though the imagery is of war and conflict, those who take the side of Satan do so because of his insidious influence. It comes through temptation and sin. They become loyal to his cause voluntarily, and as such make war against God and His people.
- **We resist Satan by resisting temptation**

(James 4:7-10), “Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.⁸ Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.⁹ Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.”

- **We turn the world to our cause through the preaching of the gospel**

(Ephesians 4:17-21), “This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind,¹⁸ having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart;¹⁹ who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.²⁰ But you have not so learned Christ,²¹ if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus...”

THE AUTHOR OF REVELATION

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,² who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw” (1:1-2).

The Author of the Book of Revelation

(Revelation 1:1-2), *“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,² who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw”*

- **The writer calls himself by the name John on four occasions (1:1,4,9; 22:8)**

(Revelation 1:4), *“John, to the seven churches which are in Asia...”*

(Revelation 1:9), *“I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.”*

(Revelation 22:8), *“Now I, John, saw and heard these things...”*

- **There are some who question whether John the Apostle is the writer... Why?**

- He does not identify himself explicitly as the author, and there are other John’s who have been considered
- (John Mark) (John, that by tradition was as an elder in Ephesus) (Another writer seeking authority by using John’s name).
- **Dionysius of Alexandria (circa 250 AD) expressed a belief that another John wrote the letter. He did not cite any**

testimony or knowledge that we would not have access to, however.

- He believed if it was the apostle he would have identified himself as such.
- He believed that since he identified himself by name, it wasn't the same John because John the apostle didn't identify himself by name in his gospel or epistles.
- The grammar used in the gospel was different from the Apocalypse (Many say the same thing today).
- Others claim the difference in grammar indicates that Revelation was written before the gospel, but by the same John.
- The idea of different grammar is not compelling. For example, my writing style changes depending upon purpose!
- It must be recognized that the apocalyptic language of Revelation can explain any differences in grammar or writing style, and that such arguments do not compare to the overwhelming evidence that the apostle was the author of the book. (They are very subjective, and can lead to very different conclusions, as seen above).

- It is widely recognized that John the apostle is the author of the book. No legitimate evidence exists in denial of this view.

- Justin Martyr, Eusebius, Irenaeus, Tertullian and Victorinus all assign the book of Revelation to Paul's pen.
 - **Justin Martyr** (A.D. 110-165) in his *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew* (LXXXI) says, "There was a certain man with us, whose name was John, one of the apostles of Christ, who prophesied by a revelation," and then refers to the thousand years, the resurrection and the judgment of Revelation 20. (Hailey, 21).
 - **Irenaeus** (AD 120-202) who had heard Polycarp, a disciple of John the apostle, wrote in his *Against Heresies* (IV. XX. 11), "John, also the Lord's disciple...says in the Apocalypse," and then quotes profusely from that book.... Irenaeus says later: "In a still clearer light has John, in the Apocalypse" revealed certain things, which the writer proceeds to discuss (V. xxi.1). (Hailey, 21)
 - **Clement of Alexandria** (A.D. 153-217) in his treatise, *Who is the Rich Man that Shall Be Saved?* (XLII), writes of "the apostle John" who "returned to Ephesus from the isle of Patmos" after "the tyrant's death." The tyrant is unnamed. (Hailey, 22).

- Regarding the language of the book, consider some words that John the apostle uses in his writings that are almost unique to him. (Do a concordance search for details).
 - **The Word (logos)** identifying the Christ (only in John, 1 John & Revelation)
 - **To overcome or conquer (nicao)** John (1), 1 John (7), Revelation (17)
 - **True (alethinos)** (the rest of N.T. only 5 times: John (8), 1 John (4), Revelation (10))
 - **Lamb (arnion)** (John 21:15, of his disciples); Revelation (29 times)

THE DATE OF WRITING

Two dates contended for:

- AD 54-69 (Nero)
- AD 95-90 (Domitian)

We will work under the assumption that John wrote the book in AD 95-96 in response to the reign and persecution of the Roman emperor Domitian.

- In AD 64, the emperor Nero was the first of the Caesar's to persecute God's people simply because they wore the name Christian

- Most scholars believe that Nero's persecution was not ideologically driven, but rather to shift blame from himself for setting Rome on fire. Christians were not popular.

- The earliest persecution of the church was brought by the Jews, not the Romans (Acts 8:1-4; 12:1-19; 13:50-52; 14:2)

- At this point in history, there is no evidence that the Romans were particularly intolerant of religious beliefs. However, any perceived criminal activity or sedition against the state was punished by Rome (cf. Acts 16:21-22; 1 Peter 2:12; 4:14-16)

(Acts 16:20-23), [Owners of slave girl who had a demon/spirit of divination. Paul had exorcised the spirit], *“And they brought them to the [Roman] magistrates, and said, “These men, being Jews, exceedingly trouble our city;²¹ and they teach customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to receive or observe.”²² Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods.²³ And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely.”*

(1 Peter 2:11-12), *“Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul,¹² having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.”*

(1 Peter 4:14-16), *“If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.¹⁵ But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters.¹⁶ Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.”*

- Nero, however, did set a precedent for Roman emperors who would follow.

• Those who believe the book of Revelation was written in response to Nero’s persecution of Christians ascribe an early date of writing to the book. (AD 54-69), prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. (Commonly referred to as the “early date”).

- Colors their interpretation of the book
- They consider the fall of Jerusalem to be the thrust of the book of Revelation
- *“Babylon has fallen”* would be reference to the fall of Jerusalem, rather than Rome.

- **Note:** The change in interpretation does not change the general theme and message of the book, only some of the particulars in the details.

(Robert Harkrider): “Advocates of the early date who see the book written near the end of Nero’s reign in AD 68 almost always interpret the fall of Babylon in chapters 17 and 19 as referring to the destruction of Jerusalem which occurred in AD 70, fulfilling Jesus’ words recorded in Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 17 and 21. Proponents know that the early date must be established or else their exegesis instantly fails. However, several problems soon arise. They must neutralize, or else explain away, external evidence found in statements from the earliest of church writers and historians; they must negate sound exegesis of internal evidence; and they must discount the view of the majority of Bible scholars who have agreed through the centuries that the time of the writing of Revelation was about AD 95-96.” (page xxxiii)

- **The visions of Revelation seem to indicate a more systemic persecution of God’s people, visited upon them not because of any perceived wrongdoing, but simply because of their faith.**

- By the time of the emperor Domitian, the worship of Caesar as divine was uniformly enforced in the empire.
- Those who refused to address Domitian as “Master” or “God” were charged as atheists. Since Christians would

not do so, they (like Daniel and his companions), were persecuted for their faith.

- Persecution was less because Christians worshiped God, and more because they refused to worship the emperor. Most historians accept that persecution under Domitian was widespread.

• Those who believe the book of Revelation was written during the time of Domitian's persecution of Christians (or shortly after) ascribe a date of (AD 95-96) for the writing of the book. (Commonly referred to as the "late date").

- Other Roman emperors who persecuted Christians included Trajan (98-117), Marcus Aurelius (161-180), Commodus (180-192), Septimus Severus (193-211), Caracalla (211-217), Maximus I (235-238), Decius (240-251), Valerian (253-260), Diocletian & Maximian (284-305), Galerius (305-311), Maximus II (305-313)
- During the reign of Constantine (306-337, who co-reigned with Maximus II for the first 7 years of his reign), the emperor ordered religious toleration in the empire.

• **Reasons for accepting the late date for the writing of the book of Revelation**

- If the reference to the great harlot Babylon can be ascribed as symbolic of Rome, the prophecy of

Revelation can be correlated to the prophet Daniel (2:31-45; 7:13-28).

(Daniel 2:40-45), [Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of four kingdoms, Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian and Roman], *"And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.⁴¹ Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay.⁴² And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile.⁴³ As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.⁴⁴ And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.⁴⁵ Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure."*

(Daniel 7:23-27), [The interpretation of Daniel's visions during the reign of Belshazzar] *"Thus he said: 'The fourth beast shall be*

A fourth kingdom on earth, Which shall be different from all other kingdoms, And shall devour the whole earth, Trample it and break it in pieces. ²⁴ The ten horns are ten kings Who shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them; He shall be different from the first ones, And shall subdue three kings. ²⁵ He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time. ²⁶ 'But the court shall be seated, And they shall take away his dominion, To consume and destroy it forever. ²⁷ Then the kingdom and dominion, And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And all dominions shall serve and obey Him."

- The late date better explains the breadth of persecution that is predicted and was occurring for God's people (2:10; 2:13; 3:10).
- John was exiled to Patmos (1:9). Domitian throughout this reign exiled political and religious enemies. (There is no evidence that Nero ever did). The accepted tradition, corroborated by early writers, is that Domitian exiled John to Patmos, and that John remained on the island until Domitian's death. While the early date necessitates the major persecution to be because of the Jews, the

language of Revelation indicates a more systemic, state persecution (13:7; 13:15).

- The deterioration of the church in Ephesus from AD 62 (the date of Paul's writing of his epistle, Ephesians 1:15-16) to a congregation that had lost its first love (2:4) is improbable in less than a decade.
- The sect of the Nicolaitans did not seem to be active until very late in the first century.
- Laodicea was destroyed by an earthquake in AD 61. But, by the time of John's writing Revelation 3:17, the city had become rich. Unlikely in only 7 or 8 years.
- Most external evidence (early church fathers) attribute the writing to the later date.

Irenaeus (AD 120-202): Wrote of John and his visions, "For that was seen not very long since, but almost in our own day, toward the end of Domitian's reign" (Against Heresies, V. 30. 3)

Victorinus (died AD 303): Commenting on Revelation 10:11 wrote, "When John said these things he was in the isle of Patmos, condemned to the labor of the mines by Caesar Domitian. There, therefore, he saw the Apocalypse" (Commentary on the Apocalypse, A-N-F, VII. P. 353).

- **Note:** Harkrider, in his commentary, argues convincingly that an analysis of Daniel's prophecies in Daniel (2, 7, 9)

better fit with a later date view of Revelation (*xxxix – xliii*)

- **Note:** Some commentaries (notably, brethren such as Foy E. Wallace, Jr. and Authur Ogden, argue for an early date).

HOW TO INTERPRET REVELATION

Three Rules for Studying Apocalyptic Literature:

- **Picture** – Close your eyes, and visualize the vision described
- **Principle** – Analyze the intended point
- **Practice** – Make application both to the original recipients of the message, then to us today.

6

HOW TO INTERPRET THE BOOK OF REVELATION

- Apocalypse “*the Revelation (apokalupsis) of Jesus Christ*” (1:1). **Thayer** – laying bare... a disclosure of truth (concerning things before unknown).
 - Literature broadly termed as apocalyptic (for its use of signs and symbols to vividly unveil truth) include the Old Testament books of Ezekiel, Daniel and Zechariah.
 - The major characteristic that apocalyptic writings share is the use of symbols.

Harkrider on Apocalyptic writing: “Adversity usually furnished the background out of which this type of writing grew. Persecution and days of difficulty often tempt one to doubt and compromise his faith. The purpose of these writings was to look beyond the present time to a dramatic intervention by God. They gave answers to such questions as, ‘Is our faith worth enduring this suffering?’ ‘What does the future hold?’ In glorious contrast to the near despair of its setting, the apocalyptic writers always set forth a future of deliverance and triumph. Thus this type of literature was intended to reveal a message that would bring hope and encouragement as God promised the overthrow of evil and a final victory for his righteous cause.” (*lvii*)

- **A principle rule of interpretation is that a literal meaning should be ascribed to any text, unless the context requires a symbolic interpretation. In Revelation, the danger is to ascribe a literal meaning to what is obviously symbolic language and intent.**
 - When **Premillennialists** use the book of Revelation to give credence to the theory, they often arbitrarily ascribe **literal meanings to the numbers and visions** in the book. In this, they are both inconsistent, and guilty of *eisegesis* (reading into the text a meaning that corroborates their theory).
- **Harkrider’s Three Rules for Studying Apocalyptic Literature** (*lix*)

- **Picture**: Read the context; close your eyes and visualize the scenery described. If you do not see the picture, you will never understand the point.
- **Principle**: After feeling the emotions depicted by the symbolic language, then analyze what point is intended.
- **Practice**: Upon determining the principle lesson intended, then make the application first of all to those who originally received it and then determine its abiding lesson throughout all ages.

Note: This is one of the reasons the scene pages are presented as they are (Remind them of this)

- Recognize the danger of getting caught up in the trees (details), and missing the point (forest). **While we can't be dogmatic in our understanding of every detail, we can discern the basic points being made in the book.**

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Seven Sections, falling into two groups (1-11; 12-22)

The book of Revelation recaps in symbolic language and vivid pictures the exact prose of the rest of scripture that predicts the kingdom, establishes its presence, and prophesies its deliverance to God in the end (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:25-28).

7

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION (Taken from Hendriksen's, *More than Conquerors*)

- **Note:** Our outline and worksheet divide the book up into the various scenes that constitutes the visions given to John on the Lord's day (cf. 1:10). Consider the following, adapted from W. Hendriksen's introductory material (22-30)
 - "The book consists of 7 sections." (W.H.) (1-3; 4-7; 8-11; 12-14; 15-16; 17-19; 20-22)
 - "These seven sections run parallel. Each of them spans the entire dispensation from the first to the second coming of Christ. This period is viewed now from one aspect; then from another." (W.H.)
 - Consider the references to judgment given either explicitly or implicitly in each section (1:7; 6:12-17; 11:15,18; 14:14; 16:20; 20:10-15) **READ**

- Different sections ascribe an identical duration to this period. *“forty-two months”* (11:2); *“one thousand two hundred and sixty days”* (11:3; 12:6); *“a time and times and half a time”* [3½ years] (12:14)
- So, the section on the trumpets (8-11) runs parallel with the battle between the Christ and the Dragon (12-14).

○ “the seven sections fall into two groups” (W.H.) (1-11; 12-22)

- “In the first group, chapters 1-11, we see the struggle among men, that is, between believers and unbelievers. The world attacks the church. The church is avenged, protected, and victorious.” (W.H.)
- “In the second group of visions, chapters 12-22, we are shown that this struggle on earth has a deeper background. It is the outward manifestation of the devil’s attack upon the Man-Child. The dragon attacks the Christ. Repulsed, he directs all his fury against the church. As his helpers he employs the two beasts and the great harlot. All these enemies of the church are defeated in the end.” (W.H.)

○ “Each section gives us a description of the entire Gospel Age, from the first to the second coming of Christ, and is rooted in Israel’s history under the old dispensation to which there are frequent references.” (W.H.)

- In effect, the book of Revelation recaps in symbolic language and vivid pictures the exact prose of the rest of scripture that predicts the kingdom, establishes its presence, and

prophesies its deliverance to God in the end (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:25-28).

(1 Corinthians 15:25-28), *“For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. ²⁶ The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. ²⁷ For “He has put all things under His feet.” But when He says “all things are put under Him,” it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. ²⁸ Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.”*

- “One more remark and this chapter is closed. We have concentrated our attention on the division of the book. Yet, it is not the division but the unity of the book, the very close relationship between all the parts, that should be emphasized. This is often forgotten.” (W.H.)

HOW MEN INTERPRET REVELATION

- The Futurist Position
- The Continuous Historical Position
- The Philosophy of History Position
- The Preterist Position
- The Historical Background Position

HOW MEN INTERPRET THE BOOK OF REVELATION (Taken from Hailey's Commentary, 48-51)

- **The Futurist Position** – “holds that the book reveals the conditions and events which will immediately precede the second coming of Jesus.” (H.H.)
 - Though perhaps not the most popular, it is certainly the way of looking at Revelation that captures the fancy of the public. It is exciting, because the typical view is that our generation is the one that will be living when Christ comes again!
 - This is the view held by millennialists. That chapters 4-19 refer to events that have yet to happen.
 - Though there have for centuries been those who hold to such speculative theories, they have been popularized by Jehovah's Witnesses (Charles Taze Russell), then men such as C.I. Scofield & Herbert Armstrong.
 - This is why in just about every protestant denomination there is at least small groups who hold to the doctrine
 - In the Lord's church, a battle was fought in the 1940's when R.H. Boll (a Tennessee preacher, began advocating the theory). It was debated (Foy E. Wallace, Jr. had a lead role), and fortunately defeated by truth. Unfortunately, there are some Christians that have been touched by the error in our time as well.

- Typical claims of the premillennialists
 - Jesus was thwarted in His effort to establish a physical kingdom, on David's throne, when the Jews rejected Him.

(Mark 9:1) {would therefore be a broken promise}, *“And He said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power.”*

- That only the righteous will see Jesus when He comes (a secret rapture).

(Revelation 1:7), *“Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.”*

- That Jesus will set up a physical kingdom on earth, reigning for 1,000 years [a **misinterpretation of Revelation 20**], and that the destruction of the wicked will not take place until after that date. Well after His second coming.
 - Note: Christ's throne can't be on earth, and Him be both Priest and King!

(Hebrews 8:4), *“For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law.”*

- Also, the wicked will be destroyed AT His coming!

(2 Thessalonians 1:8-10), *“in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, ¹⁰ when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.”*

- This view does not take into consideration the fact that the book was intended to give comfort the Christians in the first century

“things which must shortly take place” (1:1).

- “This position is exceedingly speculative and gives rise to numerous false interpretations of Scripture.” (H.H.)

● **The Continuous Historical Position** – “holds that the book is a forecast of the church’s history and fortunes from John’s day to the end of time, and thus some parts of the book have been fulfilled and some parts have not.” (H.H.)

- Those who hold this view will interpret the symbols to include the rise of the Catholic church, Islam, the Protestant Reformation, etc.

- It holds the same disadvantages as the futurist position. No comfort for the first century saints, and extremely speculative interpretations of the symbols.

● **The Philosophy of History Position** – “advocates see in the book symbols representing forces at work rather than specific historical events and persons which these symbols signify.” (H.H.)

- “This view has more to recommend it than do the first two; however, it seems to overlook certain historical settings which gave birth to the book, and which it was intended to deal with. The view falls short in too many areas.” (H.H.)

- **The Preterist Position** – “holds that the book was written for the people of John’s day and was fulfilled in that general period.” (H.H.)

- Definition: Preterist – one who holds that all prophecies and references to the end times have already been fulfilled. (Realized Eschatology – AD 70 Doctrine)

- Just like Premillennialists, many flavors and distinctions in the doctrines.

- Most view the fulfillment in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70

- Others hold that the entire fulfillment is seen in the conflict with the Roman Empire

- Note: Regardless of how the text of Revelation may be viewed, the Preterist doctrine itself is false, and destructive to faith

- It is also a cause of division among brethren today!

- **The Historical Background Position** – “advocates see in Revelation a book written for the people of that day, set in a definite historical background and fulfilled in the events of the first two or three centuries.” (H.H.)

- Note: Harkrider holds to this view, though modified a bit in keeping with the caveats expressed by Homer Hailey below

- Very similar to the Preterists, but hold that there are certain principles found in the conflicts that bring out very important principles and truths for all time.

● **Note:** Homer Hailey feels that all five positions are a bit too structured and limited. Consider his concluding words in that section:

“The book has a concrete setting in a definite period of history and deals with very real problems faced by Christians of the period. Diverse figures symbolize powerful moral and spiritual forces involved in a violent clash in which the forces of God are ultimately triumphant. By their faith and steadfastness to Christ and to truth, the saints of that day found encouragement and gained the crown of victory. The particular instruments through which the satanic forces and powers of John’s day warred against the saints have long since fallen. But the message of that defeat continues to instruct and encourage God’s people today and will always sustain them when they face similar conflicts...”

“...Some of the prophecies are yet to be fulfilled; examples of these are the passing of the present order, the resurrection, the judgment, and the final reward and punishment of the righteous and the wicked. Consequently, some futurist aspects of the book are to be recognized.” (H.H.)

CONCLUSION

- Our intent is to be consistent and careful in our treatment of the book of Revelation.
- Refrain from the speculation that is prevalent regarding the book

9

CONCLUSION:

- The extensive nature of this first lesson is designed to give us a basis upon which we can correctly determine the truths to be found in the book
- While details may differ, and some details found in the symbols may be beyond our grasp, the intent will be to be consistent and careful in our teaching and learning about the book, and refrain from subjective speculations and hobbies.
- Please study this material carefully, and keep both the structure and the theme in mind throughout our study.

A CONSISTENT INTERPRETATION

1. Revelation written for Christians in 1st century
2. Written in symbols, can't be taken literally. Must agree with great context of Bible.
3. Look to Old Testament prophets for insight.
4. Don't miss the forest for the trees.
5. Understand the difficult in light of the clear.

10

A CONSISTENT INTERPRETATION

(From Robert Harkrider's commentary, *lxxii-lxxiii*)

1. Remember that Revelation was written by John primarily for the encouragement and edification of the Christians **of his own time.**
2. Remember that Revelation is written largely in symbolic language, thus **it cannot be taken literally throughout.** One can ill afford to be dogmatic in interpreting symbols, but **he must strive to be certain his interpretation agrees with the context of the book as well as with the rest of the Bible.**
3. Remember that Revelation uses Old Testament terminology with New Testament meaning. John has used much of the terminology of Ezekiel and Daniel, **but has adapted them to his own message.** An understanding of the Old Testament prophets and their use of symbols would be helpful because

over 400 allusions to the Old Testament are made in Revelation.

4. For the true meaning of Revelation, one must seek to grasp the visions or series of visions as a whole without pressing the details of each symbol.
5. Understand difficult passages in light of clearer passages. Make all interpretations consistent with the teaching of the whole Bible.

Note that pages 10-15 constitute an extensive outline of Revelation, divided up into 24 scenes which will be used as the structure for our study going forward...

THE INTRODUCTION (1:1-8)

- The Revelation of Jesus Christ (1:1-3) – Things which must shortly take place (cf. Psalm 119:62-64)
- John's Greeting to the 7 Churches (1:4-8)

11

INTRODUCTION (1:1-3)

(22:10) [End of book mirrors the beginning], *“And he said to me, “Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.””*

- Revelation of Jesus Christ – **Things which must shortly take place** (1:1)
 - Given by God, (indicating inspiration – both in writing, and in the visions themselves. They are God’s work)
 - Revelation (apokalupsis) – reveal, uncover, disclose
 - Signified by an angel – the origin of the visions/signs.
- Revealed to John, and **a blessing** to those who read and keep it (1:2-3)

(Psalm 119:62-64), *“At midnight I will rise to give thanks to You, Because of Your righteous judgments. ⁶³ I am a companion of all who fear You, And of those who keep Your precepts. ⁶⁴ The earth, O Lord, is full of Your mercy; Teach me Your statutes.”*

JOHN’S GREETING TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA (1:4-8)

(1:4-8), *“John, to the seven churches which are in Asia:*

Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, ⁵ and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, ⁶ and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. ⁷ Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. ⁸ “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning

and the End,” says the Lord, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”



12

7 Churches of Asia

- Asia a Roman Province (Western part of Modern Day Turkey)
 - Look in your Bible at the back, if you have a map.
 - These 7 churches (and the letters written by the Lord) occupy our study of Chapters 2 and 3.
 - Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea
 - Note: At least 3 other churches in Asia noted in the New Testament. Troas (Acts 20:5); Hierapolis (Col. 4:13); Colossae (Col. 1:2)
 - What is significance of number 7? (Go to last index)...
 - It signifies perfectness, completeness, wholeness
 - Depicts the Lord’s church as a whole!

THE INTRODUCTION (1:1-8)

- The Revelation of Jesus Christ (1:1-3) – Things which must shortly take place (cf. Psalm 119:62-64)
- John's Greeting to the 7 Churches (1:4-8)
 - From the Godhead (1:4-5)
 - Description of Christ (1:6-7)
 - God's Self-Declaration (1:8)

13

- From the eternal God, seven Spirits before His throne and Jesus Christ (1:4-5)
 - Him which is, and which was, and which is to come. (The eternally existing Heavenly Father)
 - 7 Spirits (number used to describe the perfection of the Holy Spirit). (Also found in 3:1; 4:5; 5:6)
 - From Jesus Christ (many different descriptions and names in this book about Jesus)
 - Faithful witness (cf. **John 8:14**, *“Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going...”*)
 - Firstborn from the dead
 - Ruler over the kings of the earth
 - Note: This list includes all three persons in God.

- Description of Jesus Christ/His second coming (1:5-7)

- Who loved us, and washed us from our sins (Savior)
- Made us kings and priests to God (note: already the theme of victory is being shown here)
- He is the one who has dominion forever and glory (cf. Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:16-17)

(Ephesians 1:22-23), *“And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, ²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”*

(Colossians 1:16-17), *“For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.”*

- He will come again! (in Judgment. All will see him).
 - The idea of mourning comes to those who are ungodly (cf. 2 Thessalonians 1:8-10)

- Christ’s self-declaration (Alpha and Omega/Almighty) **(1:8)**

- Note: Perhaps more accurate to say that this is God the Father speaking (the last phrase, “Almighty” is used in Revelation exclusively to Him. cf. 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7,14; 19:15; 21:22).
- My first thought was that since the Son is the subject of verse 7, it is the Son speaking in verse 8. Maybe not.
- First and last letters of Greek alphabet (God is from A to Z)!
- Signals fullness and completeness. Sovereignty.

- He is eternal (is, was, is to come). (cf. John 1:1-ff)

(John 1:1-4), *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.”*

- He is Almighty (omnipotent, see above).

Now that we are finished with the introductory material, we get to the first scene.

- Unlike others, it is lengthy, and so we will break it up into two parts. This may cause problems with the sheet, so either write small, or perhaps make a copy of the sheet so that more room can be placed for information

- Part 1: (1:9-20); Part 2 (Chapters 2 and 3)

SCENE 1 – VISIONS BEGIN / 7 CHURCHES OF ASIA

PICTURE THE SCENE (1:9-20)

- Loud voice and trumpet declaring the presence of Jesus Christ.
- Seeing the Christ – Purity, fierceness. Note John’s response (1:17)
- Relief at Christ’s loving response. (1:17)
- No cause for fear, because Jesus is the First and Last, with the keys to Hades and Death (1:17-18)
- **Emotions** – Awe, Fear, Dread, Relief, Joy, Confidence

- **Picture the Scene (give your impressions and emotions)**

- The loud voice and the trumpet sounding from Behind. (Would startle - abrupt, significant). Imagine Jesus sneaking up on you!

(1 Thessalonians 5:2-4), "For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. ³ For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. ⁴ But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief."

- Also, Loud Voice and Trumpet an appropriate introduction of Royalty!

- What does the description of the Christ elicit from you emotionally?

- Me? The use of the color white (denotes purity) elicits a feeling of awe and reverence
- The feeling I get of this figure is size (voice of many waters), and fierceness (2 edged sword). Brings the "fear of God" into my mind.

(Matthew 10:28), "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

- John's response is understandable, *"I fell at His feet as dead" (17)*
- But, Jesus comforts Him. Interesting (note: Matthew 10:28 above), the things that make Jesus comforting

for those who are His should bring terror to those who are not!

- Emotions quickly run from surprise, awe, fear, dread to relief, joy and confidence as Jesus is identified.

SCENE 1 – VISIONS BEGIN / 7 CHURCHES OF ASIA

PRINCIPLE: ANALYZE (1:9-20)

- The description of Jesus in verses 11-16 is to establish His authority and sovereignty.
- John writes what He sees, at the direction of His Lord
- An introductory statement reveals Jesus care for John, His authority, and the time frame of the visions *“which are, and the things which will take place after this.”*

15

Principle: Analyze the point/points that are being made in this part of the vision.

- Jesus describes Himself as the Alpha and the Omega
 - Just as in 1:8, it indicates the eternal nature of Jesus
- **The vivid picture of Jesus described evidences his Purity and His authority. He commands John to write what he sees.**
- Jesus is shown to be caring, with a message to be shared with His church. Notice the time frame of the visions, (cf. 1:1). *“Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this” (1:19)*

SCENE 1 – VISIONS BEGIN / 7 CHURCHES OF ASIA

PRACTICE: APPL. (1:9-20)

- Jesus had a message that he wanted to share with the church of the first century. (Represented by the 7 churches of Asia). The message was authoritative to them.
- The message, though initially for them, is equally beneficial for us today. Jesus has authority. His message brings comfort. His power ensures confidence.

16

Practice: What is the application to Christians of that day and to us.

- **This one we have established clearly in our introductory comments**
 - Our Lord had something important to say to the Christians in the first century
 - As we will be seeing in our study of the book, this authoritative “revelation” of Jesus Christ is one that will bring comfort and confidence to His disciples.
- **In the same way, the message for them can benefit us today. Jesus has authority. He is all-powerful. He can comfort us and protect us.**

SCENE 1 – VISIONS BEGIN / 7 CHURCHES OF ASIA

CHAR. & SYM. (1:9-20)

- Jesus (10-16)
- 7 Golden Lampstands (12)
- 7 Stars (16)
- Sharp, 2-edged sword (16)
- Keys of Hades and Death (18)
- Angels of the churches (20)
- **Note:** *Try to identify and define the symbols and characters, if possible*

17

The Characters and Symbols that are found in (1:9-20)

○ Jesus Christ (10-16)

- Jesus is the primary character (the Protagonist) in the visions revealed to John
- There will be many different descriptions given of Him
- This description and His words bring the idea of self-existence, purity, fierceness and strength.

○ 7 Golden Lampstands (12)

- The number 7 denotes perfection or completeness
- Gold is a precious metal, indicating value
- A lampstand gives forth light
 - Zechariah uses the imagery (Zechariah 4:1-13)
 - Here the image refers to the 7 churches (cf. 1:20)

(Philippians 2:14-16), *“Do all things without complaining and disputing,¹⁵ that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the*

world, ¹⁶ holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.”

○ **7 Stars (1 star for each of the “churches”)**

- Identified as the angels to the churches (1:20)
- Angel – (angelos) – a messenger (context determines whether divine or human).
 - The word derives from a root that means “to lead”
 - In this context, I believe it would have reference to the leaders of the congregations. Those who were most responsible for condition of each congregation
 - Elders, deacons, teachers, preachers, influential members.

○ **Sharp 2-edged sword (out of Jesus mouth) (1:16)**

- Coming out of His mouth... His words

(Hebrews 4:12-13), “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. ¹³ And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.”

- God’s word saves (Rom. 1:16), but it is also the standard of judgment!

(2 Thessalonians 1:8-9), “in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.”

○ Keys of Hades and Death (1:18)

- Keys indicate authority. The one who holds the keys has the authority!
- Example: Jailor has the keys to lock and unlock a prison door
- Jesus, through His resurrection, has gained the victory of death and it is he who determines who will live eternally, and who will die eternally!

(1 Corinthians 15:20-23), *“But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. ²³ But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.”*

○ Angels of the churches (1:20) (See 7 stars above).

SCENE 1 CONTINUED (2 & 3) - PICTURE

- How would you feel if you received a letter from Jesus Christ? Joy?
- What if that letter had criticism? Godly Sorrow?
- What if the letter had praise? Relief?
- What if the letter gave you instructions regarding needed changes? Resolve?
- Joy, Sorrow, Relief, Resolve.

Chapters 2 and 3 of Revelation (Letters to the 7 churches of Asia)

- Note the similarities in the 7 letters
- Note the differences in the 7 letters
- Note recurring themes
 - Different designations describing Jesus
 - Evaluation of the churches including what is right, and what is wrong
 - The references to judgment
 - The final exhortation to hear

(Revelation 2 & 3) READ

- How would you feel if you received a letter from Jesus Christ?

Joy?

(Psalm 119:12-16), *“Blessed are You, O Lord! Teach me Your statutes. ¹³ With my lips I have declared All the judgments of Your mouth. ¹⁴ I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, As much as in all riches. ¹⁵ I will meditate on Your precepts, And contemplate Your ways. ¹⁶ I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word.”*

- What if that letter had criticism? **Godly Sorrow?**

(2 Corinthians 7:8-9), *“For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it. For I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though only for a while. ⁹ Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing.”*

- What if the letter had praise? **Relief?**

(2 Corinthians 10:17-18), “But “he who glories, let him glory in the Lord.” ¹⁸ For not he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends.”

- What if the letter gave you instructions regarding needed changes? **Resolve?**

(Psalm 119:9-10), “How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. ¹⁰ With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!”

- **Joy, Sorrow, Relief, Resolve.**
- Question: Any other feelings or perceptions that you want to introduce to our study?

SCENE 1 CONTINUED (2 & 3) - PRINCIPLE

- A direct letter from the Lord. Significant, authoritative, serious.
- Consider the ramifications of having a lampstand removed from its place, and the importance of repentance.
- Consider the validation of being praised by God. We do not seek approval of men, but of God.

19

Principle: Analyze the Purpose of this particular vision

- Each of these 7 churches received a direct communication from the Lord.
 - These letters were significant, authoritative, serious.

- The point is straightforward: Jesus expected them to listen and act upon what they heard.

(Matthew 7:24-29), "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock:²⁵ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.²⁶ "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand:²⁷ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."²⁸ And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching,²⁹ for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."

(James 1:22-25), "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror;²⁴ for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.²⁵ But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does."

- Consider the ramifications of having a lampstand removed from its place, and the importance of repentance.

- God rejecting a church because of its spiritual condition. Because its light was no longer productive.
- Repent, or else!

(Luke 13:3), "I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish."

- Consider the validation of being praised by God. We do not seek approval of men, but of God.

SCENE 1 CONTINUED (2 & 3) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- Address what is lacking in their congregation
- Heed the teaching of Jesus
- Prepare so as to be ready for judgment

TO US

- Examine our congregation to see if we are lacking.
- Learn from their mistakes
- Prepare so as to be ready for judgment

20

Practice – Application to them and us

- **In this vision we are going to do this separately (Not all the churches as one group)**
 - Jesus intended that they address what was lacking in their congregation (each congregation was unique)
 - He intended that they heed his words (repent when necessary)
 - He wanted them to avoid the removal of their candlestick
- **For us it is the same**
 - However, we are unique as well. What is right, and what is wrong about West Side
 - Are our deficiencies the same? Or different?

- We need to repent in order to avoid having our candlestick removed from His presence
- After “filling in our boxes” we will do as Justin did last week, and quickly summarize each congregation in turn

SCENE 1 CONTINUED (2 & 3) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| • Jesus (2:1,8,12,18; 3:1,7,14) <i>Note how He is described.</i> | • The Devil (2:10) |
| • False apostles (2:2) | • 10 days tribulation (2:10) |
| • Nicolaitans (2:6,15) | • Crown of life (2:10) |
| • Tree of life (2:7) | • Second death (2:11) |
| • Paradise of God (2:7) | • Satan’s throne (2:13) |
| • Synagogue of Satan (2:9; 3:9) | • Antipas (2:13) |
| | • Doctrine of Balaam (2:14) |
| | • Hidden manna (2:17) |
| | • White stone (2:17) |

21

Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapters 2 and 3

- Identify and define

Jesus Christ (Consider His self-designations, and their significance)

- **Ephesus (2:1) – “He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands”**

- We have discussed this. Christ is among the churches (the lampstands). The seven stars being the angels of the various churches. (1:20 identifies the lampstands and stars).
- He knows the good and the bad. The trials and the suffering.

- He is not far away and unconcerned. He is near and accessible.

(Hebrews 4:14-16), *“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.¹⁵ For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”*

- **Smyrna (2:8)** – *“the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life”*

- He is eternal in nature (always has been always will be (cf. John 2:1-2)
- Death could not contain Him

(1 Corinthians 15:3-4), *“For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,⁴ and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.”*

- **Pergamos (2:12)** - *“He who has the sharp two-edged sword”*

- The word of God described in this way (Hebrews 4:12)
- Converts the poor in spirit (humble). Judges those who reject it

(John 12:48), *“He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.”*

- **Thyatira (2:18)** – *“the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass”*

- The phrase “*Son of God*” is a direct reference to the Deity of Jesus
- His eyes (*like a flame of fire*) may reference the fact that we can’t hide our sins from Him

(Hebrews 4:13), “*And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.*”

- “*Feet like fine brass*” indicates standing firm, strength, durability

(Hebrews 13:8), “*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*”

• **Sardis (3:1)** – “*He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars*”

- Jesus Christ possesses the fullness of the Holy Spirit

(John 3:34-35), “*For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure.³⁵ The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand.*”

- His possession of the seven stars (angels) probably is an indication of His authority over the church

(Ephesians 1:22-23), “*And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church,²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*”

• **Philadelphia (3:7)** – “*He who is holy, He who is true, ‘He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens’*”

- He is holy and true (attributes that we have long established (cf. 1 Peter 1:15-16; John 14:6)

- Key of David, Opening and shutting is again, a reference to Jesus' sovereignty and authority. (Remember, it is He alone who is able to loose the seals on the book)

• **Laodicea (3:14)** – *“the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God”*

- Or, the “so-be-it” of God. An affirmation of the truth

(John 7:28-29), “Then Jesus cried out, as He taught in the temple, saying, “You both know Me, and you know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know. ²⁹ But I know Him, for I am from Him, and He sent Me.”

- As He is from God, his testimony as a witness is always true!
- Beginning of Creation is not a statement of being the first created, rather of being the source of creation. He is preeminent!

(John 1:1-3), “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.”

False Apostles (2:2) – Apostles are those who share and disseminate truth. False apostles would be those falsely making the claim to be disseminating truth.

- The church in Ephesus was defending the truth!

(1 John 4:1), “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

Nicolaitans (2:6,15) (Ephesus/Pergamos) – Little is known of this group other than that the Lord hated their doctrine

- This might be another argument as to the late date of writing, if this religious error was just gaining a foothold in the church (Pergamos to be exact)
- Some believe this was Gnosticism in an incipient form (What the flesh does is immaterial and did not affect the spirit).
- If so, this would explain how some in Pergamos (a compromising church) might would rationalize their actions and still claim to be spiritual.

Tree of Life (2:7) – A reference to the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:22-24). Here would symbolize eternal life to those who ate of it.

Paradise of God (2:7) – the phrase paradise indicates “a garden of pleasure.”

- Jesus used the word to refer to a part of the Hadean world (cf. Luke 23:43)
- It seems here to refer to heaven itself. (cf. John 14:1-6) Mansions...

Synagogue of Satan (2:9; 3:9) (Smyrna/Philadephia) – Jews who rejected the Son of God rejected God. Their worship would be vain, and their claims to be followers of God would be blasphemous.

- They would be religious (go to the synagogue to worship), but would be serving Satan rather than God.

(Romans 2:28-29), *“For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh;²⁹ but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.”*

The Devil (2:10) Smyrna

- **Satan** (*satanas*): **Adversary** (one who opposes another in purpose or act), cf. Job 1:6
- **Devil** (*diabolos*): **Accuser, slanderer**, John 8:44. Deceives the world and accuses our brethren, Rev. 12:9-10. He maligns, misrepresents, lies.

(John 8:44), *“You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.”*

(Revelation 12:9-10), *“So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.”*

10 Days tribulation (2:10) Smyrna

- 10 Days indicates a full or complete measure for those in Smyrna
- Either in time or in limit, their tribulation would continue for a while, but would end.
- Faithfulness even to death (cf. 2:10) would bring them a crown of life.

Crown of Life (2:10) Smyrna

- The eternal reward of the faithful

(1 Corinthians 9:25), "And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown."

Second Death (2:11) Smyrna

- The first death has reference to physical death (when the spirit separates from the body, Hebrews 9:27)
- The second death has reference to eternal separation from God

(Revelation 21:8), "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

Satan's Throne (2:13) Pergamos

- This would be figurative, indicating Satan's control over the populace of Pergamos

- Imagine as a Christian living in such a place, like Sodom and Gomorrah before it.

Antipas (2:13) Pergamos

- There is no other reference to Antipas. We know only he was killed for his faith in Christ

(cf. Revelation 17:6), *“I saw the woman [Babylon the great, the mother of harlots], drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.”*

Doctrine of Balaam (2:14) Pergamos

- A reference to idolatry. Balaam taught Balak (king of Moab) to entice Israel to eat a sacrifice in recognition of a pagan idol (cf. Numbers 25:1,6; 31:16).
- Note: The eating of meats sacrificed to idols, and the practice of fornication are trappings of idolatry.

Hidden Manna (2:17) Pergamos

- References God’s supplying the spiritual needs of the church there (just as God supplied Israel with manna)
- Remember Jesus’ words, being the true bread from heaven (cf. John 6:58)

White Stone (2:17) Pergamos

- Indicating purity, the stone would signify their acceptance from God

- (Note: ancient courts would sometimes give either a black or white stone to the accused as a verdict)

SCENE 1 CONTINUED (2 & 3) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- Jezebel (2:20)
- Satan (2:24)
- Rod of iron (2:27)
- Morning star (2:28)
- White garments (3:5,18)
- Book of life (3:5)
- The Father's angels (3:5)
- Open door (3:8)
- Hour of trial (3:10)
- Pillar in the temple (3:12)
- New Jerusalem (3:12)
- New name (3:12)
- Gold refined (3:18)
- "My" throne / "My Father" 's throne (21)

22

Jezebel (2:20) Thyatira

- The woman was reminiscent of King Ahab's idolatrous wife (1 Kings 21:25)
- An influential woman who was leading some in Thyatira into sexual immorality and idolatrous practices

Satan (2:24) Thyatira

- See Devil from previous slide
- **Satan (*satanas*): Adversary (one who opposes another in purpose or act),** cf. Job 1:6

Rod of iron (2:27) Thyatira

- (cf. Psalm 2:9) Christ's rule is from God, as such it is absolute
- The "rod of iron" indicates complete domination and strength. Destruction of those who oppose His power.

Morning star (2:28) Thyatira

- Most probably a reference to the planet Venus, during certain seasons the planet would be bright just before dawn, and was considered the harbinger of the coming dawn.
- Overcoming persecution would bring with it a new dawn, and the reception of Christ's eternal blessings.

White garments (3:5, 18) Sardis/Laodicea

- White indicates purity. It is appropriate that white would be a symbol of the dress of the saints
- Interestingly, a Roman custom was for the nobles to march through the streets of Rome in white garments after a military victory.
- Walking with Christ in white is an indication of honor in victory!
- Note: In Sardis, some had them... In Laodicea, the Lord encouraged them to purchase the garments.

Book of life (3:5) Sardis

- The divine register that has the names of those who belong to God

- Found in numerous Biblical references (cf. Exodus 32:32-33; Psalm 69:28; Daniel 12:1; Luke 10:20; Philippians 4:3) as well as several references in Revelation (3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27)

The Father's angels (3:5) Sardis

- Jesus confession of the faithful would be before the heavenly host. The context would indicate actual angels.

(cf. **Luke 2:13-14**, at Christ's birth), *“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”*

Open door (3:8) Philadelphia

- An open door indicates an opportunity, providentially given
- Philadelphia had the opportunity (and responsibility) to share the gospel
- (cf. 2 Corinthians 2:12; 1 Corinthians 16:9; Acts 14:27; Colossians 4:3)

(1 Corinthians 16:8-9), *“But I will tarry in Ephesus until Pentecost. ⁹ For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.”*

Hour of trial (3:10) Philadelphia

- “Hour” is used to describe a season or a period of trial.

Pillar in the temple (3:12) Philadelphia

- In this context, as one who overcomes, the Pillar would be a reference to a permanent and important position

(1 Peter 2:5), “you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

New Jerusalem (3:12) Philadelphia

- Jerusalem here on earth symbolized to Israel the dwelling place of God (in the Temple)
- The imagery of a New Jerusalem would reference the habitation of God’s citizens, the church.

(Hebrews 12:22-24), “But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels,²³ to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect,²⁴ to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.”

New name (3:12, see also 2:17) Philadelphia

- The name or complete manifestation of Christ Himself (too glorious to perceive in the flesh).
- (cf. **Colossians 3:4**), “When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”

Gold refined (3:18) Laodicea

- To buy this gold would be to do whatever is necessary to obtain it (salvation). Refined gold is an indication of the removal of any impurities

“My” throne / “My Father” ‘s throne (21) Laodicea

- Those who serve Christ on earth will be privileged to rule with Him in eternity
- This would not necessarily be an indication of two thrones, but of the two reigning, and Christians there with them in eternity

(Ephesians 1:20), *“which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places”*

(Revelation 7:15-17), *“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 dwell among them. ¹⁶ They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; ¹⁷ for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”*

(2 Timothy 2:11-12), *“This is a faithful saying: for if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him. ¹² If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us.”*

EPHESUS (2:1-7) [LOVELESS CHURCH]

Good

- Labor, patience / Perseverance in labor (2,3)
- Testing of false apostles (2)
- Hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans (6)

Bad

- Left first love (4)

Warnings Given

- Repent and do first works (5)
- Let him hear (7)

23

Having discussed all of the characters and symbols, as well as the intent of this first scene in our visions. What I want to do now is simply give an overview of the admonitions and approval shown to each of the churches

Let's begin with Ephesus. **(2:1-7)** [Loveless church]

- First, note that at the time Paul wrote his letter to the church there, the congregation was well thought of by Paul

(Ephesians 1:15-16), *“Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints,¹⁶ do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers.”*

- There is no criticism of the church there by the apostle Paul in his epistle (AD 62)
- This may be an indication that the book of Revelation was written several years later, as the church is criticized for having left its first love.

- **What was good in Ephesus**

- Labor, patience / Perseverance in labor **(2,3)**

(1 Corinthians 15:58), *“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”*

- Testing of false apostles **(2)**

(Jude 3), *Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.”*

- Hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans **(6)**

(Proverbs 6:16-19), **[Note: God hates sin]**, *“These six things the Lord hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: ¹⁷ A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, ¹⁸ A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil, ¹⁹ A false witness who speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren.”*

- **What was bad in Ephesus**

- Left first love **(4)**

- **Note:** There must be a differentiation between a loss of love, and apathy or a lack of perseverance.

- **“Their warmth of love had given place to a lifeless orthodoxy. Compare Paul’s view of faith so called without love” (Jamieson – Fausset-Brown)**

(1 Corinthians 13:1-3), *“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. ² And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I*

have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.³ And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.”

- **Warnings given**

- Repent and do the first works (5)
 - Those works that characterized their initial love and devotion
 - Note: Gk. word also can have reference to that which is first in IMPORTANCE

(Matthew 22:35-40), “Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying,³⁶ “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?”³⁷ Jesus said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’³⁸ This is the first and great commandment.³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

- Let him hear (7, 11, 17, 29, 3:6, 13, 22)
 - We will only cover this once, as it is found in every letter given
 - This phrase is typical of Jesus

(Matthew 11:15), “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

(Mark 4:23), “If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.”

(Mark 7:16), “If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!”

- (Albert Barnes) “It is a form of expression designed to arrest the attention, and to denote that what was said was of special importance.”

SMYRNA (2:8-11) [PERSECUTED CHURCH]

Good

- Works (9)
- Note: Aware of suffering (10)

Bad

- Nothing!

Exhortations Given

- Do not fear (10)
- Be faithful unto death to receive reward (10)
- Let him hear (11)

24

Smyrna (2:8-11) [Persecuted church]

(Note: From early in the first century, Smyrna was loyal to Rome. As such they were rewarded as the site for building a temple in honor of Tiberius - Caesar of Rome).

- Not surprising that it was a center of paganism, and emperor worship.
- Also shows how the church in Smyrna would be subjected to persecution
- **What was good in Smyrna**
 - **Works (9)**
 - Letter to Smyrna one of only two (Philadelphia) without criticism
 - Despite enduring persecution, they were commended for their fruitfulness and diligence to the Lord

(John 15:8), *“By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.”*

- **Note:** Aware of suffering [tribulation, poverty] **(9)**

- Despite their being physically impoverished, they were rich toward the Lord
- Unlike the church in Laodicea

(3:18), *“I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.”*

- The opposite of the foolish Rich man

(Luke 12:21), *“So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”*

- **What was bad in Smyrna**

- Nothing! They understood loyalty

(Deuteronomy 6:4), [Moses, after giving Israel the 10 commandments] *“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!⁵ You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.”*

- **Exhortations given**

- Do not fear tribulation/persecution **(10)**

(Matthew 10:28), *“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”*

- Be faithful unto death to receive reward **(10)**
- Let him hear **(11)**

PERGAMOS (2:12-17) [COMPROMISING CHURCH]

Good

- Held fast to Jesus' name (13)
- Did not deny the faith despite persecution and the martyrdom of Antipas (13)

Bad

- Some hold the doctrine of Balaam (14)
- Some hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans (15)

Warnings given

- Repent (16)
- Let him hear (17)

25

Pergamos (2:12-17) [Compromising Church]

Of all 7 of the Asian cities, Pergamos was the most corrupt religiously. Thoroughly pagan. Contained temples to Zeus, Athene and Dionysus. (Devoted to sensuous worship). From the time of Augustus (29 BC), loyalty to the Caesar was required as this was the official capitol of the region.

• Good

• Held fast to Jesus' name (13)

- This, despite the fact that they dwelt where "*Satan's throne is*"
- It is interesting that Jesus did not tell the Christians to leave this wicked city, but to stay there and fight!
- **MAJOR POINT: We can either be influenced by our surroundings, or stand as a light to the world, as a positive and uplifting influence among the lost**
- Remember the confession of Jesus!

(Luke 12:8-9), "Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God.⁹ But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God."

- **Did not deny the faith despite persecution (13)**

- This was persecution unto death in the case of Antipas
- And yet, they were willing to stand up and be counted.

- **Bad**

- **Some hold the doctrine of Balaam (14)**

- While they were willing to die for their faith, doctrinal purity was not important to them (as it was to Ephesus).
- **Consider those today critical of the Lord's church. Claim: Major in doctrine, but aren't loving and "spirit filled."**
- In truth, it is not one or the other (Consider Ephesus/Pergamos), but both that are necessary!
- It is not surprising that idolatry would have an effect upon the church in Pergamos (it did in Israel, as an example).
- Consider Balaam's influence, as recorded in Numbers 25

(Numbers 25:1-3), "Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab.² They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods.³ So Israel was joined

to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel.”

- Some hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans **(15)**
 - It doesn't matter the doctrine under consideration, souls are endangered, and God hates that which is false!
 - Perhaps that was what the Nicolaitans believed. A little compromise or a few concessions to fit in with society wouldn't matter to God?
 - Think about what the Roman Pontiff has just stated... Homosexual marriage is acceptable. (Compromise with the age).

(Galatians 1:9), “As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.”

• Warnings Given

- Repent **(16) REPENT OR ELSE! (The “or else” should be taken seriously)**

(Luke 13:3), “I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.”

- Let him hear **(17)**

THYATIRA (2:18-29) [CORRUPT CHURCH]

Good

- Love, service, faith, patience (19)
- Works, last more than first (19)

Bad

- Allow Jezebel to teach and seduce (20-23)

Warnings Given

- Hold fast (25)
- Let him hear (29)

26

Thyatira (2:18-29) [Corrupt church]

- **Thyatira was a city economically dominated by local trade guilds.**

- The guilds sponsored idolatrous feasts and other immoral practices
- The pressure to participate in order to prosper was great
- Such economic pressure then could have contributed to their compromises. And us today as well (for example, social drinking at office parties. Being a team player, etc.)
- I remember Darryl Treat telling me that “being a team player” in the military made it hard for him to stand for his convictions spiritually.

• Good

- **Love, service, faith, patience (19)**

- Love is the essence of faithfulness. (And no doubt led to the other positive attributes).

(Matthew 22:37-40), “Jesus said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’³⁸ This is the first and great commandment.³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

- Service would have reference to our actions toward others (cf. Good Samaritan, James 1:27)

(James 1:27), “Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.”

- Faith is what saves us. Faith is also what sustains us in our salvation (leads to obedience)
- Patience – perseverance... describes the constancy of devotion in the face of trials.

- **Works, last more than first (19)**

- Progress is important! (If you aren’t going forward, you are going backward).

(Hebrews 5:12), “For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.”

(Hebrews 2:1), “Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.”

- **Bad**

- **Allow Jezebel to teach and seduce (20-23)**

- The teaching would involve Christians into participation with idol worship (Perhaps in reference to the trade guilds mentioned).

- The word seduce – (Greek - planaō), **Thayer Definition: to cause to stray, to lead astray, lead aside from the right way**
- Specifically, sexual immorality & idol sacrifices
- Shouldn't be too surprising that if Israel could be corrupted by idolatry, Christians could be as well.
- **Note:** Allowing someone to teach error and practice sin is endorsement (cf. 2 John 9-11; 1 Cor. 5:6-7,11)

• Warnings

- **Hold fast "till I come" (25)**

- Two possibilities: 1) Final judgment; 2) Judgment of Jezebel and her followers (cf. 21-23)
- Jezebel's judgment would be a message to all the churches (cf. 23). **Harkrider believes this is the proper reference.**

- **Let him hear (29)**

SARDIS (3:1-6) [DEAD CHURCH]

Good

- (For only a few) A few had not defiled their garments, and thus were worthy (4)

Bad

- You are dead (1)
- Works not perfect (2)

Warnings

- Be watchful, strengthen what remains (2)
- Hold fast and repent (3)
- Let him hear (6)

Sardis (3:1-6) [Dead Church]

- Also a trading center (convergence of 5 important trade roads)
- The Greeks viewed it as of great importance
- It was believed to be a rich and decadent city.
- No indication that the church was suffering in any way from outside persecution (at this point).

• Good (Note, cover bad and warnings first)

• (For only a few): A few had not defiled their garments, and thus were worthy (4)

- Important to note, Judgement is individual in nature, not by congregation
- These individuals were righteous, though the church as a whole was not
- Your reward or condemnation will be determined by your own faithfulness to God

(Matthew 25:44-46) [Jesus' condemnation of the wicked],

“Then they also will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’⁴⁵ Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’⁴⁶ And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

• Bad

• You are dead (1)

- **Note:** Their reputation was they were alive.

- Reputation often disguises one's true spiritual condition (what others say rather than what actually is)
- Numbers, money, influence, acceptance in city, eloquent preacher. None of these have a bearing on actual faithfulness.

• Works not perfect (2)

- **Robert Harkrider:** Two kinds of peaceful churches can exist: 1) Repose after it has conquered many trials, or 2) A peace born of lethargy and brought about by carelessness and overconfidence. Sardis was of the latter, somewhat like a well organized, peaceful cemetery where only death reigns. The Lord urged the church at Sardis to fortify the lingering bits of truth, faith and love that might have survived neglect and inactivity.

• Warnings

• Be watchful, and strengthen what remains (2)

- See Robert Harkrider quote above:
- Similar to Hebrews 5 & 6. An admonition to stop the bleeding, and get back to what you are supposed to be!

(1 Corinthians 15:58), *“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”*

• Hold fast and repent (3)

(2 Timothy 1:13-14), *“Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ*

Jesus. ¹⁴ That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.”

(Acts 8:22), [Peter to Simon], “Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you.”

- **Let him hear (6)**

PHILADELPHIA (3:7-13) [FAITHFUL CHURCH]	
Good	Bad
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You have a little strength (8)• Have kept Christ’s word (8)• Have not denied Christ’s name (8)• Kept His command to persevere (10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nothing Exhortations Given <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hold fast what you have (11)• Overcoming will bring victory (12)• Let him hear (13)

28

Philadelphia (3:7-13) [Faithful Church]

Was known as a missionary city in the sense that it was founded by the Greeks to introduce the Greek culture and language to the area. A major road (Roman) was ran by. Destroyed in 17AD by an earthquake, and rebuilt with the help of Tiberius Caesar.

- **Good (Note: “I know your works” not met with trepidation by this faithful group.)**

- **You have a little strength (8)**

- This phrase should not indicate weakness on their part.

- However, it may indicate a lack of resources or numbers
- Note: Size and wealth do NOT indicate ability to do the Lord's work

(Mark 12:41-44), *“Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much.⁴² Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans.⁴³ So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury;⁴⁴ for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood.”*

- The Lord can use whatever we have for His purposes (Note below what they had accomplished).

- **Have kept Christ's word (8)**

- Obedience to Christ costs us nothing, and yet requires everything we have to offer

(John 14:15), *“If you love Me, keep My commandments.”*

- **Have not denied Christ's name (8)**

- Confession is necessary to become a child of God (cf. Romans 10:9-10)
- Continuing to confess Jesus is necessary throughout life.

(Matthew 10:32-33), *“Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.³³ But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.”*

- **Kept His command to persevere (10)**

- This came with the promise of God's protection
- Did not mean that God would keep them from the trial itself. Rather that God would supply protection and strength to overcome.
- It would impact the entire world. Those faithful to Christ would have Him to lean upon!

- **Bad**

- Nothing

- **Exhortations given**

- **Hold fast what you have (11)**

- Knowing that Christ would help them should give them confidence and steadfastness in the midst of their trials.

(Philippians 4:13), "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

- **Overcoming will bring victory (12)**

(Romans 8:37), "Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us."

- **Let him hear (13)**

LAODICEA (3:14-22) [LUKEWARM CHURCH]

Good

- Nothing

Bad

- You are lukewarm (16)
- Wretched, miserable, poor, blind & naked (17)

Warnings Given

- But gold and white garments (18)
- Anoint eyes with salve (18)
- Be zealous and repent (19)
- Let him hear (22)

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Laodicea (3:14-22) [Lukewarm Church]

In Roman times, due to prominent trade routes that converged there, Laodicea was the wealthiest of all the cities in the region of Phrygia. In AD 60, the city was destroyed by an earthquake, and was rebuilt without the help of Rome. It may be that such an attitude of independence infected the church there as well.

• Good

- Nothing

• Bad

- You are lukewarm **(16)**

- Laodicea was afflicted with lukewarm water, brought from hot springs several miles to the south.

(Hebrews 6:4-6), "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, ⁵ and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ if they fall away, to

renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.”

- To be anything less than burning with zeal is unpalatable to God

(Romans 1:14-15), [Paul’s example], *“I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise.¹⁵ So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also.”*

- **Wretched, miserable, poor, blind & naked (17)**

- “You say”, sad words as it indicates self-delusion. Lack of perception of their true condition.

- Laodicea was the banking center of Asia Minor

- The clothing center was world famous. (Famous for fine black wool)

- Famous Medical school there (Phrygian powder, used as remedy for eye problems).

- Christians make a mistake when they trust in material prosperity. Only spiritual riches matter!

(Luke 8:14) [Explanation of Sower Parable], *“Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity.”*

(Matthew 6:33), *“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”*

- **Amounts to nakedness & blindness (18)**

- **Warnings Given**

- **Buy gold and white garments (18)**

- True riches are found only in Christ!

(Titus :11-14), “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, ¹² teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, ¹³ looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.”

- Anoint eyes with salve **(18)**
- Be zealous and repent **(19)**

(Proverbs 9:8), “Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you; Rebuke a wise man, and he will love you.”

- Let him hear **(22)**

SCENE 2 (4 & 5) - PICTURE

- **Words that come to mind in describing the scene include:** majesty, authority, glory, beauty, preeminence, divinity, royalty, worship, heaven, worthiness (of the Christ).
- **Emotions that are elicited by the scene:** Awe, Confidence, Joy, Amazement, Thrill, Sadness, (*at the unopened scroll*), Relief (*at the slain lamb who prevailed to open the scroll*).

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Scene Two – Chapters 4 & 5 (READ)

PICTURE:

- **Note:** In scene 1, we looked at what I wrote down as a way of illustrating how you are to do the work of filling out the scene pages. Then, I asked for any other input. From now on, I would like for you to begin the discussion, then we will finish with my perceptions of the scene.

- **Question: What is your emotional response to the second scene in Revelation 4 & 5. What perceptions do you have of the scene?**

- Discussion...

My Introductory Thoughts:

- **(Harkrider)** – “Chapters 4 and 5 present the sovereignty of God who is on His throne and whose righteous rule is vindicated by the work of Christ. Though it may sometimes appear that the wicked rule, all things are actually controlled by God.”

- Imagine how impressed you would be to be able to walk into the Oval office in Washington, or Buckingham Palace in London, etc.
- Here, John is shown the throne room scene of God

- **He witnessed:**

- **Majesty, glory, royalty, divinity, Preeminence** (God on His Throne, and the Lamb at His right hand)

(1 Chronicles 29:11) [David’s Praise of God before Israel],

“Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as head over all.”

- **Authority & worship** (God, who was worthy).... 4 living creatures and 24 elders.

(Psalm 150), *“Praise the Lord! Praise God in His sanctuary; Praise Him in His mighty firmament! ² Praise Him for His mighty acts; Praise Him according to His excellent greatness! ³ Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; Praise Him with the lute and harp! ⁴ Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes! ⁵ Praise Him with loud cymbals; Praise Him with clashing cymbals! ⁶ Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!”*

- **Note:** These living creatures had a singular purpose in their creation, to worship the Almighty God... (cf. vs. 4-8), *“They do not rest day or night”* (to worship Him).

- **Reading the account elicits strong emotions!**

- **Awe** – John was in the presence of God
- **Confidence** – The omnipotence of God is on display

(2 Chronicles 32:7-8), [Words of King Hezekiah as the King of Assyria lay siege to Jerusalem], *“Be strong and courageous; do not be afraid nor dismayed before the king of Assyria, nor before all the multitude that is with him; for there are more with us than with him. ⁸ With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God, to help us and to fight our battles.”* And the people were strengthened by the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.”

- The Lord sent an angel that cut down *“every might man of valor, leader and captain the camp of the king of Assyria (vs. 21). 185,000 Assyrians.*
- That same God is on our side!

- Joy – “I was glad when they said unto me, ‘Let us go into the house of the Lord’” (Psalm 122:1).
- Thrill – Is it not thrilling to be a witness of great and wondrous events? What event greater than the opening of God’s scroll!
- Note: John was sad when no worthy one was initially found who could open the scroll (Wouldn’t we be as well?)
- The relief and joy of John at the revelation of the lamb of God is obvious. Surely we can relate.

(1 Corinthians 15:17-22), “And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!¹⁸ Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.¹⁹ If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.²⁰ But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.²¹ For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead.²² For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.”

SCENE 2 (4 & 5) - PRINCIPLE

- It is not surprising that before addressing the WAR that was coming, in which God's people would suffer, that the vision would show Who is on our side, and what They are capable of doing.
- **Remember the message of the book:**
 1. Victory of God and Christ over Satan
 2. The ultimate victory of God's people, and defeat of evil

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What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn? Why is it found here early in the book?

My Thoughts:

- **A discussion of the trials and tribulations, their cause (principalities and powers), and the consequence to God's people will follow in the book.**
 - How important it is to begin by showing who is on our side, and of what They are capable!
- **Remember the theme of the book, established in our very first week of study:**
 - The victory of God and Christ over Satan
 - The ultimate victory of God's people, and defeat of evil.
- **God wants confidence, peace and surety for His people!**

(Romans 8:31-32), "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?"³² He who did not spare His

own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

(Romans 8:37-39), *"Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

(Revelation 11:16-18) [The 24 elders proclaim the victory of God], *"And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, ¹⁷ saying: "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. ¹⁸ The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth."*

SCENE 2 (4 & 5) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- God is in control
- God's will shall be accomplished on the earth
- Our existence is God centric!

To us

- God is in control
- God's will shall be accomplished on the earth
- Our existence is God centric!

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Practice – Application to them and us

- **Note:** In every sense, the message of Revelation 4 & 5 is timeless. So, the applications that the 1st century Christians would make from the vision is exactly the same as we today!

- **God is in control**

(1 Chronicles 29:12-13), "Both riches and honor come from You, And You reign over all. In Your hand is power and might; In Your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. ¹³ "Now therefore, our God, we thank You and praise Your glorious name."

- **His will shall be accomplished on the earth (What is that will?) (The scroll in the vision)**

(Acts 17:26-27), "And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, ²⁷ so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might

grobe for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us.”

- **We are not the center of the universe, but God is the center of all things! (Theocentric view of reality).**

- **Recently viewed Video: Hubble telescope, focused on one section of black space.**

- Picture developed. Two stars, and then hundreds and hundreds of galaxies, each with millions and millions of stars.
- How much of the universe? Hold a dime at arm's length, size of the eye on Truman's face.
- The earth is nowhere near the center of the universe, and is small and insignificant
- Think of the sun the size of a soccer ball. The earth would be 26 yards away, the size of the head of a pen.

- **But, look at it from behind the curtain! (Concentric circles, ripples in the center of a pond)**

- (Revelation 4:2) God on throne
(5:7) Jesus beside him
- (4:4) 24 thrones with 24 elders
- (4:6) Around the throne 4 living creatures
- (5:11) Angels surrounding the throne (10,000 X 10,000, and thousands of thousands)
- (5:13) The rest of creation

SCENE 1 CONTINUED (2 & 3) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- Open Door (4:1)
- Voice like trumpet (4:1)
- Throne (4:2)
- God on Throne (4:2-3)
- Rainbow (4:3)
- 24 Thrones/Elders (4:4)
- White robes (4:4)
- Crowns of gold (4:4)
- Lightnings, thunders, voices (4:5)
- 7 lamps of fire (4:5)
- Sea of glass (4:6)
- Four living creatures (4:6-8)
- Scroll (5:1)
- 7 seals (5:1)
- Lion/tribe of Judah (5:5)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapters 2 and 3

- Identify and define

- **Open Door (4:1)**

- Typically, the use of the word “door” symbolically indicates an opportunity

(3:8), [Letter to church in Philadelphia], *“I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.”*

(1 Corinthians 16:8-9), *“But I will tarry in Ephesus until Pentecost. ⁹ For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.”*

- Here it indicates access. John had the opportunity to enter the throne room of God!

- **Voice like a trumpet (4:1)**

- The voice is not identified, but the sound of a trumpet is piercing and clear
- The voice compelled John to come witness the scene
- The image is found elsewhere in scripture

(Exodus 19:16-19) [at Mount Sinai, in God's presence], *"Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled.¹⁷ And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain.¹⁸ Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly.¹⁹ And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice."*

(1 Corinthians 15:51-52), [At Christ's coming], *"Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."*

• **Throne (4:2)**

- The throne of God. (Mentioned 17 times in this scene/at least 40 times in the book)
- Signifies the "infinite power, rule and dominion of God over His creation" (Harkrider)

(1 Kings 22:19) [Similar vision to Micaiah during Ahab's reign], *"Then Micaiah said, "Therefore hear the word of the Lord: I saw*

the Lord sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by, on His right hand and on His left.”

- **God on Throne (4:2-3)**

- Not an anthropomorphic representation of God
- The two gemstones represent the Divine attributes of God as Spirit
 - Gemstones associated with radiance and value
 - **Jasper** – (Note: in 21:11 – “clear as crystal”) Such clarity would rightly emphasize the righteousness and holiness of God
 - **Sardius – (sardino)** a sardius, a precious stone of which there are two types, the former is called a carnelian (because flesh coloured) and the latter a sard (Thayer)
 - Most scholars say the sardius stone, however, references the “sard” which is a red/reddish brown stone. This would emphasize God’s justice

(Hebrews 12:29), “For our God is a consuming fire.”

(Psalm 89:14), “Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; mercy and truth go before Your face.”

- **Rainbow (4:3)**

- The rainbow has from Noah been a symbol of hope and mercy (cf. Genesis 9:12-17)
- Picture in your minds eye a beautiful emerald (precious stone) rainbow all around the throne.

- **24 elders/ sitting on 24 thrones (4:4)**

- “Why are there 24 seats around the throne? Again the apocalyptic use of numbers must be discerned. Perhaps the most logical answer is that since “twelve” is symbolic of “God’s people,” when one combines the 12 tribes of Israel with those who followed Christ as taught by the 12 apostles, one gets the number 24, which represents the sum of God’s covenant people.” (Harkrider).
- Leaders of God’s covenant people (both physical and spiritual). Sons of Israel/Apostles.

• **White Robes (4:4)**

- Rainment of the 24 elders.
- White indicates purity. (Washed in the blood of the lamb).

(7:13-14) [the great multitude in white robes], *“Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?”¹⁴ And I said to him, “Sir, you know.” So he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”*

• **Crowns of gold (4:4)**

- Worn by the 24 elders.
- The crowns signify their reign in victory over God’s enemies

(2 Timothy 2:12), *“If we endure, we shall also reign with Him.”*

• **Lightnings, thunders, and voices (4:5)**

- A very similar display before Israel on Mount Sinai

(Exodus 19:16), *“Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick*

cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled.”

- When God is present, there is reason to tremble, and be in awe at His magnificent presence.

• **7 lamps of fire (4:5)**

- In the text, described as the 7 Spirits of God (already identified as the Holy Spirit). (1:4)
- Harkider notes that since the work of the Spirit is “that of illumination of the truth” the lamps of burning fire offer “a graphic portrayal of this mission.

• **Sea of Glass (4:6)**

- The interesting thing about the sea is the contrast here with the scene in Revelation 21:1-ff
- Indications are we are describing the same basic scene with God on His throne (cf. Revelation 5)
- But in Revelation 21 there is no more sea

(Revelation 21:1), “Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.”

- Where the sea at present separates God from man, after judgment, we will be in His presence!

• **Four Living Creatures (4:6-8)**

- Remember – Symbolic language (with analogues to the Old Testament) Consider **Ezekiel 1:1-14**
- In Ezekiel the four creatures each had four faces (Lion, Man, Ox/Calf, Eagle) Just like in Revelation

- **Lion – Represents Strength**

- **Calf/Ox – Represents patient service and endurance**

- Man – Signifies intelligence, reason and wisdom
- Eagle – Penetrating vision and swiftness
- They are strong, smart, swift, with a desire to serve the Living God. (Always worshipping the Almighty)
 - Isaiah's throne room scene shows a similar worship being offered to God

(Isaiah 6:1-3), "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. ² Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³ And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!"

• Scroll (5:1) (KJV – BOOK) & Seven Seals (5:1)

- Basic statement of what the scroll is – The entirety of God's will, to be revealed to man in the breaking of the seals.
- As *Matthew 13:11* states, *"the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven."*
- 7 seals – 7 is a number of perfection (A perfect seal – only to be opened by one who is worthy)
- Harkrider – The fulness of the book and the guard of seven seals denote the completeness of Revelation

(Jude 3), "Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints."

(James 1:25), *“But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.”*

- The significance of the opening of the seals, revealing God’s will shall become evident as the study progresses

• **Lion of the Tribe of Judah (5:5)**

- A reference to the Messiah (Lion indicating strength) Judah was the kingly tribe from which Jesus came.

(Genesis 49:9-10), [Israel/Jacob’s blessing of Judah] *“Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; and as a lion, who shall rouse him?”*

¹⁰ The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to Him shall be the obedience of the people.”

SCENE 1 CONTINUED (2 & 3) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- Root of David (5:5)
- Lamb as though slain (5:6)
- Harp (5:8)
- Golden bowls of incense (5:8)
- New song (5:9-10)
- Many angels (5:11)
- Every creature (5:13)
- Text

Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapters 2 and 3

- Identify and define

- Root of David (5:5) Here defined as root in (22:16) as David's offspring or descendent

- Root indicates David's source. This an indication of Jesus' authority and deity

(Matthew 22:41-46), *“While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,⁴² saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?” They said to Him, “The Son of David.”⁴³ He said to them, “How then does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord,’ saying:⁴⁴ “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool’ ”? ⁴⁵ If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his Son?”⁴⁶ And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.”*

- They didn't understand Jesus, the Christ as God's son (Both Deity and Humanity). So, they couldn't answer Him.
- His association with David indicated the Messiah's rule on the throne

(Acts 2:30, 36), *“Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne..... “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”*

- A Lamb as though it had been slain (5:6)

- Interesting, He was told to look at the Lion of Judah, the root of David, and when he looked, He saw a lamb
- Remember, the view that the Israelites had of a conquering Messiah, rather than a suffering Savior! It is through His sacrifice that victory and power came!

(Isaiah 53:7), "He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth."

(John 1:29), "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

• Harps (5:8)

- Just like the bowls of incense represent prayer, the harps are symbolic of musical praise.
- If harps are literal (thus authorizing use of mechanical instruments) then the bowls are literal as well
- Notice the Singing of a new song (Ephesians 5:19) (Colossians 3:16).

• Golden Bowls of Incense (5:8)

- The prayers of the saints

(1 Corinthians 14:15), "What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding."

• New Song (5:9-10)

- The song is new because it is about the appearance of the one who is capable of redeeming mankind.

(Hebrews 11:13), *“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”*

- Before Jesus came, Redemption was unattainable. It was only hinted at until the fullness of time.
- The appearance of the Lion of Judah, the Root of David, the slain Lamb. Redemption (and victory) comes through the actions of God’s son!
- *(cf. Psalm 98)*

• Many angels (5:11)

- Imagine the scene (100,000,000) angels, plus thousands more, singing adulation and praise to God!
- Again, remember the symbols regarding the numbers. Not literal, rather incalculable.
- Escalating finally to the entirety of God’s creation!

• Every creature (5:13)

- The entirety of creation expresses their adulation for the worthy God and the Lamb

(cf. Psalm 148) (Note: Read at next slide, not here)...

SCENE 2 (4 & 5) – NOTES

- God is omnipotent, His followers will be victorious over trials
- This glorious vision should give us thrills and confidence too!
- 4 living creatures - cherubims
- Worthiness: Creator, Savior, God.
- The Opening of the Seven Seals
- A reminder: The theocentric nature of reality. Misunderstood but true!

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The scene establishes the omnipotence of God. This message at the beginning of the book would help to equip Christians during their suffering at the end of the first century.

This glorious vision is good for us as well. Any Christian should thrill at this scene of Almighty God, and His redeeming Son. All the heavenly host praised them, and we should as well!

The four living creatures are identified as cherubims in Ezekiel (Ezekiel 10:20-22), *“This is the living creature I saw under the God of Israel by the River Chebar, and I knew they were cherubim. ²¹ Each one had four faces and each one four wings, and the likeness of the hands of a man was under their wings. ²² And the likeness of their faces was the same as the faces which I had seen by the River Chebar, their appearance and their persons. They each went straight forward.”*

- Cherubim are presented in scripture as a high order of angels, who execute God's will, and are assigned the work of guarding holy things.

(Genesis 3:24), *“So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.”*

- Representations on the ark of the covenant

(Exodus 25:18-22), *“And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work you shall make them at the two ends of the mercy seat.¹⁹ Make one cherub at one end, and the other cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim at the two ends of it of one piece with the mercy seat.²⁰ And the cherubim shall stretch out their wings above, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and they shall face one another; the faces of the cherubim shall be toward the mercy seat.²¹ You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you.²² And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.”*

- Spoken of as being in God's presence when He reigns in heaven.

(Psalm 99:1), *“The Lord reigns; let the peoples tremble! He dwells between the cherubim; let the earth be moved!”*

- **(Harkrider)** “These living creatures are special servants of God – strong, swift, intelligent, and always vigilant. The highest of the heavenly host serve the Father.”

The songs of praise sung give explain the worthiness of God and the Lamb!

- **CREATOR (4:11) READ**

(Psalm 19:1-4), "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. ² Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. ³ There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. ⁴ Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."

- **SLAIN LAMB AS SAVIOR (5:9-10) READ, (5:12) READ**

- He has redeemed us to God
- He has bought us with a price (His precious blood)

(1 Peter 1:18-19), "knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

- **BOTH FATHER AND LAMB AS PREEMINENT GOD ON THRONE (5:13) READ**

(Psalm 148), "Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; Praise Him in the heights! ² Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His hosts! ³ Praise Him, sun and moon; Praise Him, all you stars of light! ⁴ Praise Him, you heavens of heavens, And you waters above the heavens! ⁵ Let them praise the name of the Lord, For He commanded and they were created. ⁶ He also established them forever and ever; He made a decree which shall not pass away. ⁷ Praise the Lord from the earth, You great sea creatures and all the depths; ⁸ Fire and hail, snow and clouds; Stormy wind, fulfilling His word; ⁹ Mountains and all hills; Fruitful

trees and all cedars; ¹⁰ Beasts and all cattle; Creeping things and flying fowl; ¹¹ Kings of the earth and all peoples; Princes and all judges of the earth; ¹² Both young men and maidens; Old men and children. ¹³ Let them praise the name of the Lord, For His name alone is exalted; His glory is above the earth and heaven. ¹⁴ And He has exalted the horn of His people, The praise of all His saints — Of the children of Israel, A people near to Him. Praise the Lord!”

The opening of the seven seals

- Our next scene (6:1-17) relates the events which occurred at the opening of the first 6 of the 7 seals of the scroll
- The book also refers to the blowing of 7 trumpets, and the pouring out of 7 bowls of wrath
- We will be discussing the parallels of these events throughout our study of Revelation.
- The opening of the seals indicates the carrying out of God’s divine will. Who can (as Harkider asks) “open the book, extricate and then execute its contents?”
 - Only the lamb that had been slain.

(Jeremiah 23:5-6), “Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord, ‘That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. ⁶ In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

(Acts 2:30-36), “Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne,³¹ he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.³² This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.³³ Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.³⁴ “For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: ‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand,³⁵ Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.” ’³⁶ “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

A reminder: Reality has God at the center. This encompasses more than the physical. It encompasses both God’s creation (physical and spiritual realms) and God’s own self-sufficient/eternal nature. This must always be remembered by God’s children.

SCENE 3 (6:1-17) - PICTURE

- This is the first of three “sevens” that run parallel to one another in chapters 6-16 of Revelation.
- We begin to see the plight of Christians in the first century
- Awe (the four horsemen)
- Sobriety and sadness at the horrible things to come: mayhem, scarcity, death, persecution, and fear.
- “Who is able to stand?”

36

Introductory thoughts to be stated BEFORE the reading of the text:

- **This is the first of 3 “sevens” contained in the book**
 - 6:1 – 8:5, the unsealing of the 7 seals
 - 8:6 – 9:21, the sounding of the 7 trumpets
 - 15:1 – 16:21, the pouring out of the seven bowls of wrath
- **These three series run parallel to each other (with the trumpets and bowls offering more detail)**
 - **Robert Harkrider:** “The information revealed in the seven seals is more general in nature as the first six seals give a panorama of God’s dealings with mankind on earth, beginning with the coming of Christ and culminating in the scene of final judgment.”
- **So, all three sevens, for the most part, are simultaneous**

- **Harkrider again:** “From the background of heaven, John describes them one after the other by revealing from different viewpoints the judging and restraining action of God.” ... “The symbols are a panoramic overview of the constant struggle between Christ and Satan, truth and falsehood. When the picture is completed, the thread that ties it all together is this: truth and righteousness will prevail.”

Scene Three [Opening of the first 6 seals] – 6:1-17 (READ)

Picture: To see what emotions and impressions the text has upon each of us... (Get their impressions first)

[CLICK]

PICTURE:

- **A mixed bag in this text, as we begin to see the plight of the Christians in the first century.**
 - However, even in the midst of these horrible sights, there is reason for the Christian to remain hopeful.
- **Emotions and Impressions**
 - Awe, because of the power of the vision, with the four horsemen
 - “Four horsemen of the Apocalypse” (Does not fully envision the control of God over the circumstances. He utilizes them, limits them, dismisses them when their work is done. God is in control!

- Sobering idea of mayhem, scarcity, death, persecution and fear

• The ultimate question in verse 17: ***“For the great day of His [the Lamb’s] wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”***

Book with Seven Seals, Revelation 6						
C O M I N G <i>of</i> C H R I S T	P E R S E C U T I O N	7 T R U M P E T S (8,9)	7 B O W L S O F W R A T H (16)	A R M A G E D D O N	God’s Kingdom Stands (20)	F I N A L J U D G M E N T
		God Avenges the Blood of the Saints				

37

- I don’t think I was sufficiently clear last week regarding the correspondence of the 7 seals, with the 7 trumpets and the 7 bowls of wrath
- This chart helps to picture the simultaneous nature of the seals, trumpets and bowls of wrath as we consider the next 10 chapters of the book.
 - Robert Harkrider quote: “The information revealed in the 7 seals is more general in nature as the first six seals give a panorama of God’s dealings with mankind on earth, beginning with the coming of Christ and

culminating in the scene of final judgment” (Truth Commentary – Revelation)

- The 7th seal opens the second series (trumpets) which are warnings God issues to the wicked before the judgment. From the 7th trumpet come seven plagues (bowls of wrath) showing the successful defeat of the wicked.

Note: This chart appears on page 79 of Robert Harkrider’s Revelation commentary (Truth Series)

SCENE 3 (6:1-17) - PRINCIPLE

- The events begin with the coming of the Messiah, and end with the final Judgment of God
- Though the end is certain, Satan is allowed to impact the lives of the faithful while they are here on the earth.
- In the end, the wrath of the Lamb can not be withstood. God wins.

38

What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

- **The events covered by Revelation began with the coming of the Messiah, as the battle against Satan was joined in His advent**

- **Though the end is certain, Satan is allowed to impact the lives of the faithful while they are here on the earth.**

- For example, consider the response to the loud cry of the martyrs mentioned in verse 10

(6:11), “and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.”

- **In the end, the wrath of the Lamb can not be withstood. God wins.**

SCENE 3 (6:1-17) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- They would be afflicted by Satan
- Persecution, deprivation, plagues, famines, wars
- God’s judgment would come upon men

TO US

- Persecution will continue until all is “completed” (vs. 11)
- Though the persecution was dire then, each of us can expect a measure of the same

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Practice – Application to them and us

- **To them:**
 - **They would be afflicted by Satan**
 - Persecution unto death
 - Economic deprivation
 - Plagues, famines, wars

- **God's judgment would come upon the world**

- **To us:**

- **Persecution will continue until all is "completed" (vs. 11)**

- **Though the persecution then was especially bad, each of us can expect a measure of that same attack of Satan**

(2 Timothy 3:12), "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."

Note: As we will soon see in the vision, the answer to the question asked in verse 17, "who is able to stand" against the wrath of the Lamb in that great day IS ... the faithful!

(2 Thessalonians 1:6-10), "since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you,⁷ and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,⁸ in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁹ These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,¹⁰ when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed."

COVID-19 (THE END IS COMING)

C 3 RONALD - 6

O 15 WILSON - 6

R 18 REAGAN - 6

O 15 666

N 14

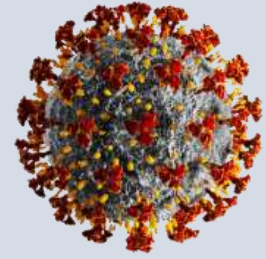
A 1 WWW (Hebrew)

6 66 666

World Wide Web

(Hebrew)

- 7 Different Corona viruses
- English language
- Context
- You can't make symbolic language literal!



40

Note: This slide is an appendage to the study in general. It was added because in the previous week I had received my vaccine, and came across the false teaching of this preacher. It serves to establish a few principles that will be beneficial in our study.

(Revelation 13:11-18), The Beast of the Earth

(18), "Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666."

- Mark on right hand or forehead
- No one could buy or sell unless they had the mark

A Dispensationalist Preacher named Robert Breaker recently preached a sermon on the subject, attributing the Corona Virus with the mark of the Beast

- First, he noted that the Word Corona, when the number of the letters, and the numerical value of each letter is taken, leads to the number 666.

- **Second, he noted the claims of some regarding the technical name COVID-19**
 - **COV** – Certificate of Vaccination
 - **ID** – To Identify all who have been Vaccinated (Only those will be able to buy and sell)
 - **19** – AI (Artificial intelligence) used to monitor those who are vaccinated
 - Inject something into the arm (via vaccination)
 - **Bill Gates – (false claim, rebutted) Quantum dot tattoo that can be used to monitor who has and who has not been vaccinated**
 - **Gates here is a big contributor to the World Health Organization / Fauci also in favor of mandatory certificates**

These kinds of speculative theories regarding the meaning of the number 666, have been common for 100's of years

- **Did you know when you translate Nero Caesar from the Greek language into the Hebrew, and give the letter equivalents, you also get 666? Some feel NERO is the beast.**
- **I met a man used numbers to claim in some convoluted way that JFK's name equalled 666. He called JFK (this was less than a decade after his death) was the Ant-Christ**
 - Revelation 13:3 (Mortally wounded head that healed). Thus, JFK was the Antichrist, alive, and going to bring about the end days

- **[CLICK]** Some thought that Ronald Reagan was the beast because of his name.
- **[CLICK]** Others think that the World Wide Web has beastly qualities. Claiming that Satan's minions would only allow buying and selling on the WWW

Certainly don't have time to debunk them all, but... let's deal quickly with the latest

- First, coronaviruses are not new. At present 7 have been discovered that impact humans, including the common cold
- **Second, the naming of the Virus is far different that this man (and the crazy websites where he got his information) claim.**
 - CO (Corona)
 - VI (Virus)
 - D (Disease)
 - 19 - Originated in Wuhan, China in 2019
- **Third, it would be silly to think that the only way a book written in Greek can be understood is to ascribe an ENGLISH word to its interpretation!**
 - The word Corona is applied to the viruses because of the common definition of the word:
 - Corona – a part of a body that looks like a crown; Gaseous envelope of the sun and other stars
 - In other words, it is named because of the way it looks under an electron microscope
- **Fourth, the context! (Remember, these are things impacting Christians in the first century!)**

(Revelation 1:1-3), *“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,² who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.³ Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.”*

- Not referencing the struggle between Catholicism and the Muslims during the crusades
- Not referencing World War 1, the war to end all wars
- Not referencing World War 2, nor Adolf Hitler
- Not referencing the Cold War, and the Soviet Union
- Not referencing Social security numbers, computer chips injected into the skin, or the European Union.
- Any effort to speculate is misguided and has been disproven again, and again, and again by the failures of previous speculations.
- **Why are such speculations constant, convincing so many?**
 - Because people are credulous (naïve and often ignorant!)
 - Conspiracy theories trouble too many (including too many Christians)
 - It is a sign of a person who is credulous, naive and spiritually immature to take at face value

any view. (Done all the time by Christians on social media).

- It is a sign of nobility to research claims, and reject the false and erroneous information or disseminated teaching!

(Acts 17:11), "These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so."

- **Fifth, you can't make symbolic language literal!**

- The text defines the number 666, *"for it is the number of a man: His number is 666" (13:18)*
- The number 7 is divine. The number 6 is one less than divine, it is human
- The divine is from above and perfect. The human is from below and is imperfect
- The conflict being described in Revelation is GOD VS Satan. Good VS Evil. The Divine VS Sinful Mankind.

I like Robert Harkrider's conclusion to Revelation 13, which we will study in more detail later:

- "The number 6 is a stand-in number for man, just as the number 7 exclusively represents God. Any occasion where man is in conflict with God, man will fail. Therefore the "wisdom" referred to in this text is that all who stand with God shall win, but possessors of the mark of the beast shall see failure upon failure upon failure!"

NOTE: SKIP to FIERY RED HORSE on NEXT SLIDE (1/17)

SCENE 3 (6:1-17) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- Lamb (6:1)
- Four creatures (6:1)
- White horse (6:2)
- He who sat (6:2)
- Bow (6:2)
- Crown (6:2)
- Fiery red horse (6:4)
- One who sat (6:4)
- Great sword (6:4)
- Black horse (6:5)
- He who sat (6:5)
- Pair of scales (6:5)
- Pale horse (6:8)
- Death (6:8)
- Hades (6:8)
- Martyred Souls (6:9)
- White robe (6:11)
- Servants & Brethren (11)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in Chapter 6

- Identify and define

- **Lamb (6:1)**

- **Q: Who is the lamb?** Already identified, the reference is to the Lord

- **Four Living Creatures (6:1)**

- **Q: Who are the living creatures?** Angels (seraphim/cherubim) who worship God continually

- **White horse (6:2) (First seal)**

- The horses are similar to the vision of Zechariah (6:1-3)

(Zechariah 6:1-3), "Then I turned and raised my eyes and looked, and behold, four chariots were coming from between two mountains, and the mountains were mountains of bronze.² With the first chariot were red horses, with the second chariot black horses,³ with the third chariot white horses, and with the fourth

chariot dappled horses—strong steeds. ⁴ *Then I answered and said to the angel who talked with me, “What are these, my lord?”*

- So, the imagery would be familiar to the Jews
- If there is any significance to the horse, it is in the color white (same with other horses, only the colors have any significance. The rider is the agent bringing the events of the seals to pass).
- (What have we noted regarding the color white? It signifies righteousness or purity)

• **He who sat (6:2)**

- Two major views regarding the one who sat on the white horse (not identified)
 - **Picture of a Parthian general, signifying conquests against the Roman empire**
 - Parthia (Iran/Persia) was the most capable opponent of Rome at this time
 - **The Victorious Christ going forth as the conqueror of evil in the world**
 - Harkrider, Hailey and Hendrikson all agree with this view
 - Consider Hendrikson’s arguments on the matter:
- **Context:** The Lamb (opening the seals) is said to have “conquered/prevailed to open the scrolls” (5:5). It seems warranted that the conqueror in chapter 5 & 6 is the same person
- **Word Study:** “White” associated with that which is holy/heavenly. “Crown”, consider (14:14). The word “conquer”, with only two exceptions, only has reference

to Christ or believers, consider (John 16:33; 3:21; 5:5; 6:2). Hendrikson: “Meditate on this exalted phrase. We feel pretty sure that, had you never heard another interpretation, you would at once have said: ‘This is the conquering Christ.’”

- Parallel passage of 19:11, *“Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.”*
- Conclusion by Hendrikson: “Frankly, we do not see how any one is justified in saying that the Rider on the white horse in 6:2 means one thing, and in 19:11 something else. Why not permit the Apocalypse to explain its own symbolism?”
- Note: if you have questions about this, I will be glad to supply you with copies of the commentary passages from all three commentators that defend this interpretation.

- **Bow (6:2)**

- A weapon of warfare/conquest

(Psalm 45:3-6) [Note: a Messianic Psalm], *“Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Mighty One, with Your glory and Your majesty. ⁴ And in Your majesty ride prosperously because of truth, humility, and righteousness; and Your right hand shall teach You awesome things. ⁵ Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; the peoples fall under You. ⁶ Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.”*

- **Crown (6:2) (note: stephanos, rather than diadem) victor or conqueror vs royalty. But, both Apply to Jesus**

- Royalty/authority. A conqueror. (16 times the Greek word for conqueror is used in Revelation, 14 of those times referencing the victory of either God/Lord or believers)

- **Harkrider:** “Christ conquered the devil’s unchecked power over sin and death, and he continues to conquer every effort of this destroyer of the kingdom of God.”

- **Fiery red horse (6:4) (2nd seal)**

- Red – symbolizes judgment. Also slaughter or bloodshed (Context would indicate latter)

- **One who sat (6:4)**

- Second rider would seem to be signifying one who persecutes
- Good point: Wherever the gospel is preached, it is followed by the sword of persecution!

(Matthew 10:21-22a) [Jesus warned His disciples of persecution to follow their preaching], *“Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death.²² And you will be hated by all for My name's sake.”*

(Matthew 10:34-36), *“Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword.³⁵ For I have come to “set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law’;³⁶ and ‘a man's enemies will be those of his own household.’”*

- **Great sword (6:4)**

- No peace on earth. Men killing men. The sword of persecution great in the extent to which its reach would be felt. (Same Greek word as in Matthew 10:34 above)
- Note: Greek word (rhomphaia/6:8) used to describe the long heavy sword used in warfare
- Here, Greek word (machaira) would symbolize persecution
- Early Christians were killed with swords and knives, mauled by wild animals, burned alive at the stake, nailed to crosses, thrown into boiling oil. There was no rest for them during this time. Only the promise of danger and violence.
- **Black horse (6:5) (3rd seal)**
 - Hailey: “Black portrays grief and mourning. In it is no light”

(Jeremiah 4:27-28), [God’s judgment of Israel for her evil], “For thus says the Lord: “The whole land shall be desolate; Yet I will not make a full end. ²⁸ For this shall the earth mourn, And the heavens above be black, Because I have spoken. I have purposed and will not relent, Nor will I turn back from it.”

- **He who sat (6:5)**
 - He does not signify famine, as there is plenty of oil and wine (6)
 - However, the idea here does signify scarcity. Perhaps the lot of Christians to be persecuted through economic deprivation. (Not all persecution is physical/violent)
 - Hailey: “The rider of the black horse therefore symbolizes grief, woe and mourning, the lot of

persecuted saints who followed the preaching of the gospel.”

• **Pair of scales (6:5)**

- A means of measuring out (Note: a penny was a full day's wage)
- Consider the plight of a Christian whose entire day's wage would only buy a single portion of the most basic necessities needed to feed one person.
- Note: Christians who were unwilling to worship the emperor or engage in the evil practices of the trade guilds, they were removed from jobs, or forced to accept lower wages.
- Consider the test to all Christians: Reject faith, and enjoy the food and advantages of those in the good graces of the empire. Or serve Christ and suffer persecution, both physical and economic.

• **Pale horse (6:8)**

- Pale: A sickly, gruesome color symbolic of disease and death (Harkrider)

• **Death (6:8)**

- So far we have noticed Satan's efforts to Persecute, and Economically oppress
- Also, there are normal frailties and struggles that are common to men (disease and death)
- Such will continue until Christ comes again. Men are afflicted with all kinds of fleshly troubles, whether from warfare, famine, disease or "beasts" (death by accident or danger).

- Consider the ends of 25% of the earth, in addition to the persecution and deprivation Christians would suffer!
- (Harkrider: When these common woes of mankind are added to the specific persecutions brought on the saints, one can easily understand the agonizing plea of souls under the altar embodied in the fifth seal.) *“How long!”*

• Hades (6:8)

- Not Hell: Hades goes hand in hand with Death. The realm of those who are dead

(Matthew 16:18), “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”

- Though Hades is the present reality of those who die, it has no lasting power because of the resurrection of Christ.

(Consider with the 5th seal, there is a change in the vision. The horses, and their impact on earth are gone, and now we have the martyrs of God under the altar).

• Martyred Souls (6:9)

- *“Slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.” (9)*

Stephen (Acts 7:57-58), *“Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord;⁵⁸ and they cast him out of the city and stoned him.”*

(Acts 9:1-2), *“Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest² and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if*

he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.”

James (Acts 12:1-2), *“Now about that time Herod the king stretched out his hand to harass some from the church.² Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword.”*

- **Tradition:** Philip-stoned (54); Hierapolis (54); James (John’s brother)-beaten to death; Barnabas-burned alive (64); Mark-dragged to death (64); Peter-crucified (69/Nero); Paul-beheaded (69/Nero); Aristarchus (70); Epaphras (70); Priscilla, Aquila, Andronicus, Junia (70). Silas-scourging (70); Onesiphorus and Porphyrius-tied to wild horses (70); Andrew-crucified (70); Bartholomew-beheaded (70); Thomas-burned to death (70); Matthew-beheaded (70); Simon Zelotes and Judas Thaddeus-crucified/beaten to death (70); Luke-hanged (93); Antipas-roasted alive (95); Timothy-stoned to death (98)
- **Note: Consider their plea (vs. 10)**

- **White robe (6:11)**

- Symbol of righteousness
- As given to them, it indicates their glory and victory

- **Servants & Brethren (6:11)**

- Others would die for Christ
- Persecution would continue (and continues even today).
- No specific end date is noted here. Persecution will not end until Christ comes

(2 Timothy 3:12), *“Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.”*

- When he does, avenging will happen, Justice will be meted out by the Lord.

SCENE 3 CONT. (6:1-17) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- Sackcloth of hair (6:12)
- Moon like blood (6:12)
- Kings of the earth (6:15)
- Great men (6:15)
- Rich men (6:15)
- Commanders (6:15)
- Mighty men (6:15)
- Slave & free men (6:15)
- Great day of wrath (6:17)

42

Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 6 continued

- Identify and define

- **Note: The sixth seal brings a “day of the Lord” – Judgment on the wicked**

- OT writers often use such language (earthquakes, heavenly bodies changing appearance, etc. to signify judgment against wickedness). Cf. Joel 2:10; Isa. 13:10; Jer. 4:23-24; Matt. 24:29).

(Joel 2:10-11), [An army of locusts], *“The earth quakes before them, the heavens tremble; the sun and moon grow dark, and the stars diminish their brightness. ¹¹ The Lord gives voice before His army, for His camp is very great; for strong is the One who*

executes His word. For the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; who can endure it?"

(Isaiah 13:9-10), [Judgment against Babylon], *"Behold, the day of the Lord comes, cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and He will destroy its sinners from it. ¹⁰ For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be darkened in its going forth, and the moon will not cause its light to shine."*

(Jeremiah 4:23-24), [Jeremiah's sorrow for Judah], *"I beheld the earth, and indeed it was without form, and void; and the heavens, they had no light. ²⁴ I beheld the mountains, and indeed they trembled, and all the hills moved back and forth."*

(Matthew 24:29), [God's judgment upon Israel, and the fall of Jerusalem], *"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken."*

- Hailey believes this a judgment in that time against forces of evil persecuting the saints. He thinks that the promise to the martyrs would be fulfilled in that time frame.
- Harkrider believes this judgment to be one reference to the final judgment of God (connecting it with the triumphant scene in 7:9-17, which seems to depict "an eternal, heavenly state")
- As with many of the "days of the Lord" in the OT, it is difficult to go to history to ascribe any specific day as a fulfillment. In fact, the language is symbolic. **No**

need to look for earthquakes in that era, or astronomical occurrences.

• **Sackcloth of hair (6:12)**

- Total blackness (Sun not shining, covered with this sackcloth)

(Isaiah 50:3), "I clothe the heavens with blackness, And I make sackcloth their covering."

- Garment of dark, coarse cloth, made from the hair of animals. Used as a sign of mourning.

• **Moon like blood (6:12)**

- Discoloration of moon would accompany the darkening of the sun as a sign of judgment
- Red – a color indicating judgment

• **Kings of the earth (6:15)**

- First of seven classes of men mentioned who quail at the judgment from God. They can't stand before God's wrath. No man can.
- Make applications to our nation at present, who stand against God, and fall into these categories.
- Kings would be the most powerful, rulers of nations
 - Our politicians (especially national ones, who rule our nation)

• **Great men (6:15)**

- Men of learning. Arts and Sciences. Celebrities. Athletes. Influencers. Those who are admired.

• **Rich men (6:15)**

- Consider the effect of technocrats, their influence. (Men like Elon Musk, Jeff Besos, Mark Zuckerberg, Bill Gates).

- **Commanders (6:15)**

- Military leaders: Maybe not direct correlation in our nation. But in history, these men could not stand against God – Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander the Great, Roman emperors).

- **Mighty men (6:15)**

- Men of influence because of their ability or might (Economic, physical, position, etc.)
- Macho idea of physical strength indicating power pales in the face of God Almighty
- (Think about the comic book Superheroes/ or Greek Gods/ as contrasted with Jehovah)

- **Slave & Free men (6:15)**

- Societal situations have no bearing on whether you will escape God's judgment.
- If none of the others apply to us, these surely do.

(Romans 14:10b-12), *“For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. ¹¹ For it is written: “As I live, says the Lord, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God.” ¹² So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.”*

(Philippians 2:9-11), *“Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*

- **Great day of wrath (6:17)**

- The contextual description of this “day of the Lord” or judgment against the wicked.
- Question: *“Who is able to stand?” (17)*
- Answer: None who oppose God, or who God brings His wrath upon.
- However, in the next chapter we will see a group who will be able to stand in that day!

SCENE 3 (6:1-17) – NOTES

- The opening of the seals is the unveiling of God’s will to man.
- A time of conflict, ending in an unavoidable *“day of the Lord.”* The *“great day of His wrath.”*
- The cry of the martyrs (2 Thessalonians 1:3-10)
- The inevitability of judgment. God’s will shall be done in all things! (2 Corinthians 5:9-11)

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The opening of the seals is the unveiling of the entirety of God’s will, to reveal it to man.

- As Matthew 13:11 states, *“the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.”*

A time of conflict, ending in an unavoidable *“day of the Lord.”*
The *“great day of His wrath.”*

- The cry of the martyrs reminds me of 2 Thessalonians 1

(6:10), “And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”

(2 Thessalonians 1:3-10), “We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other,⁴ so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure,⁵ which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer;⁶ since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you,⁷ and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,⁸ in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁹ These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,¹⁰ when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.”

The inevitability of judgment. God’s will shall be done in all things!

(2 Corinthians 5:9-11), “Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.¹¹ Knowing, therefore, the terror of

the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.”

SCENE 4 (7:1-8) - PICTURE

- We will discuss the Jehovah’s Witness doctrine concerning the 144,000 thousand.
- Question: Why are the tribes of Dan and Ephraim not included in the count?
- Awe at God’s power, and His ability to harm the earth, sea and trees
- Thankfulness for God’s protection given to those who have His seal.

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Introductory thoughts to be stated BEFORE the reading of the text:

- **After the opening of the first six seals, we have a new vision recorded by John**
 - Notice: *“After these things I saw” (7:1)*

(Revelation 7:1-8) READ

- **Our discussion of this text will have to include some response to Jehovah’s Witness doctrine regarding the 144,000.**
 - It is very problematic, in that it claims a literal, though inconsistent, interpretation of the number and text.

- We will also discuss why the tribes of Dan and Ephraim are not counted among the twelve tribes which make up the 144,000.

Emotions and Initial perceptions

- (AWE) The vision again indicates a coming of God's wrath.
 - Consider the power of God – 4 angels given the power to hurt the earth and the sea.
- (THANKSGIVING) There is reason to be thankful and relieved. God protects those who have His mark upon them.

SCENE 4 (7:1-8) - PRINCIPLE

- No man is able to stand against the wrath of the Lamb of God (cf. 6:17).
- The vision here shows that those who belong to God will receive His protection at the execution of God's judgment.
- The 144,000 refers to the sum total of God's people who are on the earth when God's day of wrath is visited upon the world.

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What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

- **We have observed from 6:17, no man is able to stand against the wrath of the Lamb of God.**

- You will note that this particular day of wrath will be visited upon the “four corners of the earth.” That is, the entire earth!
- Wind blowing is a common OT symbol used for God’s power to destroy

(Jeremiah 49:36-37), “Against Elam I will bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and scatter them toward all those winds; there shall be no nations where the outcasts of Elam will not go. ³⁷ For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies and before those who seek their life. I will bring disaster upon them, My fierce anger,” says the Lord; ‘And I will send the sword after them until I have consumed them.”

(51:1-2), “Thus says the Lord: “Behold, I will raise up against Babylon, against those who dwell in Leb Kamai, a destroying wind. ² And I will send winnowers to Babylon, who shall winnow her and empty her land. For in the day of doom they shall be against her all around.”

- **The vision here shows that those who belong to God will receive His protection at the execution of God’s judgment.**

- The Biblical concept of a seal indicates a number of things: 1) Protection; 2) Ownership; 3) Certification
- We will discuss these further when looking at the characters and symbols of the chapter
- However, here note that the 144,000 who received the seal are thereby signified as belonging to Him.

- Until all were identified and marked, the day of wrath was delayed.
- They are identified and contrasted with those who receive the mark of the beast in numerous places in the book (7:3; 14:1; 15:2; 20:4; 22:4) Mark of the beast (13:15-18; 9:4; 14:9-11; 16:2; 19:20)
- **The 144,000 refers to the sum total of God's people who are on the earth when God's day of wrath is visited upon the world.**
 - The number is symbolic, and we will discuss it in more detail. It is a number of fullness or completeness. It is not a literal number.

SCENE 4 (7:1-8) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- As seen in chapter 6, God's protection does not guarantee escape from persecution and life's difficulties.
- However, it does guarantee salvation.

TO US

- Same
- Same (cf. Romans 8)

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Practice – Application to them and us

- **To them:**

- **As seen in chapter 6, God's protection does not guarantee escape from persecution and life's difficulties**

(2 Timothy 3:12-15), "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. ¹³ But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. ¹⁴ But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, ¹⁵ and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

- **However, it does guarantee salvation**

(Romans 8:37-39), "Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

- **To us:**

- **Both of these lessons are as applicable to us today as they were to those Christians living in the first century.**

SCENE 4 (7:1-8) – CHAR. & SYMBOLSA

- Four angels (7:1)
- Four corners of the earth (7:1)
- Four winds of the earth (7:1)
- Another angel (7:2)
- The seal of the living God (7:2)
- 144,000 servants of God (7:4)
- The tribes (7:5-8)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 6, part 1

• Identify and define

• Four Angels (7:1)

- One who brings a message from God
- Sometimes glad tidings

(Luke 2:13-14), “And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

- But here, to execute God’s judgment upon the earth. Given the authority to harm the earth, sea and trees at the time determined by God.
- Adam Clarke: “Instruments which God employs in the dispensation of His providence...”

• Four corners of the earth (7:1)

- Not literally four corners (earth is spherical, not a cube or square).
- Intended to encompass all the earth
- Note: This judgment is a world wide event, not just limited to Judea, or some other region

- **Four winds of the earth (7:1)**

- Wind from every direction: North, South, East, West
- As already noted, wind is and OT symbol of God's power to destroy
- These winds, as indicated by the text, are fully under God's control (Note: The angels were "holding" the winds, preventing them from harming the world until they had received the go ahead by God).

(Mark 4:37-41), [This ability a sign of Jesus' deity], *"And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. ³⁸ But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" ³⁹ Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰ But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?" ⁴¹ And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"*

- **Another angel (7:2)**

- This angel ascended from the east. (Any significance of east? Don't know... likened to the rising sun, but no way of knowing is there is any significance to the quarter from which he came).

- This angel was bringing a message to the other angels who were holding back the wind.
- This angel was holding the seal of God.
- His message from God, that the judgment should not commence until all the servants of God have received the seal on their foreheads.

• **The seal of the living God (7:2)**

- This type of language found in the OT (Ezekiel 9)
 - God determined to slay the wicked in Jerusalem
 - Six men (angels of God) appeared with battle axes to bring God's judgment
 - One man has a writer's inkhorn in his hand

(Ezekiel 9:4-7), "and the Lord said to him, "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it." ⁵ To the others He said in my hearing, "Go after him through the city and kill; do not let your eye spare, nor have any pity. ⁶ Utterly slay old and young men, maidens and little children and women; but do not come near anyone on whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary." So they began with the elders who were before the temple. ⁷ Then He said to them, "Defile the temple, and fill the courts with the slain. Go out!" And they went out and killed in the city."

- From **(Revelation 6:15)**, no man, no matter how powerful or influential, would be able to avoid God's wrath in that day
- Who would escape that judgment? Those who had the seal of God on their forehead.

- Not a literal seal, any more than the mark of the beast is a literal mark.
- **(Harkrider)** “Only the ones whom God knows as His own shall be able to stand.”
- Biblical concept of a seal
 - **Protection** against tampering (Christians are under God’s protection, obvious from the context)

(Matthew 27:66), *“Pilate said to them, “You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how.”⁶⁶ So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard.”*

- **Ownership** (God is a jealous God, We are His!) *“You shall have no other gods before Me”* (Ex. 20:3).

(Song of Solomon 8:6), **[Shulamite to her Beloved]**, *“Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm; for love is as strong as death, jealousy as cruel as the grave; its flames are flames of fire, a most vehement fire.”*

- **Certification** (Christians are certified by the Holy Spirit to be God’s children)

(Esther 3:12), **[A certified message from King Ahasuerus]**, *“Then the king's scribes were called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and a decree was written according to all that Haman commanded—to the king's satraps, to the governors who were over each province, to the officials of all people, to every province according to its script, and to every people in their language. In the name of King Ahasuerus it was written, and sealed with the king's signet ring.”*

(Ephesians 1:13-14), *“In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.”*

- **144,000 servants of God (7:4)**

- **How is the number arrived at?**

- Number 12 in apocalyptic writing represents God’s covenant people
- **Note: 24 elders (scene 2)** *““Why are there 24 seats around the throne? Again the apocalyptic use of numbers must be discerned. Perhaps the most logical answer is that since “twelve” is symbolic of “God’s people,” when one combines the 12 tribes of Israel with those who followed Christ as taught by the 12 apostles, one gets the number 24, which represents the sum of God’s covenant people.”* (Harkrider). Leaders of God’s covenant people (both physical and spiritual). Sons of Israel/Apostles.
- Number 10 is the apocalyptic number for fullness or completeness
- (12X12X10X10X10 = 144,000)
- Therefore, symbolizes all of God’s people, every servant upon the earth. God knows them all, and God will protect them all when the day of wrath comes!

(2 Timothy 2:19), *“Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: “The Lord knows those who are His,”*

and, “Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

- Any claim that God may “miss” one is a false claim (Isaiah 40:26-27), “Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these things, who brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name, by the greatness of His might and the strength of His power; not one is missing. ²⁷ Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel: “My way is hidden from the Lord, and my just claim is passed over by my God”?”

- **The tribes (7:5-8)**

- The tribes signify God’s covenant people.
- Not LITERALLY the tribes (only the Jews), just like not LITERALLY 144,000

(Galatians 3:28), “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

(Romans 2:28-29), “For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; ²⁹ but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.”

- Only if needed (will be dealt with on last slide). Tribes of Dan and Ephraim were omitted. Joseph’s tribe consists of 2 tribes Ephraim and Manasseh. So, Joseph is listed, and Manasseh too. Dan and Ephraim NOT. Why? Best explanation is...

- Ephraim led Israel into idolatry through Jeroboam (1 Kings 11:26; 12:25-33)

- Dan left his inheritance, and moved north to Laish where he practiced idolatry (Judges 18)
- Therefore, they wouldn't be considered loyal to God, and properly represent God's covenant people.

SCENE 4 (7:1-8) – NOTES

- Problems of Jehovah's Witnesses view of the 144,000.
- Problem with idea of the 144,000 being literal Jews
- Text

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Problems of Jehovah's Witnesses view of the 144,000

- **The Jehovah's Witnesses believe:**
 - The 144,000 sealed will be given a spiritual body and spend eternity in heaven
 - This number is fixed, and already complete. No one now living will be added to that number
 - The remainder (the great multitude of 7:9-17) will live in a perfected fleshly body on a new earth.
- **First problem, taking what is clearly apocalyptic text as literal rather than symbolic**

- This is typical of Adventist theology, and is rife with pitfalls
- **Second problem, inconsistency in applying a literal interpretation**
 - If the 144,000 is literal, then the individuals who make it up must be literally Jews
 - There would have to be 12,000 from each of the 12 tribes. Who are they, and how can they be determined since the destruction of the temple destroyed all genealogies.
- **Third problem, the 144,000 are said to be on earth, and the multitude in heaven**
 - The locations are inverted in Witness theology
- **Fourth problem, the NT does not speak of a renewed eternal earth, but the total dissolution of the physical universe!**

(2 Peter 3:10-13), “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.¹¹ Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?¹³ Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”

- The reference to new heavens and a new earth is obviously a spiritual location. It is a reference to our eternal reward in God's presence. (HEAVEN).
- **(Clinton Hamilton)** "Peter spoke in 2 Peter 1:4 of the corruption that is in the world through lust. In this new order, there will be no such thing. Only the righteous will abide or dwell in this order of things. Evidently, this refers to the inheritance that God is to give the saints who are faithful, and it will be characterized as being incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you (1 Peter 1:5). This is the new order and will not partake of the nature or quality of the old and thus is called *kainos*, new.

Problem with the idea of the 144,000 being literal Jews

- **The primary problem is that God's covenant people at the time of this writing are Christians, not Jews**
 - Premillennial views mistakenly claim that the Jew holds an eternal standing in God's scheme of Redemption
 - This goes against the teaching in Romans, Galatians and Hebrews

(Galatians 3:28), *"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."*

(Romans 2:28-29), *"For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh;²⁹ but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in*

the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.”

- **Also, the twelve tribes mentioned in (7:4-8) who received the seal are not the actual 12 tribes**

- Twelve tribes consist of: Judah, Reuben, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Dan, Simeon, Levi, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph and Benjamin.
- Remember that when the promised land was taken, Joseph’s inheritance consisted of two “tribes” indicated by his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim
- In our list, Joseph represents Himself (making Joseph and Manasseh redundant). Dan and Ephraim are omitted!

- **Dan and Ephraim NOT in the list. Why? Best explanation is...**

- Ephraim led Israel into idolatry through Jeroboam

(1 Kings 12:25-33), [Note: Jeroboam was of the tribe of Ephraim, (11:26)], *“Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the mountains of Ephraim, and dwelt there. Also he went out from there and built Penuel. ²⁶ And Jeroboam said in his heart, “Now the kingdom may return to the house of David: ²⁷ If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn back to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and go back to Rehoboam king of Judah.” ²⁸ Therefore the king asked advice, made two calves of gold, and said to the people, “It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!” ²⁹ And he set up one in*

Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. ³⁰ Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan. ³¹ He made shrines on the high places, and made priests from every class of people, who were not of the sons of Levi.”

- Dan left his inheritance, and moved north to Laish where he practiced idolatry (Judges 18)

(Judges 18:18-20), *“When these [the children of Dan, cf. vs. 2] went into Micah's house and took the carved image, the ephod, the household idols, and the molded image, the priest said to them, “What are you doing?” ¹⁹ And they said to him, “Be quiet, put your hand over your mouth, and come with us; be a father and a priest to us. Is it better for you to be a priest to the household of one man, or that you be a priest to a tribe and a family in Israel?” ²⁰ So the priest's heart was glad; and he took the ephod, the household idols, and the carved image, and took his place among the people.”*

- Therefore, as idolaters they wouldn't be considered loyal to God, and properly represent God's covenant people.
- The 144,000 is a reference to all of God's covenant people on earth during this time. All who had the seal.

SCENE 5 (7:9-17) - PICTURE

- Equality (no respecter of persons with God)
- Thanksgiving that salvation comes through Jesus Christ!
- Worshipful Reverence
- Gratitude at God's fairness (the righteous are rewarded by God)
- Confidence, (I can trust that I will neither hunger nor thirst anymore).

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Introductory thoughts to be stated BEFORE the reading of the text:

- **As the interlude continues, we see a great multitude around the throne of God**

(Revelation 7:9-17) READ

- **Note especially verse 14**

(14), "So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

- So, this would be the 144,000 at a later time, after having left the earth
- We would presume this would include the souls mention in 6:9-11

(6:9-11), "When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for

the testimony which they held. ¹⁰ And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" ¹¹ Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed."

- These are also referred to at the end of the book (20:4)

(20:4), "And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years."

- In other words, the saved of all ages make up the multitude in heaven!

What are your perceptions and emotions at a first reading of the text?

- **Equality (Every nation, tribe, people, tongue)**

- God is no respecter of persons

(Galatians 3:28-29), "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

- **Thanksgiving that salvation comes through Jesus Christ**

- Given by the Father

(John 3:16-17), *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”*

- Accomplished through the Son

(Ephesians 1:3-6), *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, ⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, ⁵ having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.”*

- **Worshipful Reverence (God is worthy of praise, as indicated in Revelation 4 and 5)**

- **Gratitude at God’s fairness**

- Here seen by God’s treatment of the Righteous

(2 Thessalonians 1:6-7), *“since it is a righteous thing with God ... to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels.”*

- **Confidence**

- I can trust that I will neither hunger nor thirst anymore
- No weariness from the sun’s heat
- No tears

(2 Timothy 1:12), *“For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed*

and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.”

SCENE 5 (7:9-17) - PRINCIPLE

- Salvation is sure because salvation belongs to “our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.”
- Remember the theme of the book: We are victors through our Lord Jesus Christ!
- God is worthy of our praise and worship
- Those who are saved and comforted in heaven are those who are faithful unto death!

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What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

- Salvation is sure because salvation belongs to “our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.”
- Remember the theme of the book: We are victors through our Lord Jesus Christ!
- God is worthy of our praise and worship
- Those who are saved and comforted in heaven are those who are faithful unto death!

SCENE 5 (7:9-17) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- Remain faithful unto death to receive salvation in heaven .

TO US

- Remain faithful unto death to receive salvation in heaven.

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Practice – Application to them and us

- To them:

- Remain faithful unto death to receive salvation in heaven

- To us:

- Same: Remain faithful unto death to receive salvation in heaven
- Consider the persecutions of Christ's disciples early on...

(Mark 13:9-13), *“But watch out for yourselves, for they will deliver you up to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will be brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them.”¹⁰ And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations.¹¹ But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that;*

for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.¹² Now brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death.¹³ And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end shall be saved.”

SCENE 5 (7:9-17) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- Great Multitude (9,13-14)
- Lamb (9)
- White robes (9)
- Palm branches (9)
- Throne (10)
- Angels (11)
- Elders (11)
- Four Living Creatures (11)
- Blood of the Lamb (14)
- His temple (15)
- Living fountains of waters (17)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 6, part 1

- Identify and define
 - **Great Multitude (7:9)**
 - Defined in the context, verse 14
 - “the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

- As they stand before the throne, these are the righteous who have inherited life!
- This is a picture of a triumphant, heavenly state for God's people
- Consists of a multitude out of every nation, race and tongue

- **Lamb (7:9)**

- Previously identified as the Christ, the Son of God

- **White robes (7:9)**

- Previously identified – White indicates purity
- Pure because they are washed in the blood of the Lamb (sins are washed away).

(cf. Acts 22:16), "And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

(Revelation 1:4-6), "John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,⁵ and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,⁶ and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

- **Palm Branches (7:9)**

- Signified victory, adoration to the victor
- Remember the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem

(John 12:12-13), "The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to

Jerusalem, ¹³ took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: "Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' The King of Israel!"

- **Throne (7:10) (of God, cf. Revelation 4 & 5)**

- Identifies God's authority over creation

- **Angels (7:11)**

- Previously identified, created, heavenly beings here worshipping God at His throne (cf. Rev. 4 & 5)

- **Elders (7:11)**

- Previously identified in chapter 4.
- Symbolizes the leaders of God's covenant people both physical and spiritual). Sons of Israel/Apostles.

- **Four Living Creatures (7:11)**

- Previously identified in chapter 4
- Angels, cherubim/seraphim (cf. Ezekiel 1:1-14)
- With a strong desire to worship God (never ceasing, day and night before the Throne)

- **Blood of the Lamb (7:14)**

- A reference to the shed blood of Christ on the cross at calvary
- The means of redeeming man

(Ephesians 1:7), "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace."

(Matthew 26:27-28), "Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. ²⁸ For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

- **His Temple (15)** (note: The term (naos) perhaps better translated (sanctuary) - (heiron) is the more common term

- The spiritual analogue to the Jewish temple on earth
- Note that the ungodly sought to hide themselves from the face of God (cf, 6:16)
- In contrast, the faithful are before the throne, serving Him day and night in His spiritual temple

(11:19), "Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail."

- Consider the temple was a type of heaven, the antitype **(Hebrews 9:24-26)**, *"For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;²⁵ not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another—²⁶ He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."*

- **Living fountains of waters (7:17)**

- The child of God will be eternally satiated. Eternally nurtured.

(John 4:13-14), "Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again,¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

SCENE 6 (8:1-9:21) - PICTURE

- **Anticipation** (1/2 hour pause)
- **Awe** (at God's power)
- **Dread** (Horror and Disaster upon the earth)
- **Sorrow** (these works of God upon the earth did not bring the desired result... the repentance of men)

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Introductory thoughts to be stated BEFORE the reading of the text:

- The 6th scene (vision) was an interlude. A period of time between the opening of the first six seals and the seventh. (Elliptical, in other words)
- We saw a picture of God's protection of His people on earth, and His reward of the faithful in heaven
- Now, with this text, we see the opening of the seventh seal, and the impact of it.

(Revelation 8:1-9:21) READ

- A long scene, so there are several perceptions we might make note of...
- Consider the anticipation that John must have felt waiting for a whole ½ hour for something to happen!

- **The censer being thrown down to the earth, causing thunders and earthquakes. Awe at God's power!**
 - We are living in the time of special effects in movies. Makes it easier to see how powerful an impression that would leave on John
- **The horror and devastation upon the earth (and universe) at the sounding of the six trumpets elicits a sense of dread.**
 - All parts of the earth are struck: Vegetation, Oceans, Fresh water, Celestial bodies
 - Consider the warning: *“Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!” (8:13).*
 - Nothing more fierce than the image of the army of locusts. (5th trumpet, first woe)
 - The killing of a third of mankind by the plagues brought by the four angels (6th trumpet, second woe)
- **Sorrow at the unwillingness of mankind to repent at these chastisements from God. (9:20-21).**

SCENE 6 (8:1-9:21) - PRINCIPLE

- This scene (the sounding of the trumpets) consists of a series of severe chastisements to the wicked of the world for their sins.
- God avenges the blood of His saints. In His righteousness, he brings judgment upon the wicked.
- The purpose of these chastisements is to bring the wicked to repentance. Though, on this occasion, they refused to repent (9:20 -21)

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What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

- Remember our chart where we noted that the 7 seals would cover the entirety of Revelation's time frame, from Christ's coming to earth to the final judgment.
- We have emphasized the persecution of Christians, the reason for the writing of the book.
- The trumpets serve to signify God's chastisement of these wicked men, giving them the opportunity for repentance. (this would be among those things which must ***"shortly come to pass"*** (1:1; 22:6)
 - (Harkrider), "The trumpets reveal the workings of God in calling men to turn from evil."

- Men suffer physically because of God's wrath at their wickedness
- The expression of God's displeasure is intended to bring us to repentance!
- On this occasion, as with many others, the chastisement is ineffective because of the evil hearts of men

(9:20-21), *“But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, **did not repent of the works of their hands**, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk.²¹ And they **did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.**”*

- **God to rebellious Israel**

(Isaiah 30:8-15), *“Now go, write it before them on a tablet, and note it on a scroll, that it may be for time to come, forever and ever:⁹ That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children who will not hear the law of the Lord;¹⁰ Who say to the seers, “Do not see,” and to the prophets, “Do not prophesy to us right things; speak to us smooth things, prophesy deceits.¹¹ Get out of the way, turn aside from the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.”¹² Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel: “Because you despise this word, and trust in oppression and perversity, and rely on them,¹³ Therefore this iniquity shall be to you like a breach ready to fall, a bulge in a high wall, whose breaking comes suddenly, in an instant.¹⁴ And He shall break it like the breaking of the potter's vessel, which is broken in pieces; He shall not spare. So there shall not be found among its*

fragments a shard to take fire from the hearth, or to take water from the cistern.”¹⁵ For thus says the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: “In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength.” **But you would not.”**

- **Jesus words to Jerusalem**

(Matthew 23:37-39), “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, **but you were not willing!**³⁸ See! Your house is left to you desolate;³⁹ for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’ ”

- **Note: When events like in the 1st century are repeated in later times, God will deal with the wicked in the same way, with chastisements and judgment.**

SCENE 6 (8:1-9:21) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- God would respond to their prayers, by chastising the wicked who persecuted them .
- This chastisement was to bring men to repentance

TO US

- God hears our prayers, as we cry out and petition Him for relief.
- God, not men are in control.
- If God chastises us, we should repent!

Practice – Application to them and us

• To them:

- God would respond to their prayers, by chastising the wicked who persecuted them.

• Consider one view of the incense in the censer

- William Hendriksen in his commentary, *More than Conquerors*, expresses the belief that the large amounts of incense indicates Christ's intercession on behalf of His saints.

(Hebrews 7:24-25), "But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. ²⁵ Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."

- That censer, thrown to the earth, shows that when God hears the prayers and intercessions of the saints, He responds!

• God's chastisement of men is designed to bring them to repentance

• To us:

- God hears our prayers as well!

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

• Ultimately, God is in control, not wicked men!

(Acts 17:29-31), "Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising. ³⁰ Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all

men everywhere to repent,³¹ because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.”

- **Remember, God chastises for a reasons (especially those who are his). So, heed it and soften your heart!**

(Proverbs 3:11-12), “My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, Nor detest His correction;¹² for whom the Lord loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights.”

(Hebrews 12:7-11), “If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?⁸ But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.⁹

Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?¹⁰ For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness.¹¹ Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”

SCENE 6 (8:1-9:21) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS (1)

- Seal (8:1)
- Silence (8:1)
- Seven (8:2,6)
- Angels (8:2)
- Trumpets (8:2,6,13)
- Golden Censer (8:3,5)
- Much Incense (8:3,4)
- Noises (8:5) (Thunder, lightning & earthquake)
- To Sound/sounded (8:6,7,8,10,12; 9:1,13)
- Hail & fire, mingled with blood (8:7)
- 1/3 (8:7,9,11,12; 9:15,18)
- Something like a big mountain burning with fire (8:8)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 8 & 9

• Identify and define

• Seal (8:1)

- The 7th seal picks up where chapter 6 left off (the opening of seals 1-6)
- The seals closed the scroll/book introduced in Revelation 5. Only the Christ was worthy of opening them
- Each of the first six seals signified the efforts of the ungodly to bring suffering to God's people.
- The 7th seal signified preparation for the sounding of the 7 trumpets

• Silence (8:1)

- An interlude in heaven, when no sound is uttered
- ½ hour in duration, consider how this silence must have impacted John

- **(Harkrider)** “This interlude wherein no sound is uttered must have been impressive. Reverence must have filled John’s heart in the anticipation of something awesome about to take place.”

- **Seven (8:2,6)**

- The number indicates perfection, completion. A complete number. Exactly the right amount.

- **Angels (8:2)**

- Messengers or servants of God tasked with carrying out His chastisements on Mankind.
 - 7 angels who were given the 7 trumpets to sound (8:2)
 - Another angel, given the golden censer (8:3)
 - An angel flying through the midst of heaven, pronouncing the three woes (8:13)
 - Angel of the bottomless pit (reference later) (9:9:11)
 - Four angels bound at the great river Euphrates (9:14)

- **Trumpets (8:2,6,13)**

- **(Harkrider)** “The trumpets of God reveal the workings of God in calling men to repentance”
- A pronouncement of the coming chastisements that God would bring upon men.
- Examples of trumpets in Bible

(Matthew 6:2), *“Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.”*

(Numbers 10:1-2), “And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:²

“Make two silver trumpets for yourself; you shall make them of hammered work; you shall use them for calling the congregation and for directing the movement of the camps.”

(1 Chronicles 15:28), [**David brings the ark to Jerusalem**], “Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with shouting and with the sound of the horn, with trumpets and with cymbals, making music with stringed instruments and harps.”

(Joshua 6:4-5), [**Israel at Jericho**], “And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. But the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets.⁵ It shall come to pass, when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, that all the people shall shout with a great shout; then the wall of the city will fall down flat. And the people shall go up every man straight before him.”

- Trumpets also symbolize a warning (calling men to repent)

(Ezekiel 33:1-6), “Again the word of the Lord came to me, saying,² “Son of man, speak to the children of your people, and say to them: ‘When I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land take a man from their territory and make him their watchman,³ when he sees the sword coming upon the land, if he blows the trumpet and warns the people,⁴ then whoever hears the sound of the trumpet and does not take warning, if the sword comes and takes him away, his blood shall be on his own head.⁵ He heard the sound of the trumpet, but did not take warning; his blood shall be upon himself. But he who takes warning will save

his life. ⁶ But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, and the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at the watchman's hand.”

- **Golden Censer (8:3,5)**

- A firepan in which hot coals from the altar were placed, and grains of incense were burned on the coals to produce a sweet smell for the Lord

(Leviticus 10:1), “Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them.”

(Leviticus 16:12-13), [Instructions to Aaron as high priest],

“Then he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from the altar before the Lord, with his hands full of sweet incense beaten fine, and bring it inside the veil. ¹³ And he shall put the incense on the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that is on the Testimony, lest he die.”

- In Revelation 5:2, the incense represented the prayers of the saints, before the throne of God

(Psalm 141:2), “Let my prayer be set before You as incense, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.”

- **Much Incense (8:3,4)**

- Here, the incense is presented as separate from the prayers of the saints

- William Hendriksen thinks the “much incense” represents our Savior’s intercession in heaven for the persecuted children of God.

(Hebrews 7:25), “Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”

Note here by Harkider that is very good: Regarding incense...

“God continually hears the prayers of His people... What an assurance for the saints! Some readers of Revelation concentrated upon the fire, earthquakes, and other frightful events. Those who know the Lord read the same book and find comfort, peace and blissful hope. The difference in what one finds in Revelation is usually determined by the quality of life being lived and how much time is spent in prayer.”

- **Noises, thunderings, lightnings and an earthquake (8:5)**

- Fire taken from the censer, and thrown to the earth
- Signifies God’s response to the prayers and petitions made by God’s people
- The most powerful being in the universe is activated to deliver our escape because we appeal to Him
- All of these noises and cataclysms indicate that God is beginning His work. Justice is coming.

- **To sound/sounded (8:6,7,8,10,12; 9:1,13)**

- Each sounding of the trumpet reveals a chastisement/judgment from God

- **Hail & fire, mingled with blood (8:7) (First, trumpet, striking all vegetation)**

- Burns up 1/3 of trees, and all green grass

- (Consider what losing 1/3 of vegetation would do in affecting mankind).
- All of these calamities would be familiar to Israel (as many are similar to the plagues which came upon Egypt)
 - Hail (Exodus 9:23-25)
 - Water to blood (Exodus 7:20-21)
 - Darkness (Ex. 10:21-23)
 - Locusts (Ex. 10:4-15)
- Note, however, the book is written in symbols. (We should not be perusing history trying to find a time where hail and fire came down from heaven, literally mingled with blood)

• **(Harkrider)** “Since Revelation is written in signs and symbols, the trumpets evidently picture God’s warning judgments sent upon the wicked. What is being portrayed is that the God of grace always gives ample time for anyone to repent before meting punishment.”

- **Note:** Such physical calamities establish the truth that we are impotent. We are not masters of the world in which we live. (Hurricanes, Ice storms, etc., etc.).

• **1/3 (8:7,9,11,12; 9:15,18)**

- Only a minority affected each time. A part of the whole. This would signify a “warning shot” from God to repent. (vegetation, seas, sea creatures, ships, waters, heavenly bodies, mankind).
- 1/3 is a minority amount, but significant. If you are penalized a third, it hurts.

- Nevertheless, not the same as the final judgment of God, which will bring all the ungodly under condemnation.
- **Something like a big mountain burning with fire (8:8) 2nd trumpet (8:8-9)**
 - Picture a giant volcano, cast into the sea, poisoning the water, turning it to blood.
 - Note, this affects another aspect of nature. (1 – vegetation), (2-sea with its life, and man’s ability to trade and travel via ship).

SCENE 6 (8:1-9:21) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS (2)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Great star (Wormwood) (8:10-11) | • Four horns (9:13) |
| • Three Woes (8:13) | • Four (9:13,14,15) |
| • Star fallen from heaven (9:1) | • River Euphrates (9:14) |
| • Bottomless pit (9:1,2,11) | • 200,000,000 (19:16) |
| • Locusts (9:3-5,7-11) | • Horsemen & horses (9:16,17) |
| • Seal of God (9:4) | • Red, blue, yellow (9:17) |
| • Angel of pit (9:11) | • Fire, smoke & brimstone (9:18) |

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 8 & 9

- **Identify and define**
- **Great star (Wormwood) (8:10-11) (Third Trumpet)**
 - A poisoning of the land waters (rivers and fountains) 1/3. Many men die (bitter/poisoned)

- A huge star fell named wormwood. Wormwood is a bitter plant, often mentioned in the OT, in conjunction with God's chastisements

(Deuteronomy 29:18) [God's covenant renewed with Israel at Moab, to protect them from rebelliousness], *"so that there may not be among you man or woman or family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations, and that there may not be among you a root bearing bitterness or wormwood."*

(Jeremiah 9:13-16), [Condemnation of His people during the late days of the kingdom of Judah], *"And the Lord said, "Because they have forsaken My law which I set before them, and have not obeyed My voice, nor walked according to it,¹⁴ but they have walked according to the dictates of their own hearts and after the Baals, which their fathers taught them,"¹⁵ therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold, I will feed them, this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink.¹⁶ I will scatter them also among the Gentiles, whom neither they nor their fathers have known. And I will send a sword after them until I have consumed them."*

- **Three Woes (8:13) Fourth Trumpet (8:12-13)**

- First, heavens struck (1/3 of sun, moon, and stars) 1/3 day without sun, and night
- This familiar imagery to the Christians of the first century (re: warning to ungodly)

(Joel 2:10-11), *"The earth quakes before them, the heavens tremble; the sun and moon grow dark, and the stars diminish their brightness.¹¹ The Lord gives voice before His army, for His*

camp is very great; for strong is the One who executes His word. For the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; who can endure it?"

- Angel pronounces three woes. This attributed to the sounding of trumpets 5-7 (Note: Some translations render this an eagle who pronounces the woes instead of an angel.
- Is there a differentiation between the first 4 trumpets, and the woes to follow?
 - First four trumpets – natural calamities (vegetation, seas, fresh waters, heavens)
 - Trumpets 5-6 – The role of mankind
 - Trumpet 7 – the final judgment of God against Rome
 - (Note: Scholars say Rome fell: 1) natural calamity; 2) internal rottenness; 3) outside invaders.

• **Star fallen from heaven (9:1) (Fifth Trumpet – 9:1-12/ First woe)**

- Most common designation given to the Devil. Note, however, that Isaiah 14:12 (Lucifer/day star) refers to the King of Babylon, not the Devil
- However, the bottomless pit is the abode of the devil and his angels

(11:7), [The beast], *“When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them.”*

(17:8), [The beast]. *“The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition.”*

(20:1-3), "Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.² He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;³ and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while."

- Whoever designated by the star, given a key, indicating the ability to loose and bind
- It is he who opens up the bottomless pit, and looses the locusts upon the earth

• **Bottomless pit (9:1,2,11)**

- Dark smoke ascends from the pit (indicating wickedness)
- These are evil influences being loosed upon the earth
- (Remember how the Devil works in the affairs of men!)

(Romans 6:16), "Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?"

- **(Harkrider)** "Portrayed here is the effect of the devil's influence upon the Roman world. The anguish suffered because of moral degradation is my man's own choice. Satan gains control only through enticing men by deception and delusion."

• **Locusts (9:3-5, 7-11)**

- Locusts were a common problem in the land of Israel.

- They devastated crops, and were referred to in the OT as a means of chastising Israel

(Joel 1:6-10), [chewing, swarming, crawling, consuming locusts],

“For a nation has come up against My land, strong, and without number; his teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he has the fangs of a fierce lion. ⁷ He has laid waste My vine, and ruined My fig tree; he has stripped it bare and thrown it away; its branches are made white. ⁸ Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth. ⁹ The grain offering and the drink offering have been cut off from the house of the Lord; the priests mourn, who minister to the Lord. ¹⁰ The field is wasted, the land mourns; for the grain is ruined, the new wine is dried up, the oil fails.”

- They were to hurt only the enemies of God **(4)**
- They would torment for 5 months (a limited time) **(5)**
- The life of those they target would be miserable! **(6)**
- Their appearance is grand and has beauty, perhaps indicating why men are enticed by what will bring misery to them. The deceitfulness of sin **(7-8)**

(Hebrews 3:13), “But exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”

- Teeth, breastplates, tails like scorpions (8-10) indicating their power and invincibility **(9-10)**
- Led by a king (Destroyer) **(11)**

• Seal of God (9:4)

- Discussed before. God recognizes those who are His
- The seal indicates protection, ownership, certification

- Those with the seal would avoid the brunt of misery coming upon the ungodly
- Men reap what they sow!

(Galatians 6:7-8), *“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸ For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.”*

- **Angel of the bottomless pit (King over locusts) (9:11)**

- Hebrew – Abaddon/Greek – Apollyon – DESTROYER
- Already mentioned from 9:1, the one given the key (the Devil)
- It is not surprising in mentioning the great evil powers of the world that the Devil would be king over them.

(1 John 5:19), *“We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.”*

(Ephesians 2:1-2), *“And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, ² in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience.”*

(Ephesians 6:10-12), *“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”*

- **Four horns (9:13) (Sixth Trumpet – (9:13-21) 2nd Woe**

- The analogue is the golden altar in the tabernacle/temple
- The horns are protrusions on each corner of the altar

(Exodus 30:1-3), *“You shall make an altar to burn incense on; you shall make it of acacia wood.² A cubit shall be its length and a cubit its width—it shall be square—and two cubits shall be its height. Its horns shall be of one piece with it.³ And you shall overlay its top, its sides all around, and its horns with pure gold; and you shall make for it a molding of gold all around.”*

- Notice the events that transpire here come from Heaven itself (God’s directed chastisements)
- The voice that sounds comes from God (an answer to the incense of the saints!

• **Four (9:13,14,15)**

- Represents the entire earth. (Four winds, four corners. Four angels going out in each direction).

• **River Euphrates (9:14)**

- Euphrates among the greatest of rivers in the ancient world
- Central to great world powers: Assyria, Babylon, Persia. A source of dominance over the world.
- One suggestion: Not the literal place, but a figure of “the fountain of world dominance” (Lenski)

- **(Harkrider)**, “The Lord is the “ruler over the kings of the earth” (1:5). He has authority over the four angels which are bound in the great rive Euphrates, and he will sustain His dominion by stirring up enemies to fight against the Romans (16:12). The external invasions of the Parthians

did arise from the region of the Euphrates and were according to God's purpose in bringing about the fall of the Empire."

- **200,000,000 (9:16)**

- An army of horsemen 200 million strong. If literal, would cover an area one mile wide and 85 miles long.
- Obviously a figurative number indicating an irresistible force.

- **Horsemen and horses (9:16-17)**

- The description of the horses illustrate the overwhelming nature of their power to destroy.
- This army, unleashed by the angels, killed 1/3 of mankind.

- **Red, blue & Yellow (9:17)**

- Colors of the breastplates of the horsemen
- Other translations seem to more clearly tie them to the fire, smoke and brimstone coming from the mouths of the horses
- Red – literally, fiery; Blue - Jacinth (a dark blue); Yellow – Sulfer (Brimstone)

- **Fire, smoke & Brimstone (9:18)**

- Simply indicate total destruction
- Consider the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah as an example

SCENE 6 (8:1-9:21) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS (3)

- Tails like serpents (9:19)
- Plagues (9:20)
- Demons (9:20)
- Idols (9:20)
- Sorceries (9:21)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 8 & 9

- Identify and define
- Tails like serpents (9:19)
 - The ability of these horses to kill came both from their mouths and their tails
 - Just like the locusts who had tails like scorpions

Note from Harkrider, finally describing the events of the 6 trumpets: “It must be understood that this is symbolical language and that all these details are given to dramatize the pageantry. If the trumpets are literal, we are still awaiting their sound, for the world has not witnessed a one-to-one correspondence between the description of each trumpet and an actual event represented in the natural world. However, the trumpets portray a culture collapsing on itself. They represent the demise of the foundational institutions of society, such as

government, family, and commerce. The invasions from insects and armies, coming like organized military forces, spread hurt and death everywhere. They represent the heavy toll that violence exacts upon society. Whether internal or external, this collapse finds its main cause in man's rejection of God's value system. Men bring this killing curse upon themselves."

The final point of this section indicates that the chastisements did not lead to repentance. Thus, the bowls of God's wrath would be poured out! (20-21)

• Plagues (9:20)

- The events from God that chastised men in the blowing of the first 6 trumpets
- Think of the 10 plagues God brought upon Egypt, likewise as chastisement to Egypt and Pharaoh

• Demons (9:20)

- This would reference false Gods

(1 Corinthians 10:20), "Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons."

- Since they were not truly gods, they were demonic (evil)

• Idols (9:20)

- Graven images. The actual statutes that were worshipped as actual gods.

• Sorceries (9:21)

- Pharmakeia - **Thayer Definition:** 1) the use or the administering of drugs; 2) poisoning; 3) sorcery; magical arts, often found in connection with idolatry and

fostered by it 4) metaphorically the deceptions and seductions of idolatry

- Here, the emphasis may well have been on the immoral lifestyle that would include drug use and addiction.
- What is the effect of sin in people who refuse to repent?
- “They see daily what it does to others (and even to themselves), in such things as drug addiction, alcoholism, broken homes, shattered lives, imprisonment, and even capital punishment, and yet they continue to hug this deadly serpent to their breasts, receiving into their hearts and minds a constant flow of its poisonous venom.” (Winters)

(Romans 1:28-32), “And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;²⁹ being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers,³⁰ backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,³¹ undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful;³² who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.”

SCENE 6 (8:1-9:21) – NOTES

- The blowing of the first 6 trumpets heralded a coming of 6 different chastisements of God against those who are evil in the world.
- First 4 natural calamities
- Last two (woe 1 and woe 2) indicated great violence leading to misery, and the death of 1/3 of mankind.
- All from God to bring repentance. But, unsuccessful.

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A Summary of these two chapters:

• The blowing of the first 6 trumpets

- Six different chastisements of God against those who are evil in the world.

• First four natural calamities

- 1 – Hail and fire affecting Vegetation (1/3 of trees and all green grass burned up)
- 2 – Great poisonous mountain into SEAS (1/3 of sea creatures & 1/3 ships)
- 3 – Great star wormwood into FRESH WATERS (1/3 of waters bitter/ many die)
- 4 – 1/3 of sun, stars & moon struck (dimmed)

• Last two indicated great violence

- Woe 1 – Locusts from bottomless pit. Tormented men for five months (suffering)

- Woe 2 – Great army of horsemen. Killed 1/3 of mankind.

- **Men did not repent!**

- Of the works of their hands (idolatries)
- Did not repent of immorality (murders, sorceries, sexual immorality, thefts)

Note: Beginning Next Week: Scene 7 (10:1-11) The Mighty Angel and the Little Book (Read Chapter 10)

- **Note: Like with the seals, there is an interlude between the sounding of the sixth and seventh trumpets**

- The 7th trumpet is not sounded until 11:15, which we will cover in scene 8.

- **This vision is fairly peculiar.**

- John has revealed to him things that God (at least at that time) would not let him reveal
- There is another book that contains an unknown message, and John is told to eat it!

- **An important passage to remember (stated at the sounding of the 7th trumpet!**

(11:15), “Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”

- We may struggle and even fail to understand some of the specific details contained in this book
- But, this great underlying message (11:15) (i.e. – God is in control, and we win!) should not be understood by any careful reader.

SCENE 7 (10:1-11) - PICTURE

- As always, when descriptions are given of heavenly beings interacting with God, there is AWE!
- IMPRESSED with the description of the mighty angel -
- (His size, brightness, noise).
- Apprehension and anticipation (no more delay!)
- Curiosity (message of the 7 thunders, and the little book).

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Introductory thoughts to be stated BEFORE the reading of the text:

- **We have covered in this part of the book of Revelation**
 - The opening of the first 6 seals (Chapter 6)
 - An interlude where the sealed of Israel (144,000), and a great multitude before the throne of God are described (Chapter 7)
 - The opening of the seventh seal, introducing the 7 trumpets (8:1-6)
 - The blowing of the first six trumpets (8:7-9:21)
- **We now are going to look (in our 7th scene) at another interlude before the seventh trumpet is sounded.**
 - The Mighty Angel and the Little book
- **Note: Scene 8, that covers 11:1-19, that covers the sounding of the 7th trumpet, will bring to an end our**

discussion of the first half of the book. (As noted in our material, the book naturally falls into two halves, (1st half – 1-11; 2nd half – 12-22).

(Revelation 10:1-11) READ (Ask first for their emotions, and impressions of the scene)

- **{CLICK} As Always, a feeling of AWE!**
 - We are again given a view of heavenly things, interacting with God
- **Impressed!**
 - The description of the Mighty angel – His size and the brightness of his countenance **(1-2)**
 - The noise that accompanied his presence (Roaring like a lion, pealing of the 7 thunders) **(3)**
- **Apprehension and Anticipation**
 - What did the angel mean when he said *“that there should be delay no longer”* **(6)**
- **Curiosity**
 - What was the message of the 7 thunders that John was not allowed to record? **(4)**
 - What does the little book reveal about God’s purpose? **(8-11)**

SCENE 7 (10:1-11) - PRINCIPLE

- That God's intervention was imminent. There would be "no more delay"
- That God has more forces that He can bring to bear, of which we know nothing. All we know is what God reveals. It is enough, but it is not all! His power and abilities are not strained by the opposition He faces.
- All that God had planned for the ungodly forces was about to be revealed (the mystery of God, cf. 7)

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What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

- **That God's intervention was imminent. There would be "no more delay"**
 - This precedes the pouring out of the 7 bowls of wrath bringing God's destructive force against the ungodly forces of evil (both spiritual physical)
- **That God has more forces that he can bring to bear that we do not, and will not know of. We know what God reveals. What He reveals is sufficient. It doesn't touch the hem of the garment regarding His power and abilities.**
 - This is seen by the refusal of God to allow John to write the message of the thunderings.

(Deuteronomy 29:29), *“The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.”*

- All we need to know is that God hears the pleas of the righteous
- And in His righteousness, He will punish the wicked

• **Note:** Consider and explain 1 Peter 3:10-16

(1 Peter 3:10-16), *“For “He who would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking deceit. ¹¹ Let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. ¹² For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”*

¹³ And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you are blessed. “And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.” ¹⁵ But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; ¹⁶ having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. ¹⁷ For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.”

• **All that God had planned for the ungodly forces was about to be revealed (the mystery)**

- This seems to be the significance of the little book in the hand of the angel

SCENE 7 (8:1-9:21) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- The warnings had sounded, and now God's wrath was imminent.
- God is in control
- Their persecution would come to an end

TO US

- God bears long, but will judge the ungodly
- God is in control!
- Our distress, though it weighs upon us, is "but for a moment"

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Practice – Application to them and us

• To them:

- The trumpets had sounded the warnings, and now God's wrath was coming.
- God is powerful and in control
- Their persecution would come to an end

• To us:

- God bears long, but will judge the ungodly (both physical and spiritual)
 - Physical judgment

(Acts 17:26), "And He has made from one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings."

(Daniel 5:26-28) [The mysterious writing from a disembodied hand on the plaster of the wall in King Belshazzar's palace] ,
"This is the interpretation of each word. Mene: God has

numbered your kingdom, and finished it;²⁷ Tekel: You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting;²⁸ Peres: Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.” (Daniel 5:30-31), “That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain.³¹ And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.

- **Eternal, spiritual judgment**

(2 Thessalonians 1:6-10a), “since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you,⁷ and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,⁸ in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁹ These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,¹⁰ when He comes, in that Day...”

- **God is in control!**

(Isaiah 41:10), “Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.”

(Philippians 4:6-7), “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

- **Our distress, though it weighs upon us, is “but for a moment”**

(2 Corinthians 4:16-18), “Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, ¹⁸ while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

SCENE 7 (10:1-11) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- Mighty Angel (1)
- **Description:** Rainbow, Cloud, Sun, Pillars of fire (1)
- Little Book (2,8,9,10)
- Lion Roar (3)
- Seven Thunders (3,4)
- Mystery of God (7)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 10

- Identify and define
- **Mighty Angel (1)**
 - In what sense Mighty? Note: Another “mighty angel” is identified in 18:21

(18:21), *“Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, “Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore.”*

- **Mighty – (Thayer – ischuros) 1) strong, mighty 1a) of living beings 1a1) strong either in body or in mind**
- “another” – possibly like the angel mentioned in 5:2 (strong, same word as above)

(5:2), *“Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?”*

- **The context obviously shows an angel of great power or strength (Large and imposing)**
- **Ranks of Angels**
 - Jude refers to Michael the Archangel (9)
 - Cherubim/Seraphim (special class of angels)
 - The idea of angels with different ranks and purposes is not without defense

- **He “came down from heaven”, indicating divine authority!**

(cf. John 16:27-28a) [Like Jesus], *“the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God. ²⁸ I came forth from the Father and have come into the world...”*

- **Rainbow/Cloud/Sun/Fire (1) – The entire description speaks to the special nature of this messenger of God, and the importance of his work.**

- **“clothed with a cloud”**

- **Hailey** – “Of the 25 times that the word cloud (*nephele*) appears in the NT, in all but three it is used in some relation to deity or of a divine appearance, often in judgment. This indicates that the angel before us comes clothed with a divine mission relating to judgment.” (242)

- **“And a rainbow was on his head”**

- Only here and in 4:3 (Throne room) is the word “rainbow” found (iris)
- Note: Rainbows are referenced 4 times in the OT. 3 times re: God’s covenant with Noah (Gen. 9:13-16), and once in Ezekiel’s vision in 1:28

- **“his face was like the sun” – similar to the description of Jesus Himself (1:16)**

(1:16), “He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.”

- **“his feet like pillars of fire”**

- **Hailey** – “The appearance of the angel with the rainbow as a halo upon his head, his face as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire indicates the angel’s close relation to God and Christ and the importance of his mission. As an angel his is a minister of Christ, serving as His messenger...” (242)

- **Little Book (2,8,9,10)**

- **(biblaridion, a diminutive of biblion) – a small book or booklet**

- **Contrast with the book of chapter 5**

- Big book – sealed with seven seals, could be made known only by the Lamb of God. Sets forth the destiny and final end of God’s eternal purpose
- Little book – already opened, could be read and known by John (assimilated and understood). Sets forth only one aspect of God’s purpose.

- **Hailey states that the angel’s setting his feet on sea and land indicates the far-reaching and inclusive nature of the Angel’s mission. The book would pertain to the entire unregenerate world.**

- **Note: The image of the book being eaten is similar to God’s instructions to Ezekiel**

(Ezekiel 2:8 – 3:3), “But you, son of man, hear what I say to you. Do not be rebellious like that rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you.”⁹ Now when I looked, there was a hand stretched out to me; and behold, a scroll of a book was in it.¹⁰ Then He spread it before me; and there was writing on the inside and on the outside, and written on it were lamentations and mourning and woe. (3)¹ Moreover He said to me, “Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.”² So I opened my mouth, and He caused me to eat that scroll.³ And He said to me, “Son of man, feed your belly, and fill your stomach with this scroll that I give you.” So I ate, and it was in my mouth like honey in sweetness.”

- This is an indication of mastering the contents.
(Assimilate and understand)

- Note how it would be sweetness to Ezekiel as well, but in 3:14

(3:14), [Ezekiel told to go and preach His message to the people], *“So the Spirit lifted me up and took me away, and I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit; but the hand of the Lord was strong upon me.”*

- **Yet another example, Jeremiah (again, both sweetness and bitterness).**

(Jeremiah 15:16-18a), *“Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; for I am called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts. ¹⁷ I did not sit in the assembly of the mockers, nor did I rejoice; I sat alone because of Your hand, for You have filled me with indignation. ¹⁸ Why is my pain perpetual and my wound incurable, which refuses to be healed?”*

- **Sweet and bitter (10)**

- **Hailey** – “The reception and comprehension of God’s Word is sweet, but fraught with bitterness of spirit in the condemnation of sinners and the proclamation of Scripture’s judgments against men and nations, declaring the consequences of disobedience, the wickedness of sin, and the error and finality of judgment.” (247)

- **What is the significance of the little book?**

- It could be the gospel, (salvation & judgment), but that would seem to be better covered in the book of chapter 5.

- Consider the angel's words in verse 11, *"And he said to me, 'You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings' (10:11).*
 - In coming chapters (11-22, there are judgments against not only ungodly men, but secular powers, religious forces, spiritual enemies.
 - John would prophesy both the sweet message of victory over evil, but also bitterly prophesy of sufferings of ungodly men, and the destructive judgment of God that would fall upon them.
 - (Consider that parallel with Ezekiel above)
 - Harkrider states – "The gist of that little book is contained in the remaining visions of the Apocalypse."

- **Lion Roar (3)**

- **Commanding attention**

(Hosea 11:10-11), [God calling His children], *"They shall walk after the Lord. He will roar like a lion. When He roars, then His sons shall come trembling from the west; ¹¹ they shall come trembling like a bird from Egypt, like a dove from the land of Assyria. And I will let them dwell in their houses," says the Lord.*"

(Amos 3:8), [The fear caused by the words of God's prophets], *"A lion has roared! Who will not fear? The Lord God has spoken! Who can but prophesy?"*

- **7 Thunders (3,4)**

- **An indication of foreboding power and judgment (with these voices)**

- **7 is the number of the divine (divine power and judgment)**

- **Old Testament Examples:**

(Exodus 19:16) [Israel at Mt. Sinai], *“Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled.”*

(1 Samuel 7:10), [God’s intervention against the Philistines], *“Now as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel. But the Lord thundered with a loud thunder upon the Philistines that day, and so confused them that they were overcome before Israel.”*

(Job 26:11-14), *“The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at His rebuke. ¹² He stirs up the sea with His power, and by His understanding He breaks up the storm. ¹³ By His Spirit He adorned the heavens; His hand pierced the fleeing serpent. ¹⁴ Indeed these are the mere edges of His ways, and how small a whisper we hear of Him! But the thunder of His power who can understand?”*

- **Mystery of God (7)**

- **Note: This mystery is tied in with the sounding of the 7th trumpet of God**

- A mystery is something that has not yet been revealed
- In the sounding of the 7th trumpet, there would be a finishing of the mystery. Finishing in the sense that it

will no longer be a mystery, because it will be made known!

- **We will see that the 7th trumpet will reveal the bringing down of the force behind the persecutions being suffered by the Saints**

- An acceptance of the late date of writing would include the fall of Rome
- It is God's kingdom that reigns forever!

(Daniel 2:40-45), "And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others. ⁴¹ Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay. ⁴² And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. ⁴³ As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay. ⁴⁴ And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. ⁴⁵ Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure."

SCENE 7 (10:1-11) – NOTES

- The interlude between the sixth and seven seals showed that the faithful of God were not forgotten even in the midst of persecution (chapter 7)
- The interlude between the sixth and seven trumpets assure that the witness of truth continues unabated and victorious (this will continue into chapter 11)

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- The interlude between the sixth and seven seals showed that the faithful of God were not forgotten even in the midst of persecution (chapter 7)
- The interlude between the sixth and seven trumpets assure that the witness of truth continues unabated and victorious (this will continue into chapter 11)

SCENE 8 (11:1-19) - PICTURE

- Significance of God's temple, and the Gentile court.
- The persecution of the holy city will continue for 3.5 years
- Amazed at the courage & steadfastness of the two witnesses, proclaiming God's message through this time.
- Despair & Rejoicing at death and resurrection of the two witnesses
- Rejoicing and confidence at the 7th trumpet.

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Thoughts before the reading of the text of Chapter 11:

- The blowing of the fifth trumpet introduced us to three woes (9:12), "One woe is past", (the locust plague from the bottomless pit), Behold still two more woes are coming.
- The blowing of the sixth trumpet introduces the army/horsemen that would kill a third of mankind. (9:13-21)
- An interlude comes into play in Chapter 10, introducing the mighty angel with the little book.
- Our text for this scene describes the completion of the second of the three woes. Notice (11:14), "The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly."
 - As chapter 10, and chapter 11:1-14 is describing the death and resurrection of the two witnesses, the second woe (as noted several weeks ago), most probably refers

to the blowing of the sixth trumpet, bringing the horsemen.

- This would mean that the third woe is introduced with the blowing of the 7th and last trumpet. (11:15-19).

(Revelation 11:1-19) READ

Impressions and emotions at the first reading of the text

- **The temple of God is where God is**
 - (Note: Gk. *naos* – indicating the one building that includes the Holy place and the Most holy place, where God is present).
 - The measuring of the temple is a way quantifying it. To determine its dimension.
 - If we consider this a symbol, it would be another expression of God measuring or determining who is His

(1 Corinthians 13:15-16), “Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?¹⁷ If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.”

- **The unmeasured outer court consists of all those who do not belong to God**
- **The treading underfoot of God’s Holy City (those who are His) by the Gentiles for 42 months.**
 - 3.5 years. 1260 days. 42 months. All the same amount of time.

- During this persecution we know that God's witness will continue. The gospel will be preached.

(Acts 8:4), "Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word."

- We don't know who (if anyone in particular) is intended in the reference to the two witnesses.
- They are killed by the beast (vs. 7), but resurrected in 3.5 days (vs. 11). (Despair and Rejoicing).
- The blowing of the 7th trumpet... A great demonstration of God's kingdom and victory, as God's wrath is coming, and the victory of His people is ultimately accomplished.

SCENE 8 (11:1-19) - PRINCIPLE

- This chapter contains a brief summary of the judgments that were coming against the wicked.
- The battle commences between good and evil. While it seems evil prospers, in the end, the righteous are vindicated by God
- The sounding of the 7th trumpet (which will bring God's wrath on the ungodly), announces the climax of the conflict before God's throne. God wins!

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What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

- **It seems that this chapter contains a brief summary of the judgments that were coming against the wicked.**

- The temple and the holy city here seems to have reference to the people of God (God identifies who are his)

(21:2), "Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

(Hebrews 12:22-23), "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels,²³ to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect."

- The Gentiles are the wicked of the world, persecuting God's people for 42 months.
- The two witnesses represent the preaching of the gospel during this time of persecution.

(Luke 10:1), [Similarly, Jesus sent out his disciples in the limited commission, 2 by 2], *"After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go."*

- **The wicked seem to have obtained a victory over the righteous when the beast kills the witnesses (they rejoice and abuse the bodies of these martyrs)**

- However, after 3.5 days, the resurrection of the witnesses who are vindicated in their exaltation

- The sounding of the 7th trumpet (which will bring in the 7 bowls of wrath) announces the climax of the book before the throne of God. Christ Wins!

SCENE 8 (11:1-19) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- God identifies those who are his
- The battle will be difficult and hard, with seeming loss
- In the end, Ultimate victory

TO US

- What identifies us is our measuring up to the (reed) God's word.
- The proclamation of truth does not silence the faithful
- Reward to the saints

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Practice – Application to them and us

• To them:

• God identifies those who are his.

- The measuring of the temple is a very similar image to the numbering of the sealed of God (144,000) in Revelation 7.

• The battle with the ungodly will be very difficult, with great loss and seeming defeat a part of it.

- 3.5 years being trodden under foot by the ungodly
- The death of God's witnesses/prophets at the hand of the beast

- 3.5 days of humiliation and spectacle as the beast and his do despite to the bodies of the prophets

- **Ultimate victory**

- The resurrection and ascension of the prophets, vindicated by God
- The blowing of the 7th trumpet proclaiming the victory of the kingdom of God as it subsumes all other kingdoms.

(11:16-18), "And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, ¹⁷ saying: "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. ¹⁸ The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth."

- **To us:**

- **What identifies us is our measuring up to the reed, which is God's standard. His word!**

(Matthew 7:21-23), "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' ²³ And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"

- **The proclamation of truth does not silence the faithful**

(Acts 5:40-42), “...when they had called for the apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.⁴¹ So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.⁴² And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.”

- **Reward to the saints**

(Colossians 3:23-25), “And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men,²⁴ knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.²⁵ But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality.”

SCENE 8 (11:1-19) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- Reed like a measuring rod (1)
- Temple of God (1)
- Outside court (2)
- Holy City (2)
- 42 months (2)
- Two witnesses (3)
- 1,260 days (3)
- Two Olive trees (4)
- Two lampstands (4)
- The beast (7)
- Bottomless pit (7)
- Great City/Sodom & Egypt (8)
- 3.5 days (9)
- Great earthquake (13)
- 1/10 of city (13)
- 7,000 (13)

Identify and define

• Reed like a measuring rod (1)

- If we identify the Temple of God as His people, (to be discussed next), the reed like a measuring rod represents the divine unit of measurement upon which God's people are measured. (His will or word)
- Other example: In 1793, the meter, defined as 1/10,000,000 the distance from the North Pole to the equator, running through Paris, France. (When the figure was decided upon, a platinum bar of that exact length was created as the standard.
 - Later became much more sophisticated.
 - Lesson: Standards are important to establish exact legitimacy. (Objective rather than subjective or approximate!)

(Matthew 7:21-23), *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ ²³ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”*

• Temple of God (1)

- The word (naos) translated temple here has reference to the Holiest places in the complex (where God is).
- This symbol corresponds with the Lord's church (the ekklesia, or called out. God's people)

- Note: The idea that here is a reference to the physical temple doesn't fit the symbolic language of the text. The temple, the reed, the witnesses, the 1260 days, etc., are all symbols, not to be understood literally.
- In fact, if you accept the late date of writing (AD 96), then the temple could not be literal because it was destroyed in AD 70.

(Ephesians 2:19-22), *“Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,²² in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.”*

• **Outside Court (2)**

- Not to be included in the measurement. Given over to the Gentiles (the wicked. Not to be measured with those who are God's. (Parallel – seal of God VS mark of the beast).
- The court without represents everyone except for God's true disciples
- Harkrider believes this includes:
 - Those who have rejected God's standard of divine authority
 - Worldly and indifferent Christians who are not faithful

• **Holy City (2)**

- Tread underfoot by the wicked (Gentiles)

- Again obvious, a reference to the persecution of the people of God. (So, the temple & the Holy City would both be representative of God's people.
 - Identified by the measure of the reed
 - Persecuted by the Gentiles of the outer court.
- The church is referred to in scripture as Jerusalem

(Hebrews 12:22-23), *“But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels,²³ to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect.”*

(Revelation 21:2), *“Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”*

• 42 months (2)

- 3.5 years / 1,260 days / time, times & half a time. All refer to the same amount of time.
- Half of the number 7 (complete, perfect, divine). Therefore, a broken, finite period of time.
- During this time the gospel is preached, but severe persecution comes upon God's people
- Consider the following:

- Daniel referred to this time of persecution first

(Daniel 7:25), [Referencing the Roman Emperor], *“He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time.”*

- The woman who bore the male Child to rule all nations fled for protection for that period of time:

(12:6), "Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days."

- The woman was nourished and protected for that period of time

(12:14), "But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent."

- The beast out of the sea is given power to continue his blasphemies and persecute for that amount of time

(13:5), "And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months."

- The two witnesses would prophesy for that period of time

(11:3), "And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."

- **Harkrider:** During this finite period of time the gospel is preached, but severe persecution is waged against the church. However, the saints will not be banished from the earth; instead, they will be nourished by God.

• **Two witnesses (3)**

- Who are they? We can't determine for sure, though many have speculated: (Enoch & Elijah; Zerubbabel & Joshua;

Elijah & Moses; the OT and NT; Holy Spirit & apostles (all examples).

- What we can know: Two witnesses, who prophesy, are sufficient to establish the testimony!

(Deuteronomy 17:6), *“Whoever is deserving of death shall be put to death on the testimony of two or three witnesses; he shall not be put to death on the testimony of one witness.”*

(1 Timothy 5:19), *“Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses.”*

- They are given the burden of teaching God’s word during this great persecution
- They had power to perform signs (cf. 11:5-6), which confirms they are from God

(Mark 16:20), *“And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.”*

- Their message (5) (fire proceeds out of their mouths) is the standard that destroys the unrighteous
- They are given power from God (6) which would sustain them and grant them victory
- As a symbol, the most obvious interpretation is that they refer to those who preach the gospel during this time.

• **1,260 days (3)**

- Another way of saying 3.5 years

• **Two olive trees (4)**

- A description of the two witnesses
- In conjunction with the two lampstands

- The olive trees support the lampstands, giving oil to the lamps

• **Two lampstands (4)**

- A part of the description of the two witnesses
- The lampstands support the light sent forth by God

(Philippians 2:15), "that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world."

• **The beast (7)**

- Evil, coming from the bottomless pit, ruled by the fallen star (Satan) mentioned in chapter 9.
- First reference to this beast (more will become known in chapter 13).
- After the work of the witnesses are finished, the beast manages to kill them.
- A prevalent view (which we will enlarge upon in our study of chapter 13) is that beast represents the Roman Empire. The evil power that at that time was persecuting God's people

(13:7-8), "It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. ⁸ All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

• **Bottomless pit (7)**

- Mentioned first in chapter 9. The location of the fallen star, who leads the army of locusts.

- The source of the evil that wars against God and His Son
- **Great City which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt (8)**
 - Early date – Usually make reference to Jerusalem
 - There are a number of times that the term “great city” is used in Revelation (14:8; 16:19; 17:18; 18:10,16,18,19,21). It is called at these times “Babylon”
 - Words like Babylon, Sodom, Egypt all represent wickedness
 - Late Date: Rome – the capital of the empire that is persecuting saints.

Note: If objection raised to Rome, because “where also our Lord was crucified”, then consider the following by Harkrider. “Since both ‘Sodom’ and ‘Egypt’ are figurative, the last description, where our Lord was crucified, must be figurative also. Although Jerusalem is the city where our Lord was crucified, to say that Rome is that city casts her in the same truth rejecting mold as Jerusalem. Rome, the great city, possesses the same attitude like Jerusalem who put to death the Author of truth.

- **3.5 days (9)**
 - Mirrors the 3.5 years – the duration of the witnesses work
 - A broken, short period of time, where the wicked seem to have prospered before God’s vindication of the witnesses.
- **Great earthquake (13)**
 - A cataclysm from God, vindicating the witnesses, and punishing the wicked that mistreated them.
 - This could reference any kind of upheaval. For example, political, wars, etc.

(Isaiah 24:19-20), [God's Sovereignty over the world described],
“The earth is violently broken, the earth is split open, the earth is shaken exceedingly. ²⁰ The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall totter like a hut; Its transgression shall be heavy upon it, and it will fall, and not rise again.”

• **1/10 of city (13)**

- The destruction caused the death of a significant percentage of the city
- Coupled with the number 7,000 it indicates the full number God intended to destroy for their sins.

• **7,000 (13)**

- Only a partial part of the city fell, but 7,000 indicates a complete and whole number

SCENE 8 (11:1-19) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- Seventh angel (15)
- Temple of God (19)
- Ark of the Covenant (19)
- Lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail (19)

- Identify and define

- **Seventh angel (15)**

- The final angel with the 7th trumpet sounding forth
 - Messengers or servants of God tasked with carrying out His chastisements on Mankind.
 - 7 angels who were given the 7 trumpets to sound (8:2)
- The 7th angel sounds, bringing the third woe of the three mentioned in (8:13).
 - First woe stated as completed in (9:12)
 - Second woe stated as completed in (11:14)
 - The third woe coming quickly (11:14)
 - This third woe seems to be included in the defeat of the wicked powers, as stated in 11:15-19.

- **Temple of God (19)**

- Here, the temple of God is used synonymously with God's throne room.
- Where God is!

(Revelation 21:2-3), "Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God."

- **Ark of the Covenant (19)**

- The ark of the covenant symbolizes the promise of God to remember the covenant that exists between Him and His people.

(Exodus 25:21-22), *“You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you.²² And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.”*

- **Lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail (19)**

- Amazing displays indicating the presence of God among His people
- A very similar description as that given at Mt. Sinai

(Exodus 19:16-20), *“Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled.¹⁷ And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain.¹⁸ Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly.¹⁹ And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice.²⁰ Then the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. And the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.”*

SCENE 8 (11:1-19) – NOTES

A Chronological Summary of Revelation 11

11:1, Temple is measured	God's property protected (Zech. 2:15)
11:3, Holy City trodden	Church is persecuted (Heb. 12:22-23)
11:3, Two witnesses prophesy	Gospel is preached (Jn. 15:26-27)
11:7, After testimony, Beast kills witnesses	Apparent victory of evil (Rev. 13:7, 15-17)
11:8-10, Earth rejoices, abuses bodies 3.5 days	Apparent defeat of the Lord's people
11:11-14, Witnesses rise & ascent	Cause of Christ vindicated (Rev. 20; Dan. 7)
11:15-19, 7 th trumpet sounds	Christ reigns as King of Kings (Eph. 1:20-23)

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(Zechariah:2:1-5), *“Then I raised my eyes and looked, and behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand. ² So I said, “Where are you going?” And he said to me, “To measure Jerusalem, to see what is its width and what is its length.” ³ And there was the angel who talked with me, going out; and another angel was coming out to meet him, ⁴ who said to him, “Run, speak to this young man, saying: ‘Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, because of the multitude of men and livestock in it. ⁵ For I,’ says the Lord, ‘will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.’ ”*

(Hebrews 12:22-23), *“But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, ²³ to the general assembly and*

church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect.”

(John 15:26-27), “But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.²⁷ And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.”

(Revelation 13:7, 15-17), “It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.” ... **(15-17)**, “He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.¹⁶ He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads,¹⁷ and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”

(Revelation 20:10), “The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”

(Daniel 7:27), “Then the kingdom and dominion, And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.”

(Ephesians 1:20-23), “which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,²¹ far above all principality and power and might

and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. ²² And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, ²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”

SCENE 9 (12:1-17) - PICTURE

- Awe at the size of the conflict (Grand woman-Great dragon)
- Fear at the power of the dragon
- Gratitude for God’s intervention
- Enlightenment regarding the true scope of the conflict
- Joy at the victory in heaven
- Trepidation at the serpent’s persecution on the earth

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Introductory thoughts: (Taken directly from Harkrider’s commentary)

- **The first eleven chapters of Revelation have announced Christ as the One who controls the destiny of the world.**
 - He walks in the midst of the churches, completely aware of their works and their struggles.
 - He has the authority to carry out the plan of God revealed in the book sealed with seven seals.
 - When that book is opened, it summarizes God's dealings with the inhabitants of the earth from the period the

gospel was first preached to the time of the final judgment.

- The seventh seal, which contains the seven trumpets, recaps in greater detail the workings of God in calling men to repentance.
- These trumpets reveal a series of warnings to unbelievers to repent, for the Lord always gives man opportunity to change before he executes judgment.
- A little book then appears which holds even more imagery about this judgment upon men.
- **A brief summary of that little book is given in chapter eleven, but a full explanation of how and why that result is reached is unfolded in the last eleven chapters of Revelation.**
- **A new beginning, one might say, is introduced in 12:1 which explains the magnitude of the heavenly conflict.**
 - The seven bowls of wrath are not poured out immediately, as one might expect, when the seventh trumpet sounds.
 - Rather, another interlude occurs to explain who the characters are and what the underlying reasons are for the conflict. (12-15)
 - Finally, the seven angels pour out the bowls of wrath. (16)
 - Thus the seven bowls, which were contained in the seventh trumpet, recap additional information about the wrath of God against the impenitent. (16)

- Through these revelations the reader is made aware of the fact that all of God's judgments are just and righteous.

(Final chapters)

- Faithful saints shall be avenged of their persecutors.
- The might, dominion, and intent of Satan and his agents are terrifyingly real.
- But let Christians be encouraged to know that the devil's harassment of the church is not because he is triumphant, but because he is desperate.
- He knows that he has but a short time. To be sure, martyrs are yet to die for the faith, but physical death means only that they shall enter the paradise of God. Satan, the beast, the false prophet, and all who have the mark of the beast shall be cast into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone.

Scene 9 (Chapter 12) – The Woman, The Child and the Dragon

READ THE TEXT

What are the emotions and impressions you have, upon the first reading?

- Awe at the size of the conflict (Grand woman – Great dragon)
 - The “great sign”, great in scope, but a cause for fearful dread at the conflict itself
 - Harkrider describes (vs. 1-6) as an explanation of the “conflict on earth from heaven’s point of view”

(Ephesians 6:11-13), “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”¹² For we do

not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

- **Fear at the power of the dragon**

- The dragon is later in the chapter identified as Satan himself (12:9)

(1 Peter 5:8), “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”

- This description indicates great intelligence, power and purpose (to destroy/devour the Child) Scary!

- **Gratitude at the intervention of God**

- The child caught up to God and to His throne
- The woman’s escape in the wilderness to the place prepared by God
- God did not, and will not allow Satan to destroy either the Woman or her Child.

- **Enlightenment regarding the true scope of the conflict**

- Satan’s attempt to thwart God’s scheme for redeeming man is not merely described by Herod, or the Jewish Leaders, or the proclamation of Pilate.
- This battle is great, with the devil and his angels defeated, and the plan of God fully accomplished in His son.

- Men discount what they don't see. John gives us a glimpse of the true extent of God's victory over the Devil and those opposed to His plan for redeeming man

- **Joy at the victory in heaven**

- The victory is total. The devil is thrown out of heaven

(Ephesians 3:10-11), "to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places,¹¹ according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord."

- **Trepidation at the Serpent's persecution on earth**

- Heaven rejoices at the devil being expelled
- But, that means the devil now centers his attention upon those upon the earth

(1 Peter 5:8), "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

- Why does persecution exist? Because the devil is angry!

SCENE 9 (12:1-17) - PRINCIPLE

- A revealing of the underlying motivation for the persecution that Christians were experiencing.
- The underlying struggle is not merely an earthly conflict, but has its origin in heaven itself.
- The reason why victory is sure, is that the struggle ultimately is between God and Satan!
- The persecutions are not because the devil is winning, but because he is desperate!

What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

- **A revealing of the underlying motivation for the persecution that Christians were experiencing.**

- The devil is now on earth, and pointedly focusing on the faithful

(Job 1:9-11) [Satan seeking the persecution of Job. His reasoning], *“So Satan answered the Lord and said, “Does Job fear God for nothing?¹⁰ Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.¹¹ But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!”*

- He believes the same of us. If he can touch us, he thinks he can cause us to lose our faith in God

- **The underlying struggle is not merely an earthly conflict, but has its origin in heaven itself.**

- The woman, the child and the dragon (Behind the scenes)
- Michael and his angels fighting Satan and his angels
- We do not often get to see “behind the scenes”.
Remember Elisha (as an example)

(2 Kings 6:15-18) [King of Syria coming with a great army to capture Elisha and his servant], *“And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, “Alas, my master! What shall we do?”¹⁶ So he*

answered, “Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.”¹⁷ And Elisha prayed, and said, “Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.” Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.¹⁸ So when the Syrians came down to him, Elisha prayed to the Lord, and said, “Strike this people, I pray, with blindness.” And He struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha.”

- The reason why victory is sure, is that the struggle ultimately is between God and Satan!

(12:10-12) READ

- The persecutions are not because the devil is winning, but because he is desperate!

(12:12) READ

SCENE 9 (12:1-17) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- Think outside the box (physical existence)
- The faithful among God’s covenant people are protected by Him
- The Devil is to be feared

TO US

- Think outside the box (physical existence)
- The faithful among God’s covenant people are protected by Him
- The devil is to be feared

- To them:

- **Think outside the box (physical existence)**

- John showed that the ongoing conflict was being won or lost in heaven, not on earth.

- **The faithful among God's covenant people are protected by Him**

- The woman (which we will see refer to the faithful who are tied by covenant to God) is protected and cared for by God

- **The Devil is to be feared**

- The imagery shows his power. The ultimate enemy of the people of God, and God Himself. He, for a short while, would continue to trouble the people.
- However, though to be feared (leading to dependence upon God for victory), he is not able to defeat God. He is like a hurt animal, lashing out in desperation.

- To us:

- **Think outside the box (physical existence) (See what is behind the curtain!)**

(2 Corinthians 5:6-8), "So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord.⁷ For we walk by faith, not by sight."⁸ We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord."

(Revelation 1:1) [This is the purpose of God's revelation, so that we can see what is REALLY going on!], *"The Revelation of Jesus*

Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place.”

- **The faithful among God’s covenant people are protected by Him**

(Isaiah 54:17), “No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is from Me,” says the Lord.”

(Hebrews 13:5-6), “Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”⁶ So we may boldly say: “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?”

- **The Devil is to be feared (but with the knowledge that dependence upon God brings ultimate victory!)**

(12:4,12) READ

(1 John 4:4-6), “You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.⁵ They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them.⁶ We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.”

SCENE 9 (12:1) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- Woman (1,4,6,13,14,15,16,17)
- Garland/12 stars (1)
- Male Child (1,4,5,13)
- Fiery Red Dragon (3,4,7,9,12,13,14,15,16,17)
- 7 heads/diadems (3)
- 10 Horns (3)
- 1/3 stars (4)
- Devour (4)
- Rod of iron (5)
- Wilderness (6,14)
- 1,260 Days (6)
- Michael (7)
- Cast to earth (9)
- Wings of eagle (14)
- Time, Times, ½ Time (14)
- The flood (15,16)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 10

- Identify and define
 - **Woman (1,4,6,13,14,15,16,17)**
 - The protagonist of this scene (conflict between the dragon and the woman)
 - She gives birth to the male child (obviously a reference to the Christ)
 - **Not a reference to the Virgin Mary (remember, this is symbolic language)**
 - Some say the Jewish nation (doesn't fit in with post birth of the child)
 - Some say references the church (doesn't fit in with pre birth of the child)
 - Best explanation is that the woman symbolizes the faithful remnant of God's covenant people

- The birth of the Christ came through the Covenant promise to Abraham (though, ironically the Jewish nation rejected the Christ).
- The church came through the redemptive work of the Christ, it did not birth the Christ, so thinking of the woman as the church doesn't quite fit.
- **Homer Hailey says: "The woman can best be thought of as the spiritual remnant of God's people who, in faithfulness, had kept covenant with Him.**

(Micah 4:10), "Be in pain, and labor to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, Like a woman in birth pangs. For now you shall go forth from the city, You shall dwell in the field, And to Babylon you shall go. There you shall be delivered; There the Lord will redeem you From the hand of your enemies."

- According to Micah, the nation would be given up until the time that redemption came. The one brought forth in labor is a reference to the Messiah-King

(Micah 5:2), "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting."

- Isaiah identified the bearer of the man-child as the spiritual remnant of Zion

(Isaiah 66:7-11), "Before she was in labor, she gave birth; Before her pain came, She delivered a male child. ⁸ Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as

soon as Zion was in labor, She gave birth to her children. ⁹ Shall I bring to the time of birth, and not cause delivery?" says the Lord. "Shall I who cause delivery shut up the womb?" says your God. ¹⁰ "Rejoice with Jerusalem, And be glad with her, all you who love her; Rejoice for joy with her, all you who mourn for her; ¹¹ That you may feed and be satisfied With the consolation of her bosom, That you may drink deeply and be delighted With the abundance of her glory."

- Not only the birth of the manchild, but the new nation that would come through Him
- Through the faithful remnant of Israel, the Christ was born, at last bringing in to reality the new spiritual nation! The kingdom of Christ

• **Garland/12 Stars (1)**

- Along with the woman being clothed with the sun, and the moon at her feet, an indication of great glory.
- The garland of stars, like the sun and moon, represent light (therefore righteousness)

(1 John 1:5-7), "This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."

- Garland (Gk. Stephanos) – A mark of royal or exalted rank. The royal crown of victory. (Contrast with the crown upon the dragon. (Gk. Diadem) – a different type

of crown. Some say there is a significance to the fact that Satan is never referred to as wearing the “stephanos” crown

- 12 is a number indicating wholeness or completion. (The number of the tribes of Israel making up the nation).

- **Male Child (1,4,5,13)**

- The male child refers to the Christ (the coming of the annointed).
- Verse 5 clearly indicates the entirety of the Christ’s time on earth.
- The reference to His rule is indicative of His absolute authority!

(Ephesians 1:20-23), *“which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,²¹ far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.²² And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church,²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”*

(Revelation 1:4-5), *“John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,⁵ and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth.”*

- **Fiery Red Dragon (3,4,7,9,12,13,14,15,16,17)**

- The question of “WHO” the dragon is, is answered in 12:9 READ

- The significance of the description is found in his power and capability

(1 Peter 5:8), *“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”*

(Revelation 9:11) [**Ruler of the bottomless pit, king of the locust plague**], *“And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon.”*

(Ephesians 6:10-13), *“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”*

- **7 Heads/ Diadems (3) – ON the Serpent**

- Number 7 indicates completion – hence, full of intelligence

(2 Corinthians 11:3) [**Warning from Paul**], *“But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.”*

- Diadems –Crown. A place of authority or royalty in the realm of Evil.
- Note: A different word used than (stephanos) used in other places

- Analysis of difference (Lenski)
 - “We note that Jesus received a stephanos of thorns and then was mocked as King of the Jews. Here the woman has the twelve stars as her stephanos, her symbol of victory... The dragon has no stephanos, not even a usurped wreath of victory, but only “diadems,” royal fillets of pretended kingship, symbols of arrogated dominion. (365).

- **10 Horns (3)**

- **10 is a complete number indicating fullness or strength**
- **The Dragon has mighty power, exercising sovereignty over the darkness of the world.**

(Colossians 1:13-14) [The significance of our deliverance], *“He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,¹⁴ in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.”*

- **1/3 stars (4)**

- Symbolic of the greatness of Satan’s power. Though it is limited by God.
- Also, how ineffectual this power is towards the woman and her Child, though it seems so fearsome. (Because God is in control).

Start Here on 6/13/21

- **Devour (4)**

- Satan has constantly sought to destroy (devour) the Christ, and even the promise of His coming.

(Genesis 3:15), *“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”*

(Luke 4:13), [After Jesus successful resistance to his temptation in the wilderness], *“Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.”*

- **Rod of Iron (5) – characterization of the male child’s rule**

- An indication of the Messiah’s ability to wage war against evil

- The rod indicates a firm rule. In control.

(Ephesians 1:20-23), *“which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,²¹ far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.²² And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church,²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”*

- It does not indicate despotism or tyranny

(Matthew 11:28-30), *“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.³⁰ For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”*

- **Wilderness (6,14)**

- A refuge for those God protects. (Where the enemies of God are not present)

- Where the woman receives nourishment (cf. vs. 14)

- **1,260 Days (6)**

- 3.5 years. A period we have already discussed in Scene 8
- The time in which the beast and the false prophet wage persecution **(11:2-3) READ**

- **Michael (7)**

- Archangel

(Jude 9), *“Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!”*

- One of the chief princes (Daniel 10:13)
- ‘the prince of Israel’ (Daniel 10:21)
- ‘the great prince’ (Daniel 12:1)
- A leader of the host of heaven, battling against the dragon
- (Harkrider), “Michael was the leader of the army of holy angels whom God used to defeat the army of Satan in his heavenly attempt to destroy Christ. The effect of this battle is that the purpose and plan of God in Christ are fully accomplished (Ephesians 3:10-11).”

- **Cast to earth (9)**

- The battle is won in heaven
- Though persecution continues on earth, the devil is defeated, his time is short! **(cf. vs. 12).**

- **Wings of eagle (14)**

- Eagles wings indicated God’s protection from Egypt, taken into the wilderness

(Exodus 19:4), *“You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to Myself.”*

- In the same way, refuge is given to the faithful. (This is spiritual refuge or protection). They will be able to resist the devil.
- Despite physical persecution, they will be *“more than conquerors”* (cf. **Romans 8:35-39**)

- **Time, Times & ½ time (14)**

- 3.5 years. A reference to the same period of time as noted in chapter 11
- (Harkrider), “The gospel of God’s kingdom is being preached, but the recipients are under severe persecution from the Roman Empire. However, the promise being assured throughout Revelation is that God will nourish his people during the time of testing.

- **The flood (15,16)**

- In the OT, a flood signified tribulation from the ungodly

(Isaiah 8:5-8), “The Lord also spoke to me again, saying: ⁶ “Inasmuch as these people refused The waters of Shiloah that flow softly, And rejoice in Rezin and in Remaliah's son; ⁷ Now therefore, behold, the Lord brings up over them The waters of the River, strong and mighty— The king of Assyria and all his glory; He will go up over all his channels And go over all his banks. ⁸ He will pass through Judah, He will overflow and pass over, He will reach up to the neck; And the stretching out of his wings Will fill the breadth of Your land, O Immanuel.”

- However, God is able to dry up rivers to protect His faithful!

(Isaiah 42:14) [Within a promise of God to help those who are His], *“I will lay waste the mountains and hills, And dry up all their*

vegetation; I will make the rivers coastlands, And I will dry up the pools.”

SCENE 9 (12:1) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- Earth (16)
- Make war (17)
- Woman’s offspring (17)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 10

- Identify and define
- Earth (16)
 - Represents the political powers and peoples who diverted and weakened the Roman Empire
 - Political uprisings, wars, conflicts were used by God to protect and sustain His people
 - God’s providence is seen in the affairs of men. (Though often not recognized).

(Acts 17:26-27), “And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings,²⁷ so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might

grobe for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us.”

- **Make war (17)**

- This an indication of the persecution being felt by the children of God

- **Woman’s offspring (17)**

- In that present time, the people who are faithful to the covenant. Individuals who faithfully obey the gospel and live by it.

SCENE 9 (12:1-17) – NOTES

- Chapter 12 reveals the scope of the conflict which had engulfed the faithful at that time.
- The three main characters: Woman, Child & Dragon
- The Devil is defeated in Heaven, and his remaining time is short. He is desperate.
- The godly, who remain faithful to the end, will receive an eternal reward.

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- **Chapter 12 reveals the scope of the conflict which had engulfed the faithful at that time**

- The protagonists and antagonists of the conflict are here introduced
- The woman (Representing those who are of the covenant of God (faithful to Him))

- The child (Representing the Messiah)
- The dragon (Representing Satan, 12:9)

- **The plot is simple**

- The devil is defeated in Heaven (God's victory through His redemptive scheme is assured)
- The efforts of the devil on earth is due to his desperate realization that time is short

(12:12), *“Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.”*

- **The comfort for the godly is obvious from this text**

- In every way, God thwarts the efforts of the Devil, His defeat in heaven is total, and his time is short. Faithfulness begets eternal reward

SCENE 10 (13:1-10) - PICTURE

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The description of this beast is very similar to the dragon (chap. 12) • The beast represents political power • This political power was worshiped by men | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revulsion at the description of the beast • Despair at the initial success in warring against the saints • Joy at the message of verses 9-10 |
|---|--|

Introductory thoughts:

- Here in this text we see the way in which Satan wars against the seed of the woman on the earth

(12:17), *“And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”*

- There are two beasts introduced in the 13th chapter. The first is the beast from the sea, and we will next be introduced to the beast from the earth.
- So that you will have some understanding from the beginning of this reading
 - The beast from the sea represents political power (as a parallel, study Daniel 7)
 - The beast from the earth (also referred to as the false prophet) references religious power
- Their efforts are to *“make war with the rest of her [the woman’s] offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”*

Scene 10 (Chapter 13:1-10) – The Beast from the Sea

READ THE TEXT

What are the emotions and impressions you have, upon the first reading?

- The description of the beast from the sea is similar to that of the dragon in the previous chapter
 - While similar in description, they are not identical, and they are two different individuals.
 - Note verse 2, *“The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.”*

- **The beast is obviously a political power, with a throne and authority**
- **The political power was worshipped by men**
- **Regarding Emotions:**
 - Revulsion at the beast (Dangerous, powerful & evil (on his heads a blasphemous name))
 - Despair at his initial success against the saints (cf. vs. 7)
 - Joy at the important message of verses 9-10
 - If anyone has an ear, let him hear!

SCENE 10 (13:1-10) - PRINCIPLE

- The evil of the world powers that make war against the saints of God.
- The fact that we can expect such powers to have success in persecuting and even killing the saints.
- The credulous nature of worldly men that cause them to fall down and worship God's opponents.
- Such evil and hurtful powers will be killed as they have killed others. With patience, we are victorious.

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What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

- **The evil of the world powers that make war against the saints of God.**

- The Philistines and other nations in Canaan that warred against the people of God
- The Pharaoh of Egypt, who showed such disdain for God's power, even to death
- The Babylonian King, Nebuchadnezzar, who initially considered himself God's equal
- The Roman emperors, who decreed that they be worshipped by their subjects as Gods, persecuting those who refuse
- The secularists of our day, who deny and ignore the power and might of the Almighty, no longer retaining God in their knowledge.
- **The fact that we can expect such powers to have success in persecuting and even killing the saints.**
 - It always has been that the world persecutes and kills those who follow after God

(Matthew 10:28), *“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”*

(2 Thessalonians 1:4-10), *“so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure,⁵ which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer;⁶ since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you,⁷ and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,⁸ in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who*

do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁹ These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,¹⁰ when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.”

- **The credulous nature of worldly men that cause them to fall down and worship God’s opponents.**

(Acts 17:22-25), “Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious;²³ for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you:²⁴ God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands.²⁵ Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things.”

- **Such evil and hurtful powers will be killed as they have killed others. With patience, we are victorious.**

- In **Matthew 26:52**, after Peter lopped of the ear of the high priest’s servant, Jesus said much the same thing.
“Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.”
- Violence begets violence.
- Each empire throughout the history of the world, no matter how great, was overcome by another.
- Even the Roman empire fell.

- (So will America)
- But, we are victorious in the end because God is with us!

(Romans 8:31-37), *“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?³³ Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.³⁴ Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?³⁶ As it is written: “For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”³⁷ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.”*

SCENE 10 (13:1-10) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- Recognize the world to be the enemy. Us VS Them. (7-8)
- The saint will endure through patience and faith. (9-10)

TO US

- Recognize the world to be the enemy. Us VS Them. (7-8)
- The saint will endure through patience and faith. (9-10)

Practice – Application to them and us (Same for both in this text)

- **We need to recognize the world as the enemy. The powers to be, as well as those under their thrall. The Christian should maintain an US VS THEM attitude.**

(James 4:4), “Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”

(Romans 12:1-2), “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

- **The Saint will endure and overcome if he hears God’s word, believes and steadfastly endures.**

- Here in this text, the knowledge that the beast (Roman empire) would be brought low helps the Christian to endure.
- We know today, that no matter the darkness of the moment, God’s will shall eventually be brought to fruition

(Isaiah 35:3-4), [Really the entire chapter teaches the future glory of the coming kingdom], *“Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees.⁴ Say to those who are fearful-hearted, “Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with*

vengeance, with the recompense of God; He will come and save you.”

(Joshua 1:9) [God’s promise to Joshua], *“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”*

SCENE 10 (13:1-10) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- Sea Beast (1)
- 7 Heads (1)
- 10 horns (1)
- 10 crowns (1)
- Blasphemous name (1)
- Dragon (2)
- Wounded head (3)
- Mouth (5)
- 42 months (5)
- Book of life (8)
- Captivity (10)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 10

- **Identify and define**
- **Beast rising up out of the sea (1)**
 - Note: Different translations vary with regard to who stood on the sea.
 - One variant – “I”, meaning John. The second variant refers back to the previous chapter “he”, meaning the Dragon. (Reason? No pronoun in the original, only the word for “stood”)
 - Regardless, the vision teaches the same thing.

- Consider the similarity of this vision to Daniel's in Daniel 7.

(Daniel 7:2-3), *“Daniel spoke, saying, “I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea.³ And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other.”*

(Daniel 7:17), *“Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth.”*

(Daniel 7:19-26), **[The fourth kingdom]** *“Then I wished to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its nails of bronze, which devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled the residue with its feet;²⁰ and the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, before which three fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke pompous words, whose appearance was greater than his fellows.²¹ “I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them,²² until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom. ‘The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, Which shall be different from all other kingdoms, And shall devour the whole earth, Trample it and break it in pieces.²⁴ The ten horns are ten kings Who shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them; He shall be different from the first ones, And shall subdue three kings.²⁵ He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the*

saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time. ²⁶ 'But the court shall be seated, And they shall take away his dominion, To consume and destroy it forever.'

- Like David, the beast of John's vision is a world empire. Our view of the date of writing coincides with the fourth beast of Daniel's vision. The Roman Empire
- Described as like a leopard (swift destructive power), feat of a bear (crushing power), mouth of a lion (tearing power) Note: Coincides with the four beasts of Daniel 7

- **Seven heads (1)**

- An indication of completeness. As with the dragon an indication of full life and intelligence

- **10 horns (1)**

- Number 10 is a whole number, indicates the magnitude of the beast's great power on the earth

(cf. 17:12), [Another designation of horns (the scarlet beast of chapter 17)], "The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdoms as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast."

- **10 crowns (1)**

- Here differs with the description of the dragon (7 heads with 7 crowns)
- Here, 10 horns with 10 crowns
- Diademata (royalty and great authority). Note, not the victorious crown (stephanos)

- **Blasphemous name (1)**

- We are told in verse 6 of the beast blaspheming against God.
- (blasphemy – vilification against God. Slander, evil speaking)
- An attack against God, a demeaning of His name.
- Harkrider states that the blasphemous name is an arrogant self-exaltation. Deification of the emperor, in the place of God.

- **Dragon (2)**

- Satan (cf. 12:9)

- **Wounded head (3)**

- Would indicate that the mortal death of a single head would not bring down the beast
- Perhaps the recognition that the empire would continue, regardless of the death of an emperor
- Some claim that it refers to the death of Nero
- Others that it refers to a time in the kingdom, where persecution ceased for a time.
- Harkrider believes the beast to not refer to any one kingdom, but all kingdoms of men that are opposed to God, and persecute His people. Hence, if one kingdom is dealt a death blow, the beast remains alive, and continues to antagonize God's people in a different guise.
- Regardless, the indication is the defeat of the beast can come ONLY at the hands of the Lamb

(19:20), *“Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived*

those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.”

- **Mouth (5)**

- An opportunity or voice to rail against God
- **God (6)** – speak arrogantly against His eternal nature and authority.
- **His Name (6)** – speak against what He stands for
- **His tabernacle (6)** – His dwelling place, including the church on earth
- **Them that dwell in heaven (6)** – the angelic beings and host of God’s faithful

- **42 months (5)**

- Mentioned previously, a significant, but limited amount of time to prevail

- **Book of life (8)**

- Those who are named in the book of Life are those in a relationship with God. The life here is eternal life.
- Note: These names can be blotted out!

(Revelation 22:19), “and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”

- Be sure to maintain holiness, that your name may be present “unto death”

- **Captivity (10)**

- The present position of God’s people on earth. Subject to oppressive government.

- While the beast makes captive God's people (eventually the beast will be "captured" by the Lamb

SCENE 10 (13:1-10) – NOTES

- The devil has given power and authority to evil governments to persecute and overcome God's people.
- Though the beast seems undefeatable, he is not!
- Blasphemy, persecution, war, authority would only last for a period of time.
- The beast would eventually meet defeat. Saints need patience and faith.

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- The devil has given power and authority to evil governments to persecute and overcome God's people.
- Though the beast seems undefeatable, he is not!
- The devil has given power and authority to evil governments to persecute and overcome God's people.
- Though the beast seems undefeatable, he is not!

SCENE 11 (13:11-18) - PICTURE

- After reading with dismay of the first beast, there is greater foreboding as he gains company.
- This beast is every bit as bad as the other, & supports the other.
- Fear as we consider the great signs. How not to be deceived?
- Fear as we consider the ostracization of the saints, as they did not have the mark of the beast (666).

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Introductory thoughts:

- **As we will see in our discussion of this beast from the earth, it represents false religion**
 - There are other references to this beast in Revelation
 - He is spoken of as “the false prophet”

(16:13), [6th bowl of wrath], *“And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.”*

(19:20), [The final defeat of both beasts], *“Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.”*

(20:10), [The final defeat of Satan], *“The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the*

beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”

- **Knowing the end from later verses, this beast is nevertheless described as dangerous and intimidating.**

Scene 11 (Chapter 13:11-18) – The Beast from the Earth

READ THE TEXT

- **My Thoughts**
 - **A sense of dismay as I see a second beast arise, much like the first**

(2 Corinthians 4:3-4), “But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴ whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.”

(2 Corintihans 4:7-9), [Note how Paul’s testimony parallels what we read in our text], “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. ⁸ We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed— ¹⁰ always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. ¹¹ For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus’ sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. ¹² So then death is working in us, but life in you.”

- **The second dragon is just as imposing as the first (Supports the beast from the sea)**

(13:12), *“And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.”*

- The two go hand in hand, as the second beast also has authority over the people
- The idea of “cause” is to be considered. It doesn’t mean compelled.
- It can’t, as faithful Christian’s are not compelled.
- However, pressure and influence can lead individuals into sin! There is great pressure and influence here!

(Matthew 5:32), *“But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.”*

- NOT appreciated by God (leads to the beast’s punishment)

(Matthew 18:6-7), *“Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea. ⁷ Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes!”*

- **False religion can be very deceptive, and was at this time**

(2 Thessalonians 2:9-12), *“The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰ and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹ And for this reason God will send*

them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,¹² that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

- Consider that Simon the Sorcerer was able to deceive with his signs, though they were not legitimate
- He and those in Samaria could see the difference between what Simon did, and the miracles that came from God.

(Acts 8:9-13), “But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great,¹⁰ to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, “This man is the great power of God.”¹¹ And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time.¹² But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.¹³ Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done.”

- **Fear because of the ostracization of the saints, (economic privation).**

- We will talk about the number 666 a bit later

SCENE 11 (13:11-18) - PRINCIPLE

- The devil works through both secular and religious means to deceive the world and oppress the saints.
- Even the performance of great signs, when not from God, are to be rejected by God's people.
- The devil and his minions are only able to do what God has "granted" them power to do.
- The wise man can differentiate between the perfection of the divine, and that which falls short

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What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

- **The devil works through both secular and religious means to deceive the world and oppress the saints**
- **Even the performance of great signs, when not from God, are to be rejected God's people.**
 - Consider, God's signs are greater than any available to the devil.
 - We have already mentioned the account of Simon the Sorcerer
 - Add to this the signs given to Pharaoh

(Exodus 7:8-13), "Then the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying,⁹ "When Pharaoh speaks to you, saying, 'Show a miracle for yourselves,' then you shall say to Aaron, 'Take your rod and cast it before Pharaoh, and let it become a serpent.'" ¹⁰ So Moses

and Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and they did so, just as the Lord commanded. And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a serpent. ¹¹ But Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers; so the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. ¹² For every man threw down his rod, and they became serpents. But Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. ¹³ And Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, as the Lord had said.”

- Remember, God’s scheme and work has already been established!

(John 20:30-31), “And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”

(Acts 2:32-33), “This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. ³³ Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.”

- Any other signs are lesser, counterfeit, and to be rejected by God’s people

- **The devil and his minions are only able to do what God has “granted” them power to do.**

(Job 1:12), “And the Lord said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person.” So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.”

- The victory is secured. God does not allow the devil to defeat any who are His

(John 10:27-29), *“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.²⁹ My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand.”*

- **The wise man can differentiate between the perfection of the divine, and that which falls short (666)**

SCENE 11 (13:11-18) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- Awareness of the two-fold attack of the dragon against God's people.
- Aware both of its limited time and ultimate failure.

TO US

- The effectiveness of false religion to deceive those in the world.
- Wisdom to know a stand with God will ultimately bring victory.

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Practice – Application to them and us

• Them

- **Awareness of the two-fold attack of the dragon against God's people**

- The world power bringing the oppression is aided by false religion, deceiving those who dwell on the earth

- Such militance for the empire brings intolerance to those whose kingdom is not of this world!
 - Shadrach, Meshach & Abed-nego (fiery furnace)
 - Daniel (Lion's den)
 - Us today (intolerance toward LBGQT agenda & those who advocate for the rule of law).

- **Awareness both of the limited time of the Beasts dominance (cf. 13:9-10), and its ultimate failure (666, 13:18)**

- **Us**

- **The effectiveness of false religion to deceive those in the world.**

- It is easy to be credulous of false claims regarding what is divine and what is not
- How to discern?
 - God's word!

(Acts 17:11), *“These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.”*

- Dependence upon one another

(Ephesians 4:14-16), *“that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,¹⁵ but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies,*

according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”

- **We need wisdom to know that a stand with God will ultimately gain victory!**

- The devil can't win!

(12:12), "...For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time."

SCENE 11 (13:11-18) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- Beast from the earth (11)
- Two horns (11)
- Deadly wound (12,14)
- Great signs (13)
- Image of the beast (14)
- Mark (16)
- Number of the beast, 666 (17-18)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 11:11-18

- **Identify and define**
- **Beast from the earth (11)**
 - As noted before, he is referred to in other places as the "false prophet" (16:13; 19:20; 20:10)
 - He has a supportive role to the beast from the sea (political or secular power)

- *“causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast” (13:12)*

- He has the backing of the beast from the sea, so exercises all the authority of the first beast (13:12).

- **From Harkrider:** “The vision John saw had an element that Daniel’s description of the beast-empires did not have. John’s vision had a religious aspect inasmuch as the sea-beast received worship from men. When an empire is united with divine qualities, there emerges state religion, state worship, and at its center, the states idol. The Roman Empire, with its god-Caesar, had become precisely this kind of political entity. The two beasts are so intertwined that the false religion of the land-beast was supported by the authority of the political power of the sea-beast.

• **Two horns (11)**

- *“like a lamb”*. The lamb was significant in regard to religion and sacrifice. So, this would be an indication of the religious nature of the beast’s authority
- However, though the idea of a lamb is found in appearance. The words were that of a dragon! (cf. 13:11) The doctrine of this beast was from the devil, not God.

• **Deadly wound (12,14)**

- This a reference back to 13:3, concerning the deadly wound suffered by one of the seven heads of the Sea beast.

- Remember, the only way the Sea beast will be defeated is by the Lamb of God!

(19:20), "Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone."

- **Great signs (13)**

- The devil has the power to cause "lying wonders"

(2 Thessalonians 2:9-12), "The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,¹⁰ and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.¹¹ And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,¹² that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

- It is hard to know for certain the nature of these "wonders", but as we have discussed, they are lesser than the divine miracles of the Bible
- The word miracles is used in verse 14. There very well may have been some supernatural abilities that had their origin from Satan. BUT, God's power is greater.

- **Harkrider:** In the biblical sense, an authentic miracle is an observable act directly produced by God with means other than physical laws of nature. If Satan could do the same, there would not be a way to determine the true message of God from the devil's false words. Whatever

signs Satan has attempted to duplicate have only been counterfeit.

- We must not be credulous, but discerning. Not taken in by false wonders!

• Image of the beast (14)

- A statue or idol (most probably of the Caesars as the head of the empire).
- Caesar worship was present late in the first century.
- The voice of the beast. (Spokesman? Harkrider: Through the function of the priests in the pagan temples and by the requirement of offering sacrifice on the altars, the spirit of Caesar worship came to life, and the mind of the empire was spoken.)

• Mark (16)

- The purpose – to distinguish between those who worship the beast, and those who do not.
- In some way a sign of loyalty required (no telling if literal or figurative)

(Daniel 3:4-6) [Loyalty required in immediately falling down to worship at the sound of the instruments], *“Then a herald cried aloud: “To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages,⁵ that at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up;⁶ and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.”*

- Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused and suffered the consequences
- Most probably not any more visible a mark than the seal of God that Christians have (cf. 7:3-4)
- No commerce allowed if not loyalty to the empire and emperor
- Maybe no employment, or only menial labor. Persecution is not always to death
- **Note:** What do people say the mark is? SS #? How about Vaccine card today? (Some are claiming that is a mark). No business or travel unless a vaccine passport?
- **Number of the Beast, 666 (17-18)**
 - Typical claim has to do with numerology (For example, NERO. When Nero Caesar is transcribed into the Hebrew letters, the numerical value is 666.
 - Silly, a Hebrew transliteration of the Greek form of a Latin name?
 - Also, other names can derive from such playing around with numbers (Hitler, Napoleon, Mussolini, Saddam Hussein, John F. Kennedy).
 - What proves too much proves nothing!
 - A consistent hermeneutic will approach ALL numbers as symbolic
 - **6 is the number of a man. In contrast in this instance, the number 7 represents God**
 - When man is in conflict with God, man is destined to fail!

- The beast will fail. Those who have his mark will fail as well.
- Wisdom teaches us to note that number, and know the end of the beast is inevitable.
- Note: Compare the three sixes to Isaiah 6:3

(Isaiah 6:3), [The threefold call of holy by the seraphim], *“And one cried to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!”*

SCENE 11 (13:11-18) – NOTES

- The two minions of Satan, oppressive empire, and false religion
- The false religion is effective in convincing the world to worship the empire
- Those without the beast’s mark (666) would be oppressed, and persecuted.
- Wisdom notes the imperfect and ultimately unsuccessful beast!

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- The two minions of Satan, oppressive empire, and false religion
- The false religion is effective in convincing the world to worship the empire
- Those without the beast’s mark (666) would be oppressed, and persecuted.

- **Wisdom notes the imperfect and ultimately unsuccessful beast!**

SCENE 12 (14:1-5) - PICTURE

- A reintroduction of the Lamb and the 144,000 in a yet future circumstance
- A description of individuals who were righteous, and thus rewarded.
- Encouragement at the thought of a reward for a righteous life.
- Anticipation of the joy of heaven
- The characteristics of those who are the sealed of God

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Introductory thoughts:

- Our next scene is very different in tone and subject
- **The previous two chapters were a terrifying description of the enemies of the cross of Christ**
 - The Dragon, and the two beasts
 - The very real physical and spiritual dangers that were present among the redeemed.
- **In our scene today, (14:1-5), there is a picture of optimism. Of victory.**
 - How timely this needed word of encouragement truly is.

Scene 12 (Chapter 14:1-5) – The Lamb and the 144,000 Redeemed

READ THE TEXT

• My Thoughts

• A reintroduction of characters in a different setting

• The Lamb

- (5:6,8) At the right hand of the Father in heaven
- (6:1,16) Opening the seals and bringing God's wrath upon the world
- (7:9,10,17) In heaven with the great multitude
- (12:11) The blood of the Lamb the means of victory for the faithful
- (13:8) Slain from the foundation of the World

• The 144,000

- (7:4-8) The sealed of God (7:4) on earth
- This apparently a reference to a time yet future for God's people

• On Mount Zion

- With the four living creatures and the 24 elders
- A reference to the throne room (cf. 4:& 5)

• A description of individuals who were righteous, then rewarded

- Not defiled with women (14:4)
- Followers of the Lamb (14:4)
- Honest, and without fault before God (14:5)

• Encouragement (the reward for a righteous life. In the presence of the Christ)

(Philippians 1:23-24), "For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.²⁴ Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you."

• Anticipation of the joy of heaven

(Psalm 68:2-3), "So let the wicked perish at the presence of God. ³ But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God; Yes, let them rejoice exceedingly."

- **The characteristics (righteousness & purity) of those who are the sealed of God**

(1 Peter 1:15-16), "but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶ because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

SCENE 12 (14:1-5) - PRINCIPLE

- This scene serves as a contrast and needed encouragement to those who were suffering the wrath of the Dragon.
- We learn something of the joy to be found in heaven
- We also learn the nature of the ones who will be in heaven with the Lamb of God

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What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

Basically a simple message that we have already covered fairly well

My Thoughts:

- **This scene serves as a contrast and needed encouragement to those who were suffering the wrath of the Dragon.**

- We learn something of the joy to be found in heaven
- We also learn the nature of the ones who will be in heaven with the Lamb of God

SCENE 12 (14:1-5) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- They would identify themselves as the 144,000 on earth, sealed of God in chapter 7
- A message of hope to the faithful

TO US

- Those of us who endure to the end will likewise be saved in the final day of God's judgment.

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Practice – Application to them and us

• Them

- They would identify themselves as the 144,000 on earth, sealed of God in chapter 7
- Here is a message of hope to the faithful

• Us

- Those of us who endure to the end will likewise be saved in the final day of God's judgment

(22:14-15), "Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.¹⁵ But outside are dogs and sorcerers and

sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.”

SCENE 12 (14:1-5) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- Lamb (1)
- Mount Zion (1)
- 144,000 (1)
- His Father’s name (1)
- Voice (2)
- Harpists/Harps (2)
- New Song (3)
- Four living creatures (3)
- Elders (3)
- Virgins (4)
- Followers of the Lamb (4)
- Firstfruits to God (4)
- Throne of God (5)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 14:1-5

• Identify and define

• Lamb (1)

- Already identified as the Lord, God the Son.

(4:6-7), “And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.⁷ Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.”

- The victor over the Dragon and the Beasts (cf. 19 & 20)

• Mount Zion (1)

- The literal Mount Zion is the mount upon which the city of Jerusalem was built
- The highest point in Jerusalem (first captured by David, made capitol city)

(2 Samuel 5:6-7), *“And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who spoke to David, saying, “You shall not come in here; but the blind and the lame will repel you,” thinking, “David cannot come in here.”⁷ Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion (that is, the City of David).”*

- NT writers often applied the prophecies of this city to heaven itself

(Hebrews 13:14) **[Contrasting physical Jerusalem to heaven]**, *“For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come.”*

- **144,000 (1)**

- No reason not to identify them as the same as those mentioned in 7:4

(7:4), *“And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed.”*

- Those with the seal of God on their foreheads
- Represents the elect of God under the New Covenant (The Spiritual Jew)
- We spent a great deal of time discussing why this was not a reference to literal Jews

(Romans 2:28-29), *“For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh;²⁹ but he is a*

Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.”

- Note: If the number is literal, then they must be literal Jews, and they must literally be virgins. (Even the literalists have a problem with all of that).
- The only change is location (heaven, not earth), indicating final reward

(2:10b), “Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”

- **His Father’s name (1)**

- The seal of God (7:3)
- An identification of these 144,000 as belonging to God
- A consistent rule of interpretation would cast doubt concerning any literal mark
- God knows who is His

- **Voice (2)**

- Described *“like the voice of many waters”*
- *“like the voice of loud thunder”*
- Perhaps a similar description to the singing of the song in the throne room scene

(5:11-12), “Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,¹² saying with a loud voice: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!”

- The voices obviously were singing (the context through verse 3 demands it).

• Harpists/Harps (2)

- **Note:** Use last week's bulletin to discuss how the idea of harpists in heaven has no impact on authorized Christian worship
- There is a parallel reference to this in Revelation 5:8

(5:8), "Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints."

- Consider that the golden bowls full of incense are figurative (they are the prayers of the saints).

• **Harkider:** "As the golden bowls are symbolical, so also are the harps which they play. They represent musical praise. Heaven is real, but it is a spiritual realm, not a material one."

- **Note:** in 5:9, *"and they sang a new song"*

- It seems appropriate to note the parallels between 5:8-9, and 14:1-5, and consider that the harps represent musical praise. The harps "sang" a new song

• New Song (3)

- Why a new song? Because, a NEW EXPERIENCE!
- Consider our joy and praise when we as the redeemed reach our home in heaven!
- We will be singing of and experience that we can now barely imagine

• Four living creatures (3)

- Introduced in chapter 4:6-8
- Around God's throne, worshipping God without ceasing.

“Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!” (4:8)

- **Elders (3)**

- Introduced in chapter 4:4
- Possible representation of the Old Covenant (12 Tribes) and New Covenant (12 Apostles)
- These would represent the leaders of the entirety of God's covenant people

- **Virgins (4)**

- Remember, 144,000 is not a literal number (represented in chapter 7 the redeemed on earth)
- This should be obviously “virgins” in a symbolic sense, not literal
- Otherwise, literally 144,000, all Jews, all men, and all virgins
- So, “virgins” would be an indication of spiritual purity (no defilement). Perhaps a special reference to spiritually chaste in regard to idolatry

(2 Corinthians 11:2), “For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.”

- **Followers of the Lamb (4)**

- Their allegiance is not to the king or emperor. It is only to the Lord Jesus Christ

(Hebrews 5:8-9), “though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.⁹ And having been

perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.”

- **Firstfruits to God and to the Lamb (4)**

- This is accomplished through their redemption with the blood of Christ

(5:9), “And they sang a new song, saying: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood’”

- Not necessarily a means of distinguishing them from later redeemed people. (If so, only in the fact that these events are early in the history of the church)
- More significantly, a separation (as the firstfruits became offerings to God. Sanctified). So, a separation from the Worldly.
- A comparison between those who belong to God, and those who remain in the world.

(Romans 12:1-2), “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

(Galatians 2:20), “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

- **Throne of God (5)**

- Again, a repeat of the description of God's throne room in heaven (Revelation 4&5)
- They were without deceit, therefore worthy of standing before the presence of God

(1 John 1:7), "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."

Note: Next scene 13 [Three Angels and Their Proclamations] (14:6-13)

SCENE 13 (14:6-13) - PICTURE

- There is significance in the fact that the gospel was for *"every nation, tribe, tongue, and people."*
- Proclamation of judgment is either a concern or a reason to rejoice
- Curiosity – To what does Babylon (8) refer?
- Reason to pause as we contemplate the nature of God's individual judgment of the wicked/righteous.

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Introductory thoughts:

- **The remainder of chapter 14 describes the prelude to, and beginning of a great world judgment**
 - The extent of this judgment will be discussed in the next scene

- Here, we see proclamations emanating from the angels (messengers of God).

Scene 13 (Chapter 14:6-13) – Three Angels and Their Proclamations

READ THE TEXT

• My Thoughts

- There is significance in the fact that the gospel was for ***“every nation, tribe, tongue, and people.”*** (6)

(Isaiah 2:2), “Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it.”

- **Note:** The gospel includes a warning of judgment and a call to righteousness

- **Proclamation of judgment is either a concern or a reason to rejoice** (7)

(Revelation 6:15-17) [The wicked], *“And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains,¹⁶ and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!¹⁷ For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”*

(Revelation 22:20) [The sentiment of the righteous], *“He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming quickly.” Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!”*

- **Curiosity – To what does Babylon refer?** (8)

- Babylon is mentioned six times in Revelation. This is the first (16:19; 17:5; 18:2,10,21).
 - The original Babylon was the capital of Nebuchadnezzar's world empire.
 - It was evil, and God brought judgment upon it.
 - Here it is used as an allusion to the evil forces present in the world at that time.
 - Evil described, *"she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication" (8)*.
 - Reference either to Jerusalem (early date) or Rome (late date). We will make our arguments later.
- **Reason to pause as we contemplate the nature of God's judgment**
 - Wicked (worships the beast) Wrath of God/torment (10)
 - Righteous (who keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus) Blessings and Rest (13-14)

SCENE 13 (14:6-13) - PRINCIPLE

- The gospel of Christ is for all men (both Jew and Greek). (6)
- Judgment comes upon the wicked nations of men. (8)
- The torment of the wicked is horrific. (10 -11)
- Righteousness requires both faith in Christ, and obedience to the commands of God (12)
- The Righteous will be rewarded (13)

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What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

- **The gospel of Christ is for all men**

(Romans 1:16), "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek."

- **Judgment comes upon the wicked nations of men**

(Acts 17:26-27), "And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings,²⁷ so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us."

- **The torment of the wicked is horrific**

(cf. 14:20), *“And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses’ bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs.”* (200 miles)

- **Righteousness requires both faith in Christ, and obedience to God’s commands**

(James 2:24), *“You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.”*

- **The righteous will be rewarded**

(Galatians 6:9), *“And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.”*

SCENE 13 (14:6-13) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- “Fear God and give glory to Him”
- It is a losing proposition to give allegiance to the beast rather than God!
- Faithfulness to death will be rewarded

TO US

- We don’t know when Christ is coming, “Fear God”!
- Do not love the world
- “Once saved, always saved” is not true doctrine!

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Practice – Application to them and us

• Them

- **As the judgment of God grows near, the exhortation to “fear God and give glory to Him” becomes ever more important**

- An example would be found in Hebrews 10:24-25

(Hebrews 10:24-25), *“And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”*

- The *“day of the Lord”* here most probably refers to the destruction of Jerusalem
- *“and so much the more”*

• **It is a losing proposition to give allegiance to the beast rather than God.**

• **Us**

• **We don't know when Christ is coming “Fear God”**

(2 Peter 3:10-11), *“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. ¹¹ Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness.”*

• **Do not love the world (place your allegiance with God instead!**

(James 4:4), *“Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”*

• **Once saved always saved is not a true doctrine**

- Those who die in the Lord are identified in verse 12
- *“who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus”*

- **Keep – (Thayer) 1)** to attend to carefully, take care of. 1a) to guard. 1b) metaphorically to keep, one in the state in which he is. 1c) to observe

SCENE 13 (14:6-13) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- Angels (6,8,9)
- Everlasting ospel (6)
- His judgment (7)
- Babylon (8)
- *“wine of the wrath of her fornication”* (8)
- Beast/image (9,11)
- Mark of the beast (9,11)
- *“wine of the wrath of God”* (10)
- Fire and brimstone (10)
- Voice from heaven (13)
- Spirit (13)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 14:6-13

- **Identify and define**
- **Angels (6,8,9)**
 - Spiritual beings (Messengers)
 - These, speaking from heaven spread the message of defeat for the pagan powers that were oppressing God’s people, an the torment that awaits those who worship the beast
 - One: Preaching the everlasting gospel, saying to fear God and give Him glory, for judgment is coming (6)
 - Two: The fall of Babyon (8)

- Three: God's wrath upon those who worship the beast (9)

• Everlasting gospel (6)

(1 Corinthians 15:1-4), "Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand,² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.³ For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,⁴ and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."

- Not merely the death, burial and resurrection of Christ
- Include all that impacts our redemption through Him
 - Example: Before Christ's death, the coming kingdom and Messiah (Matthew 4:23, et al)
 - Example: Baptism (Eunuch) Acts 8
 - Example: Judgment (as seen here)

• His judgment (7)

- God's judgment falls upon nations, and individuals
- There are judgments that are partial (a particular people at a particular time); and the Final judgment
 - Israel, Judah, Babylonians, Medes/Persians, Greeks, Romans (here), Jerusalem (AD 70)
 - Final judgment (Matthew 24:31-46; 2 Peter 3)
- This judgment is of the Paganism that was at present oppressing Christians. Its fall was imminent.

• Babylon (8)

- Literally: Great city that oppressed the nation of Judah (Nebuchadnezzar as King)
 - Pagans, with idolatry common practice
 - Opposed to the people of God
- Figuratively: The Roman Empire (City of Rome) center of Emperor worship
 - Note: We will discuss a vivid description of this Babylon in (17:1-18)
 - Described as a woman (harlot), drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs

(Revelation 17:18), *“And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.”*

- Consider that Isaiah used the same words to describe the fall of ancient Babylon

(Isaiah 21:9), *“...Then he answered and said, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen! And all the carved images of her gods He has broken to the ground.”*

• **“wine of the wrath of her fornication” (8)**

- Again, a reference that mirrors ancient Babylon

(Jeremiah 51:7-8), *“Babylon was a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunk. The nations drank her wine; Therefore the nations are deranged. ⁸ Babylon has suddenly fallen and been destroyed.”*

- Rome seduced the world through Paganism (cf. vs. 13:12)

(Revelation 13:12) [The false prophet/Beast of the Earth], *“And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence,*

and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.”

- The wine of wrath has reference to the pouring out of God’s wrath

(Romans 1:18-19), “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,¹⁹ because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.”

- **Harkrider:** Since the “wine of her fornication” brings about the “wrath of God,” they are mentioned together in the one phrase, “the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”

- **Beast/image (9,11)**

- The beast is identified in 13:14 as the one the False Prophet deceives men to worship (as the False prophet (Beast of the earth) makes the image.
- This beast is the Beast of the Sea described in (13:1-10)

- **Mark of the beast (9,11)**

- First mentioned in (13:16) buying and selling allowed only if the mark is present on the right hand or on their forehead.
 - Those who did not have the mark were oppressed on earth (13:15,17)
 - Those who did have the mark are here stated to be recipients of God’s wrath, a much worse fate.

- **(9/5/21) Note: Next week, Aaron Collier will be teaching the class. We will pick up where we left off today in two weeks.**

- **“wine of the wrath of God” (10)**

- God’s wrath is often described as a cup of wine poured out in the Old Testament

(Job 21:20), “Let his eyes see his destruction, and let him drink of the wrath of the Almighty.”

(Psalm 75:7-8), “But God is the Judge: He puts down one, and exalts another. ⁸ For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is fully mixed, and He pours it out; surely its dregs shall all the wicked of the earth drain and drink down.”

- **Note:** “poured out full strength” (NKJV); “without mixture” (KJV)

- A reference to the practice of diluting wine with water. God’s wrath would not be weakened or diluted.

- **Fire and brimstone (10)**

- The same judgment that God used to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:28)
- Even if here they are symbolic, it describes a judgment that is horrific, and to be feared
- We have the picture of eternal judgment that is very similar to this

(Matthew 10:28), [Worse than death] “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”

(Matthew 25:30), “And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

- (Adapted from Harkrider) Can you imagine men asking, “Why would you choose a life that brings such oppression and persecution to you?”
- A similar question to the ungodly, “Why would you choose a life that means definite torment forever and ever without the hope of relief?”

- **Voice from heaven (13)**

- The Speaker is identified in latter part of the verse as the Spirit
- Blessings will come to those faithful until death

(Revelation 2:10), “Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”

- **Spirit (13)**

- The Holy Spirit (From whence we get God’s revealed will and blessings)

- **Next Scene, 14 (14:14-20) [The Earth’s Harvest]**

SCENE 14 (14:14-20) - PICTURE

- Another majestic figure from heaven (The Christ)
- The concept of a harvest is often used in reference to judgment
- Anticipation at the judgment
- Sobering to consider the picture of harvest accompanied by images of sharp sickle, fire, wrath, and blood coming from the winepress.

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Introductory thoughts:

- **Our discussion of chapter 14 continues with another trio of angels coming in proclamation, and in carrying out God's judgment.**

- Just a note: The concept of judgment can reference either the final judgment of Christ at the end of time, or limited judgments upon nations, and empires.
- Examples:

(Joel 2:1-2) [Judah/With Babylon the instrument of Judgment],
“Blow the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord is coming, for it is at hand: ² A day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, like the morning clouds spread over the mountains. A people come, great and strong, the like of whom has never been; nor will there ever be any such after them, even for many successive generations.”

(Matthew 24:1-2) [Jerusalem, Rome as instrument in AD 70],

“Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. ² And Jesus said to them, “Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”

- **Our newest scene is such a picture of judgment as predicted by the 2nd and 3rd angels of verses 8-11**

Scene 14 (Chapter 14:14-20) The Earth’s Harvest

READ THE TEXT

- **My Thoughts**

- **The figure on the white cloud “One like the Son of Man” is impressive. Obviously represents Christ in judgment**

(Revelation 1:7), *“Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.”*

- **The concept of a harvest. Often used with respect to God’s judgment**

(Matthew 3:12) [John the Baptist’s words to the unrighteous Pharisees and Sadducees about the coming Christ], *“His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”*

- **Feelings of anticipation regarding the coming judgment**

- The faithful had reason to rejoice, and desire this judgment of the wicked who oppressed.
- Do we have the same?
- **It is a sobering picture presented. Imagery of God's wrath, seen in the sharp sickle, fire and the blood coming from the winepress.**
 - As much as judgment is a cause for rejoicing for the faithful. It is a painful and horrible picture for the unrighteous

SCENE 14 (14:14-20) - PRINCIPLE

- Christ sits in judgment upon nations (and the world)
- Hence, God is ultimately in control
- Relief is coming, as the wicked will be defeated and punished.
- In short, a microcosm of the message of the entire book. God and His are victorious!

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What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

- Christ sits in judgment upon nations (and the world)
- Hence, God is ultimately in control

- Relief is coming, as the wicked will be defeated and punished.
- In short, a microcosm of the message of the entire book. God and His are victorious!

SCENE 14 (14:14-20) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- It is best to be on God's side, as Christ is in control.
- Judgment is imminent, be ready!

TO US

- The same. Judgment is harsh for the ungodly, so it is best to be obedient, among the righteous
- Judgment is imminent, be ready!

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Practice – Application to them and us

• Them

- **It is best to be on God's side, as Christ is in control**
 - The Christ is wearing the victory crown (stephanos)
 - (Remember, Satan's crown indicates power and authority, but never victory)
 - (note: stephanos, rather than diadem) victor or conqueror vs royalty. Though both apply to Christ, stephanos ONLY applies to Him.)

(Romans 8:38-39), "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present

nor things to come,³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

- **Judgment is imminent, be ready!** *(vs. 15, “for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.”)*

• **Us**

- **Judgment is harsh for the ungodly, pleasant for the righteous**

(2 Thessalonians 1:4-7), “so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure,⁵ which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer;⁶ since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you,⁷ and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels.”

- **Judgment is imminent, be ready!**

(Matthew 25:13), “Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.”

SCENE 14 (14:14-20) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- White cloud (14)
- “One like the Son of Man” (14)
- Golden crown (14)
- Sharp sickle (14,15,16,17,18,19)
- Reap, Reaped, Harvest of the earth (15,16)
- Three angels (15,17,18)
- Ripe grapes (18)
- Vine of the earth (19)
- Great winepress of the wrath of God (19)
- Blood out of the winepress (20)
- 1600 furlongs (20)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 14:6-13

• Identify and define

• White cloud (14)

- White indicates purity, and these things that descend from above are obviously emanating from heaven.
- Though heaven is not physically above us. Spiritually it certainly is, and the concept is clear in scripture.
 - Jesus’ ascension

(Acts 1:9-11), “Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.¹⁰ And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel,¹¹ who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up

from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”

- Divine Wisdom

(James 3:17), *“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.”*

- Jesus words concerning Himself

(John 3:13), *“No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.”*

- **“One like the Son of Man” (14)**

- A reference to Jesus Christ

(1:7), [A clear reference to Jesus Christ, vs. 5], *“Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.”*

(Daniel 7:13), [A messianic reference in Daniel’s vision], *“I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him.”*

- **Golden crown (14)**

- Stephanos crown – The crown of conquering and victory... As contrasted with diadem.
- Remember, never in the New Testament is Satan referred to as having a “stephanos”

- **Sharp sickle (14,15,16,17,18,19)**

- Thayer - a sickle, a pruning-hook, a hooked vine knife, such as reapers and vinedressers use
- A tool of Harvest, both definitionally, and in the context

(14:15), [The first angel of the vision, speaking to the Christ], *“Thrust in your sickle and reap, for the times has come for you to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe”*

• **Reap, Reaped, Harvest of the earth (15,16)**

- There seems to be two separate occasions of harvesting in the context
- If so, the first may have reference to the judgment of the righteous (verses 15-16)

(Matthew 3:12), [John the Baptist concerning the coming Christ], *“His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”*

- The second, very obviously is a reference to the judgment of the wicked (verses 18-20)

(14:19), *“So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.”*

- This may could indicate a chronological action: righteous first, then ungodly second
- However, that is not necessary.
- Note: The final judgment of God will come for both righteous and ungodly at the same time!

(Matthew 25:31-33), *“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a*

shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.³³ And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.”

(2 Thessalonians 1:9-10), *“These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,¹⁰ when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.”*

• **Three angels (15,17,18)**

- Messengers from God
- Note: Typically either to bring a divine message to man, or to execute His will on earth
 - The first angel came out of the temple and proclaimed the time of Reaping had come (15)
 - The second angel came out of the temple to execute God’s judgment with the sickle of harvest (17,19)
 - The third angel to proclaim the reaping of the wicked (18)
 - Note: This third angel was given “*power over fire*”, coming from the altar (18)
 - Barnes indicates this signaled destruction, noting the nature of God’s judgment of the wicked
 - Consider fire before the altar of God is used to burn incense (the prayers of the saints)
 - But, fire also consumes, and is an appropriate symbol to use of the judgment of the wicked.

• **Ripe grapes (18)**

- Indicates the fullness of the wickedness present in that time, bringing God’s judgment against this world power.

- When wickedness is full, it is a righteous thing for God to bring judgment!
- (Note: God delayed Abraham's descendants conquering Canaan, because the grapes were not yet ripe!)

(Genesis 15:15-6) [God to Abraham], *“Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. ¹⁶ But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.”*

• Vine of the earth (19)

- Harkrider: “The vine of the earth stands in contrast to the true vine who is Christ (John 15:1-8). All those who leave God out of their lives will be cast into the winepress of His wrath.”

• Great winepress of the wrath of God (19)

- Consider the reference to Christ dealing out punishment to the Beast, false prophet (and eventually the Dragon himself)

(19:15-16), *“Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶ And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”*

- Again, a symbol of judgment. What is the end of grapes when they are ripe? They go into the press. What happens when the wickedness of men are complete? They go into the “winepress” of God's wrath.

• Blood out of the winepress (20)

- Blood and grapejuice are familiar to us (the Lord's Supper as symbol)
- Blood here seems to indicate the finality of God's judgment on the wicked. Together with the amount mentioned in the text, it is breathtaking both in gore and extent.

- **1600 furlongs (20)**

- Not sure of the significance of the number.
- A river of blood from the ungodly, its depth to the bridle of a horse. Its length over 200 miles.
- Obviously not literal.
- Homer Hailey: "Probably the picture intends only to indicate the magnitude and completeness of judgment. Some have sought to explain the 1600 as four, the world number, multiplied by itself, then multiplied by ten times ten, giving the idea of earthly completeness. I have no better suggestion. The picture indicates the gory completeness of God's judgment upon the wicked, as the horsemen wade through a sea of blood that reaches to the bridles."

One final note, alluded to earlier in our study:

- This seems to indicate the judgment of God upon Babylon, not the final judgment
- Having said that, it serves as a suitable foreshadowing of the final judgment, and the end of the wicked.

Next Scene, 15 (15:1-8) [Introduction of the Seven Final Plagues]

SCENE 15 (15:1-8) - PICTURE

- Consider John's words for the vision – "great and marvelous"
- Gratefulness (victors on the sea of glass)
- Rejoicing, worship of praise to God in verses 3 and 4.
- Vindication as heaven is opened, and the angels appear with the bowls of God's wrath
- Finally, awe at the image of God's glory (smoke) and power shown in the temple.

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Introductory thoughts:

- **Previous three chapters show the spiritual reasons behind the struggle Christians were having (persecutions)**
 - The dragon, and two allies (Beast of Sea & Earth/False Prophet) all identified.
 - We then see the attempt of the dragon, once he lost in heaven, to destroy the kingdom of God on earth
 - We see the end state of the church in heaven, in glory and victory
 - We see the followers of Satan cast into the great winepress of God's wrath
- **In our next two scenes, we will see the details of this judgment of God upon the wicked**
 - Our discussion will start with an introduction here in chapter 15. The pouring out of the 7 bowls of God's wrath upon the world.

- Chapter 16 describes these plagues of God's judgment upon the earth

Scene 15 (Chapter 15:1-8) Introduction to the final 7 Plagues

READ THE TEXT

• My Thoughts

• Consider John's words – "great and marvelous"

- The scene is describing the wrath of God being visited upon the earth, and yet John considered it a "great and marvelous" thing.

(2 Thessalonians 1:6-7), "since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you,⁷ and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels."

• Gratefulness at the vision of those who have victory standing on the sea of glass.

- This "sea of glass" first represented in (4:6). Before the throne of God

• Rejoicing at the song of Praise of God

- How many times have we seen these songs of praise? (4:8,11; 5:9-14; 6:12; 11:7-18; 15:3-4; 16:5-6; 19:5-7)

To start 10/10, I said we would read over the songs of praise mentioned in point above. That is the starting place

• Vindication as heaven is opened up, and the seven angels descend with the bowls of God's wrath

- The scene of verse 8 , with the smoke of God’s glory filling the temple should cause us awe and fear as we consider the power of God.

SCENE 15 (15:1-8) - PRINCIPLE

- The scene is intended to introduce the climax of the book. (What will unfold soon, and in the end).
- Remember, the sounding of the 7th trumpet ushers in the 7 bowls of wrath (11:15).
- “The stage is now set and the time has come for the final scenes of the Apocalypse” (Harkrider)

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What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

- The scene is intended to introduce the climax of the book, what will unfold soon, and in the end
 - Consider the synopsis of Harkrider from his commentary
 - “From this point to the end of the book all of the participants are presented step by step”
 - 1) The full wrath of God is poured out in the seven bowls (15-16)
 - 2) The destruction of the great Babylon is described (17-18)

- 3) Praise given to Christ who led the victory (19-20:10)

- 4) The final judgment and the beauty of the new heaven and new earth (20:11-15; 21; 22:1-5)

- **Remember, the sounding of the 7th trumpet ushers in the 7 bowls of wrath, just like the opening of the seventh seal ushered in the 7 trumpets sounding.**

(11:15), "Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"

- Chapters 12-14 constitute an interlude, before the plot continues with the pouring out of the bowls of wrath in chapters 15 and 16.
- The interlude explains how God is "just" (15:3)
- The interlude shows how God's judgments against evil are "true and righteous" (16:3)

- **"The stage is now set and the time has come for the final scenes of the Apocalypse" (Harkrider)**

SCENE 15 (15:1-8) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- We have victory in Jesus
- We must respect the Power and Glory of God

TO US

- We have victory in Jesus
- We must respect the Power and Glory of God

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Practice – Application to them and us

(The chapter is short, and serves as an introduction. So, applications are limited).

- Them
 - We have Victory in Jesus
 - We must Respect for the Power and Glory of God
- Us
 - We have Victory in Jesus

(1 Corinthians 15:54-58), “So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.”⁵⁵ “O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?”⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in

the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

(John 16:33) [Jesus to His Disciples], *“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”*

- **We must have Respect for the Power and Glory of God**

(1 Chronicles 29:10-13), *“Therefore David blessed the Lord before all the assembly; and David said: “Blessed are You, Lord God of Israel, our Father, forever and ever. ¹¹ Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, The power and the glory, The victory and the majesty; For all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, And You are exalted as head over all. ¹² Both riches and honor come from You, And You reign over all. In Your hand is power and might; In Your hand it is to make great And to give strength to all. ¹³ “Now therefore, our God, We thank You And praise Your glorious name.”*

(2 Peter 1:2-4), *“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, ³ as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, ⁴ by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”*

SCENE 15 (15:1-8) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- Seven angels (1,6)
- Seven last plagues (1,6)
- Sea of glass, mingled with fire (2)
- Harps of God (2)
- Song of Moses/the Lamb (3)
- The temple/tabernacle/testimony (5,6,8)
- Pure bright linen (6)
- Golden bands (6)
- Four living creatures (7)
- Golden bowls full of the wrath of God (7)
- Smoke from the glory and power of God (8)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 15:1-8

• Identify and define

• **Seven angels (1,6)**

- Created, spiritual beings that are messengers of God
- They are described in Revelation as given the responsibility of carrying out God's will among men

• **Seven last plagues (1,6)**

- Significance of the number 7, the number of perfection, of God (Following the pattern previously established by the seals and the trumpets.
- These plagues come from God
- They are the "last plagues", as they describe the completion of this judgment of God (As contrasted with the chastisements and warnings that came before them)

- These, accompanied by the bowls full of God's wrath (vs. 7), constitute the retribution of God to be visited upon those who worship the beast.
- God's wrath will now be felt by the enemies of His people
- Consider the plagues upon Egypt (cf. Exodus 7 – 11)

• **Sea of glass, mingled with fire (2)**

- Verses 2-4 Describes the end from the middle, A picture of Victory for the Christ and His people
- **Harkider** – Only God can reveal the future before it occurs (Isa. 42:9; 46:10; Rom. 4:17b), and this scene is another of several in the Apocalypse where John is shown the future destiny of faithful saints.
- The sea of glass is introduced in chapter 4:6, part of God's throne room

(4:6), "Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back."

- "mingled with fire"? Significance? (Burning bush... purification through trial?)
- Typical explanations: God's transcendence (bush). Trials of the saints endured? (cf. James 1:12)

(James 1:12), "Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him."

• **Harps of God (2)**

- We have already discussed the fallacy of using these harps to justify mechanical instruments of music in worship.
 - These are visions, the harps are not literal, they are symbolic, they represent...
 - The harps together with the singing represent the praise offered up to the worthy God of heaven. (cf. 5:8; 14:2; 15:2)
 - To make them literal is to require the sea to be a literal glass sea, etc., etc., etc.

(Harkrider): Like the use of the tabernacle (vs. 5) and other imagery, the OT is used to picture the spiritual realities of the NT. These are not intended as a revival of OT institutions, but are used as mere imagery. The point is that the image becomes distorted if there is an attempt to alternate between the symbolic and the literal, or to reverse the heavenly scene to an earthly venue.”

START HERE, 10/31/21

- **Song of Moses and the Song of the Lamb (3)**

- This is probably a reference to Moses’s song of victory after crossing the Red Sea as God delivered them from the and of the Egyptians in Exodus 15:1-8

(Exodus 15:1-3), *“Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the Lord, and spoke, saying: “I will sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea! ² The Lord is my strength and song, and He has*

become my salvation; He is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will exalt Him. ³ *The Lord is a man of war; The Lord is His name.*”

- In the same sense, in this vision the Lamb’s song is also one of victory!

(15:3-4), *“Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints! ⁴ Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. for all nations shall come and worship before You, For Your judgments have been manifested.”*

(15:9-10) [Remember the song sang as the Lamb as though it had been slain took the scroll from God to open the seals], *“And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, ¹⁰ And have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.”*

- Note the words, *“Just and true are Your ways”*
- The Judgment we will read about in the succeeding chapters is a just judgment. The unrighteous are worthy of the great wrath of God! The obedient are justly allowed hope due to God’s wrath being satisfied by the blood of righteous.

(2 Thessalonians 1:6-7), *“since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, ⁷ and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels.”*

(Romans 3:23-26), *“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,²⁴ being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,²⁵ whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,²⁶ to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”*

- **The Temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven (5,6,8)**

- The tabernacle of the testimony is a name used for the Tabernacle, first in Numbers 1:50

(Numbers 1:49-50), *“Only the tribe of Levi you shall not number, nor take a census of them among the children of Israel;⁵⁰ but you shall appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of the Testimony, over all its furnishings, and over all things that belong to it; they shall carry the tabernacle and all its furnishings; they shall attend to it and camp around the tabernacle.”*

- The combination name in our text is understandable. Both the Temple and the tabernacle contained the Holiest Place – ostensibly the place where God dwelled
- In this they represent the throne room in heaven.
- Note: in verse 8, *“and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.”*
- The purpose of entering the sanctuary was to exhibit repentance, and gain forgiveness
- God’s longsuffering had ended, the judgment had come!

(Matthew 25:8-13) [Parable of the Wise and Foolsh Virgins],
“And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’⁹ But the wise answered, saying, ‘No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’¹⁰ And while they went to buy the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.¹¹ “Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’¹² But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’”¹³ “Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

- **Pure bright linen (6)**

- The linen and its color is indicative both of righteousness and significance (royalty, high standing)

- **Golden bands (6)**

- Again the value of these golden bands indicated a position of high standing
- In fact, their attire resembled that of the Christ Himself in 1:13

(Revelation 1:13), “and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.”

- **Four living creatures (7)**

- Again, already identified in (4:6-8)
- The Seraphim of Isaiah 6:1-3, constantly worshipping the Lord God at His throne

- **Golden bowls full of the wrath of God (7)**

- Also translated “vials”

- phialē Thayer Definition: a broad shallow bowl, deep saucer

(Hosea 5:10), *“The princes of Judah are like those who remove a landmark; I will pour out My wrath on them like water.”*

- **Note:** It is only in Revelation that the concept of bowls full of God’s wrath is used
- Same intent as scene 14 (14:19) *“the great winepress of the wrath of God”* (blood coming out).

- **Smoke from the glory and power of God (8)**

- Smoke is a familiar indication of God’s presence and glory

(Exodus 19:18) [At the giving of the 10 commandments], *“Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly.”*

(Isaiah 6:4) [Isaiah’s vision of God’s throne room as God called him to prophesy], *“And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him (one of the seraphim) who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke.”*

SCENE 16 (16:1-21) - PICTURE

- I am reminded of the parallel between the trumpets and bowls
Divisions: (1-4, 5-6, 7)
- Despite the judgment, the hardened hearts of men never acknowledge their sin (9,11,21)
- The magnificence of God's power gives us pause.
- The finality of the judgment at the pronouncement of God. "It is done!" (vs. 17, 19).

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Introductory thoughts:

- **Keep in mind that the sounding of the trumpets constituted God's chastisements and warnings to the ungodly.**
 - God's plagues visited upon the ungodly affected 1/3 (8:7; 8:9; 8:10; 8:12; 9:15)
 - The bowls of wrath we will read about here constitute God's final judgment of the evil present in that time. (Empire, and those who cast their lot with the Dragon and the Beasts)
- **Rather than 1/3, these judgments are more intense, affecting the whole.**
 - Trumpets were a call to repentance

(9:20-21), "But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone,

and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk.²¹ And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.”

- But, they did not repent
- The bowls of wrath constitute God’s judgment and punishment, the time for repentance has passed.
- As we read these verses, I would like you to consider the response of the ungodly to these judgments, and compare them to the Egyptians response to the 10 plagues, (Exodus 7-12)
- We are now beginning a discussion of the climax of the book of Revelation.

Scene 16 (Chapter 16:1-21) The Seven Bowls of Wrath

READ THE TEXT

• My Thoughts

• I am reminded of the parallel between three trumpets and the bowls

- Trumpet 1-4 – Vegetation, Seas, Waters, Heavens (8)
- Bowls 1-4 – Sores on men, Seas, Waters, Heavens (16)
- Trumpet 5-6 – Darkness and Locusts, and Horsemen from Euphrates (9)
- Bowls 5-6 – Darkness and Pain, and Euphrates dried up (16)
- Trumpet 7 – The proclamation of Jesus’ ultimate victory (11)
- Bowl 7 – The fall of the great city, and the pain and wrath of men (16)

- **Despite the judgment, the hardened hearts of men never acknowledge their sin (9,11,21)**

- Pharoah as example

(Exodus 7:13), "And Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them..."

- The rebellious. They know, but they are willful, prideful

(Romans 1:32), "who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them."

- **The magnificence of God's power and sovereignty gives us pause**

(Matthew 10:28), "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

- Note: There is no reason to fear if we belong to God in this time

(Matthew 10:31), "Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows."

- But, those who are ungodly have reason to tremble (Ex: Sixth seal, earthquake, darkness)

(Revelation 6:15-17), "And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains,¹⁶ and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!¹⁷ For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

- **The finality of the judgment at the pronouncement of God. “It is done!” (vs. 17, 19).**

(2 Peter 3:9-10), “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.”

- The only way to prepare is to always stand prepared!

(1 Thessalonians 5:4-8), “But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. ⁵ You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. ⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. ⁷ For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. ⁸ But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.”

SCENE 16 (16:1-21) - PRINCIPLE

- **God's judgment upon the unrighteous is inexorable**
- **God's judgment upon the unrighteous is just**
- **God's judgment comes as a thief**
- **God's judgment is irresistible**

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What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

- **God's judgment upon the unrighteous is inexorable.**

(Revelation 1:1-3), "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,² who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.³ Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near."

- **God's judgment upon the unrighteous is just (5-7)**

(Psalms 7:8-11), "The Lord shall judge the peoples; Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to my integrity within me.⁹ Oh, let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, but establish the just; for the righteous God tests the

hearts and minds. ¹⁰ My defense is of God, Who saves the upright in heart. ¹¹ God is a just judge, and God is angry with the wicked every day.”

(Psalms 7:14-17), “Behold, the wicked brings forth iniquity; yes, he conceives trouble and brings forth falsehood. ¹⁵ He made a pit and dug it out, and has fallen into the ditch which he made. ¹⁶ His trouble shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down on his own crown. ¹⁷ I will praise the Lord according to His righteousness, and will sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High.”

- **God’s judgment comes as a thief (15)**

- Prideful men who have things as they wish them to be, are blinded by their arrogance
- Especially in the final judgment, there will be no signs indicating the time has come.

(2 Peter 3:10), “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.”

- **God’s judgment is irresistible (17-19)**

- **(Matthew 24:32-34) [A reference here to the destruction of Jerusalem]**, “Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. ³³ So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors! ³⁴

Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.”

SCENE 16 (16:1-21) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- The need for preparation (15)

TO US

- The need for preparation
- What preparation consists of is daily righteousness

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Practice – Application to them and us

- **Them**
 - **The need for preparation (15)**
- **Us**
 - **The need for preparation**

(Matthew 25:1-13), *“Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.² Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish.³ Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them,⁴ but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.⁵ But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.⁶ “And at midnight a cry was heard: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’⁷ Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.⁸ And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’⁹ But the wise answered, saying, ‘No, lest there should not be*

enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’¹⁰ And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.¹¹ “Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’¹² But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’¹³ “Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.”

- **What preparation consists of is daily righteousness**

(1 Thessalonians 5:4-10), “But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.⁵ You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober.⁷ For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night.⁸ But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.⁹ For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,¹⁰ who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.”

SCENE 16 (16:1-21) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- Seven Angels (1)
- Bowls of Wrath (1)
- Foul & Loathsome sore (2)
- Mark of Beast (2)
- Blood as of a dead man (3)
- Rivers and Springs of water (4)
- Throne of the Beast (10)
- Darkness (10)
- River Euphrates (12)
- 3 Unclean Spirits (13)
- Dragon/Beast/False Prophet (13)
- Armageddon (16)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 15:1-8

- **Identify and define**
- **Seven Angels (1)**
 - Angels – God’s servants; heavenly beings; given the task of carrying out God’s judgment in our text
 - Number 7 indicates perfection or completeness (the pattern of 7 continues from seals and trumpets)
- **Bowls of Wrath (1) (notes from 15:7)**
 - Also translated “vials”
 - phialē Thayer Definition: a broad shallow bowl, deep saucer

(Hosea 5:10), *“The princes of Judah are like those who remove a landmark; I will pour out My wrath on them like water.”*

- **Note:** It is only in Revelation that the concept of bowls full of God’s wrath is used

- Same intent as scene 14 (14:19) “*the great winepress of the wrath of God*” (blood coming out).
- **Here I think it important to emphasize the apocalyptic language used in reference God’s judgment**
 - We are familiar with it, as we have seen it both in Old Testament passages, and here in Revelation regarding the opening of the seals, and the sounding of the trumpets
 - If you look at the fall of Jerusalem (AD 69 date of writing) or the fall of the Roman Empire (AD 96 date of writing), you will not see secular reports of literal plagues, darkness, earthquakes, blood, drought, and destructive hail that you can correlate with the chronological pouring out of these bowls.
 - With Rome’s fall, three major causes have been identified. Natural disasters, social decay, external invasion.
 - Each of these are dealt with in the symbolic language of our text.
 - **Harkrider:** “Any attempts to find in history specific applications of these signs has always met with reasonable objections. Rather than trying to identify definite historical occurrences that would fit these scenes of God’s wrath being poured out, the reader should simply accept these in the apocalyptic style as symbolic. God brought to nought the false religion of paganism which was backed by corrupt rulers of a world empire. These signs are revealed in God’s picture book,

not as specific events of history, but as scenes in which to visualize the awesome terror of His judgments.

- **Foul and Loathsome Sore (2)**

- Both adjectives describe something very harmful and evil. Decay, pain, grossness describes this plague upon those who are loyal to the beast.
- The people themselves would be directly impacted by the judgment of God. Direct harm indicated here.

- **Mark of the Beast (2)**

- Again, that which identifies them as in agreement/fellowship with the beast.
- All were either identified with this mark, or the seal of God

What is the significance of the first bowl?

- First four bowls (like with first four trumpets) poured out upon objects of nature
- First trumpet (scorched trees and grass, indirectly harming man)
- First Bowl (plague upon the unrighteous, indicating direct affecting of the people)

- **Blood as of a dead man (3)**

- Coagulated, rotting.
- Pollution of the seas. Water is necessary to life. Such pollution would lead to the endangering of life.

What is the significance of the second bowl

- Death of all sea creatures (great impact upon the welfare of man)

- These parts of nature are all within the power of God's hand.

• Rivers and Springs of water (4)

- Distinction between fresh and salt water. Fresh water even more important to mankind
- The third trumpet and the third bowl have similar characteristics. Only difference is the extent (1/3 VS all)

What is the significance of the third bowl

- Again, the first four bowls afflict parts of nature, having a negative impact upon the welfare of the ungodly
- Third bowl contains the words of the third angel, proclaiming the righteous nature of the judgment (5-6)
- *"You have given them blood to drink. For it is their just due."* (6)
- *"Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are your judgments"* (7)
 - Why just? Consider how corrupt these powers of evil truly are...

(17:6), "I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement."

What is the significance of the fourth bowl (vs. 8-9)

- Note: No real characters or symbols to discuss
- Fourth seal impacts the sun (That is extreme temperatures and its effect upon climate and man)
- It did not cause men to repent. Rather they blasphemed God.

- As we discussed with Pharoah (Plagues of Egypt)

• **Throne of the beast (10)**

- KJV – Seat (indicative of his dominion or place of power)
- That over which he had authority

• **Darkness (10)**

- Darkness is often representative of evil in scripture
- Now, the ruler of darkness will himself be in darkness (with pain for his acolytes)
- The description of this torment reminds one of eternal condemnation in hell

(Matthew 25:30), *“And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”*

What is the significance of the fifth bowl

- Similar to the fifth trumpet (smoke from pit, darkness, locusts with sting of scorpion tormenting men).
- Consider the great pain (gnawing tongue).

(Revelation 9:5-6), [Torment from 5th trumpet, locusts not killing, but tormenting], *“And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. ⁶ In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them.”*

- (vs. 11 – Again, they railed against God)

Start here on November 21, 2020

- **Great River Euphrates (12) [CLICK FOR MAP]**

- A large and significant river that runs through western parts of Asia, almost 1800 miles long, emptying into the Persian gulf.
- A very significant boundary and landmark to the east.
- The “drying up” of this great boundary would prepare the way for invaders from the East to come and bring low the Empire of oppression
- (Harkrider: After being weakened from within by natural disasters and moral decay, the Roman Empire was unable to maintain its defense against outside invaders such as the Parthians from the east.)

- **Kings from the East (12)**

- A force used by God to defeat the evil and oppressive empire
- While the battle of Armageddon (as we will see) is a spiritual and symbolic conflict, it is appropriate to note that the physical end of the Roman Empire came in part from invasions from the East.

- **Three unclean spirits (13)**

- Emanate from the mouths of God’s enemies: Dragon, Beast, and false prophet
- They represent the powers of the devil, and lead the army of Satan in the spiritual battle against the army of the Lord.
- “Like” frogs – (B.W. Johnson, Johnson’s Notes) “Unclean, loathsome, suggesting the plagues of Egypt.”

- They use signs and lies (vs. 14) to persuade the kings of the earth to unite with Rome
- Propaganda – (If we are fighting for the god, the emperor, we are fighting a righteous battle). LIE!
- Harkrider: “But Caesar worship was a vain system of religion, and it was destined to failure in its conflict with the only true God.”

• **Dragon, Beast, False prophet (13)**

- Dragon is Satan
- We have identified the Beast as the Roman empire fronted by the Emperor
- The False Prophet (Beast from the earth) is false religion, emperor worship.

• **Armageddon (16)**

- Literally – hill of Megiddo
- Gathering place of the great battle between the forces of God and Satan
- Where is Megiddo?
 - Located in the valley of Jezreel (SW of the Sea of Galilee. East of Mt. Carmel)
 - There were towns located there, referenced at the time the Israelites sought to conquer the land.

(Judges 1:27), However, Manasseh did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth Shean and its villages, or Taanach and its villages, or the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, or the inhabitants of Ibleam and its villages, or the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages; for the Canaanites were determined to dwell in that land.

- There is a reference to the “waters of Megiddo” (Judges 5:19), and the “Valley of Megiddo” (2 Chronicles 35:22).
- Note: There is no known geographical site known as the mount of Megiddo
- (Harkrider: “Since there is no geographical site known as Mount Megidoo, this should give us more than a faint hint that the battle is not a literal battle.”)
- The area held significance for the Jews
 - Barak and Deborah overthrew the kings of Canaan there (Judges 5)
 - Gideon defeated the Midianites there (Judges 6)
 - Saul was defeated by the Philistines there (1 Samuel 31)
 - Pharoah-Necho overthrew Josiah there (2 Kings 23).
 - A place of significant battles (would be an obvious symbolic place for this great battle between good and evil.
- Though the “battle of Armageddon” is spoken of often in theology, the word is found only here.
- The battle itself is described in 19:19-21

(19:19-21), “And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.²⁰ Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive

into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.²¹ And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.”

- False view of the battle (Premillennialism)
 - A literal, physical battle, yet to happen, with modern weapons of war (tanks, planes, bombs, etc.)
 - They envision it happening right before a literal 1,000 year reign of Christ on the physical throne of Israel
- Truth: A spiritual battle against the forces of evil (Devil and his acolytes), and God and His saints
 - Seen in the evil spirits depicted as frogs
 - Seen in the lack of a literal geological location for the battle (All symbolic language)
 - Already fought, seen in the defeat of the Great Babylon (Jerusalem, or Roman Empire).

(John 18:36-37), “Jesus answered [Pilate], “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.”³⁷ Pilate therefore said to Him, “Are You a king then?” Jesus answered, “You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.”

(2 Corinthians 10:3-6), “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,⁵

casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,⁶ and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.”

- Note: While already fought, that doesn't mean the devil is dead
 - He still works today, and the conflict between good and evil continues as well.
 - We must be on guard for him just as much as the Christians of John's day.

(1 Peter 5:8-9), “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.⁹ Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.”

What is the Significance of the sixth bowl

- Paves the way for the great battle, climaxing the victory of the Christ.

SCENE 16 (16:1-21) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- Temple of Heaven (17)
- Great Earthquake (18)
- Great city/Babylon (19)
- Cup of His wrath (19)
- Plague of Hail (21)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 15:1-8

- **Identify and define**

- **Temple of Heaven**

- A description of heaven, the dwelling of God.
- The tabernacle and temple in Jerusalem have always represented God's dwelling among the people.
- The great voice mentioned here would seem to indicate God Himself. Regardless, it speaks the Divine will being accomplished. "It is done."

- **Great Earthquake**

- Accompanied by noises and thunderings and lightnings. (18)
- Again, symbolic of God's judgment.
- The greatest of earthquakes is a compelling way of describing the awesome, and arresting power of God as he breaks up the city of Babylon into three parts.

(Psalm 60:1-2), "O God, You have cast us off; You have broken us down; You have been displeased; Oh, restore us again! ² You have made the earth tremble; You have broken it; heal its breaches, for it is shaking."

- **Great city/great Babylon**

- The center of power of the evil oppression
- Two views: Jerusalem, or our view Rome
- The division into three parts is indicative of her complete destruction as a part of God's judgment. All in league with her (all the cities of the nations) fell as well.
- Additionally, every island fled, and mountains were not found. In the face of God's wrath, there is nowhere on earth for His enemies to hide

- **Cup of His wrath**

- Already mentioned several times: winepress, bowls, now cup.

(Revelation 14:19-20), "So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. ²⁰ And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs."

- A symbol of God's judgment against evil.

- **Plague of hail**

- As a part of God's judgment against the Great City, hail falls from heaven
- Consider the plagues against Egypt, and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah
- Weight of a talent = approximately 100 lbs.

- Can you imagine men, faced with such judgment, to be so antagonistic toward God and His saints to blaspheme Him regardless of this judgment.

What is the significance of the 7th bowl

- Shows in outline form the judgment of God upon the Great City, and her ultimate fall at His hands.
- **Note:** The next two chapters will show in great detail just how this would take place.
- An end of the narrative of sevens (seals, trumpets and bowls) which show to the Saints Gods plan and victory over Satan's efforts to oppress through Rome.

SCENE 17 (17:1-18) - PICTURE

- We are now enlarging upon the events described in chapter 16
- The description refers to debauchery, fornication, blasphemy, drunkenness (UGLY)
- Confusion: Who are the 7 kings and the 10 kings mentioned in verses 10-14?
- Appreciation for the way God uses nations against nations to accomplish His will.

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Introductory thoughts:

- We are discussing in this text the judgment of the "Great Harlot"

- **Note: There are several different views of who the Great Harlot is.**

- (Verse 5 does not settle, because her identification as Babylon is likewise symbolic)

- **Consider that there are a number of passages in the Old Testament that describe important cities/capitals of kingdoms, in this very way...**

(Isaiah 1:21) [Jerusalem], *“How the faithful city has become a harlot! It was full of justice; Righteousness lodged in it, But now murderers.”*

(Nahum 3:4) [Ninevah of Assyria], *“Because of the multitude of harlotries of the seductive harlot, the mistress of sorceries, who sells nations through her harlotries, and families through her sorceries.”*

(Isaiah 23:17) [Tyre], *“And it shall be, at the end of seventy years, that the Lord will deal with Tyre. She will return to her hire, and commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world on the face of the earth.”*

- **Contrast the city of Tyre with the Great Harlot described in our text**

(17:1-2), READ

- **Babylon**

- Described in Isaiah 47:3 as “The Lady of Kingdoms” due to the extent of her influence
- Much like the Harlot of our Text

- **The Most important thing to keep in mind in identifying the Great Harlot is to remember:**

- This representation indicates great influence and world domination (committing fornication with the kings of the earth)
- And, great evil (Harlotry often used to describe idolatry, and unfaithfulness to God)
- We will seek to identify her following the context and structure we have used through our study

Scene 17 (Chapter 17:1-18) The Great Harlot on a Scarlet Beast

READ THE TEXT

- My Thoughts
 - Reminder: We are here fleshing out the events referred to in the bowls of wrath judgments
 - I am rather amazed at the ugliness of the description of this great harlot
 - Debauchery, fornication, blasphemy, drunkenness
 - To parallel, prostitution in our day. Garishness, hardness, vulgarity, licentiousness
 - In every way a distortion, a perversion of what we see in the marriage relationship.

(Proverbs 5:3-5), "For the lips of an immoral woman drip honey, and her mouth is smoother than oil; ⁴ but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. ⁵ Her feet go down to death, her steps lay hold of hell."

- This evil AMAZED John (6). It should amaze and disgust us as well!

- **Perhaps some confusion regarding this list of 7 kings, and 10 kings.**
 - Which we will discuss as our examination of this vision continues.
- **Appreciation for the way God uses nations against nations to accomplish His will.**
 - The ten horns on the beast carrying the harlot are 10 kings
 - These hate the harlot **(16)**, used by God to make desolate the harlot!

SCENE 17 (17:1-18) - PRINCIPLE

- **A three-fold evil influence is being dealt with in these chapters: The harlot (Rome), the Sea-beast (the Empire) and the False prophet (paganism).**
- **The harlot's influence is felt throughout the world.**
- **The harlot will come to desolation (16-17)**

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What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

• A three-fold evil influence is being dealt with in these chapters: (Following the theory that the book was written in AD96.

- We will give evidence in our identification of the great Harlot that she refers to the city of Rome and her influence over the nations she rules.
- The beast's description upon which she rides parallels the description of the sea-beast in Revelation 13:1.
- The false prophet (influence of Paganism), as we have seen, plays a part in the seduction of those who carry the mark of the sea-beast

• The harlot's influence (Rome) is felt throughout the world. At the time of John's writing, they are seduced by the harlot. (However, the time comes when kings begin to hate the beast!

- Hendriksen uses Judas Iscariot as an object lesson
 - At first Judas is enamored with the 30 pieces of silver (mammon was his idol)
 - Eventually, revulsion overcame his and he threw the betrayal money away.
 - In his suicide, the enticement of sin led to his complete ruin (desolation, cf. 17:16)

• So, these same "kings" are used by God to destroy the Harlot as the irony of her seduction becomes her ruin.

SCENE 17 (17:1-18) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- The woman of (12:1) and the harlot of (17:1) are antithesis of one another!
- The Harlot – Babylon, entices the world through wickedness

TO US

- We are to be the antithesis of the world (stand in contrast)
- Worldliness is to be rejected. We must not allow ourselves to be enticed!

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Start Here On December 5, 2021

Practice – Application to them and us

• Them

- **The Harlot and The Woman with child (12:1) are the antithesis of one another**

- The Woman of 12:1, the faithful remnant of God's people who seek God in righteousness
- The Harlot – Babylon. Entices the world through wickedness

(Proverbs 6:23-28), "For the commandment is a lamp, and the law a light; reproofs of instruction are the way of life, ²⁴ to keep you from the evil woman, from the flattering tongue of a seductress. ²⁵ Do not lust after her beauty in your heart, nor let her allure you with her eyelids. ²⁶ For by means of a harlot a man

is reduced to a crust of bread; and an adulteress will prey upon his precious life. ²⁷ Can a man take fire to his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? ²⁸ Can one walk on hot coals, and his feet not be seared?"

- **Infatuation with the harlot is to be enticed by wickedness**

- **Us**

- **We are to be the antithesis of world (stand in contrast)**

(1 Peter 4:1-3), "Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, ² that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. ³ For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries."

- **Worldliness must be rejected. We must not allow ourselves to be enticed by worldly influences.**

- Consider the end of those who refuse the world, in contrast to those who are enticed by it.

(1 John 2:15-17), "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever."

(James 1:14-15), "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, when desire has

conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.”

SCENE 17 (17:1-18) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- One of 7 angels (1)
- Great harlot (1,3-6,7,9,15,16,18)
- Kings of the earth (2)
- Scarlet beast (3,7,8,11,12,13,16,17)
- 7 heads/mountains (3,9)
- 10 horns/Kings (3,12-14)
- Purple & Scarlet (4)
- Gold, stones, pearls (4)
- Golden cup (4)
- Babylon the Great (5)
- Drunk with the blood of saints and martyrs (6)
- Bottomless pit (8)
- Book of Life (8)
- The Lamb (14)
- The waters (15)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 15:1-8

• Identify and define

• One of 7 angels (1)

- The 7 angels carried out God’s judgment in the pouring out of the bowls of wrath, (Rev. 16)
- The heavenly beings, created by God served as messengers and agents of His will.

• Great harlot (1,3-6,7,9,15,16,18)

- As noted the antithesis of the woman with child in chapter 12.
- Description: (1), sits on many waters; (3-6), arrayed in queenly garments; precious jewelry, including a golden cup (full of abomination and filthiness), name on

forehead, **Babylon the great**, drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs, (9), sitting on 7 mountains, **that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth**

- **Note: Bold above serves as an identification**
- There is nothing in the description that would disqualify Rome as the city to which she refers
 - Rome sat upon 7 hills **(9) (CLICK TO SHOW MAP, CLICK AGAIN TO REMOVE)**
 - Rome was a corrupter of Kings (Ex: The Herod's of Judah, and their clamoring for the favor of the Emperor).
 - Herod the Great was granted the title of "King of Judea" by the Roman Senate. As such, he was a **vassal** of the Roman Empire, expected to support the interests of his Roman patrons.
 - Herod Agrippa II actually was active in quelling the revolt in Judah, siding with the Romans, and contributing to Jerusalem's fall.
 - The text describes a city that actively seduced kings through worldliness and idolatry
 - Rome was the most powerful city on earth (18) *"that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth."*
- **Other views:**
 - Papal Rome – due to the idea of false religion. However, this church apostasy comes much later in history than the events described in Revelation.

- Jerusalem – Not a world-wide dominion or influence (secularly), cf. (15).
- Literal Babylon – At the time of writing, was completely destroyed.

• **Harkrider:** “During John’s day, Rome was the foremost city which debauched others in several ways – politically, socially, commercially, and even religiously. At specific times from the late first century and reaching into the second and the third, Rome and its provincial officials enforced the imperial religion. This religious system that was put before the world is described in 13:11-18. Indeed, Rome acted as a harlot. She caused the earthly inhabitants to commit spiritual fornication by worshiping the beast.”

• **Kings of the earth (2)**

- The entire world was influenced by the great harlot
- This included the vassal kings, as they sought her favor, and those without who were influenced by her decadence
- (Ex: The United States has a great influence upon other nations. Hollywood, Music, Culture)

• **Scarlet beast (3,7,8,11,12,13,16,17)**

- Rome (the harlot) sits on top of the beast (indicating guiding control)
- Rome was the nerve center of the Empire
- The beast is the Roman Empire (the same beast as introduced in (13:1-8))

- Same 7 heads and 10 horns
- Same warring against the saints, and the Lamb
- A cause of wonder (cf. vs. 8, “those who dwell on the earth will marvel).
- *“The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition” (8)*
 - All of the world empires who have fought against God are embodied by such a beast
 - They rise, fall, and are replaced by another

(Daniel 2:39-40) [Babylon the first kingdom of the four], *“But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.⁴⁰ And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.”*

- In John’s day, this beast is embodied by the Roman Empire.
- Harkider: “Satan’s cause had revived once again in the power and might of the Roman Empire.”
- Perhaps a parallel to the vision in (13:3)

(13:3), *“And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast.”*

- The beast comes from the bottomless pit (where Satan’s power resides)
- The beast will go to perdition (ruin).

(Revelation 19:20), *“Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.”*

Note: Now that we have identified the harlot and the beast, we need to discuss some of the meaning behind the descriptions given to both.

- **7 heads/mountains (3,9)**

- The seven heads on the beast represent in this vision 7 mountains upon which the harlot sits
- These mountains may have a passing reference to the hills of Rome (previously mentioned). But remember, our interpretation respects the symbolism of the language.
- Here, the 7 hills has a primary reference to the 7 kings of the next verse

(17:10), *“There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time.”*

- It is difficult to know who the kings represent (7 kingdoms? 7 Caesars? (Note: there were 8)
- Remember the meaning of 7 that which is complete and whole (thus, a number of God)
- Five is incomplete, but the majority. Most of these kings have already come and gone.

- One refers to that which is present. (Perhaps the reigning power at the time of writing?)
- The final one to come has reference to a secular power that had yet to reign, and would for only a brief time.
- Note: There is absolutely no agreement between commentators regarding and identification of these kings (or by representation, kingdoms). No way to correlate surely with secular history.
- Then, the next verse compounds our uncertainty

(17:11), *“The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition.”*

- How can the beast be the eighth, but one of the seven?
- Harkrider’s explanation:
 - Don’t try to literalize the numbers 7 and 8. Only that the Roman Empire is part of this group of Kings (Kingdoms mentioned). They are embodied by the Roman Empire.
 - The beast is the king that IS (and though seemingly invincible will be destroyed)
 - Harkrider believes that the one that is to come has reference to the time following the 1,000 year period, “Satan is briefly loosed and gathers God and Magog to compass the camp of the saints one last time. At the end time God’s kingdom will be oppressed by Satan’s last grand attempt to destroy the cause of God on the earth” (cf. 20:7-8). (We will get to that later).

Start Here on December 19, 2021

• 10 horns/Kings (3,12-14)

- **Note:** The 10 kings mentioned have no kingdom at the time of the vision
- Their power comes from the beast (the empire) In other words, they are vassals to Rome
- **Harkrider:** “Rome rules the world, and its strength is enhanced by these puppet or vassal kings who ruled various provinces.”
- Reminder (the 7 decades of rule of the Herods over Judah) ruling the Jews as vassals of the Emperor).
- Their single purpose is to serve and strengthen the beast (13)
- Verse 14 states their defeat at the hands of the Lamb.
 - Note: The central theme of our study, and the book of Revelation
 - Christ overcomes all these seemingly invincible enemies. He is the Lord of lords and King of kings.

(Ephesians 1:20-23), “ He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. ²² And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, ²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”

- **Note:** These vassals would eventually turn on the harlot (cf. 16), make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire.

- **Purple & Scarlet (4)**

- Part of the Harlot's description (what she was wearing)
- Characteristic of royalty, wealth and power.

- **Note: (Harkrider)** "To this day the world is attracted by such things as wealth, social status, and political power. The harlot likewise appealed to all people who regarded material things as of primary importance.

- **ISBE** - Purple dye was manufactured by the Phoenicians from a marine mollusk, *Murex trunculus*. The shell was broken in order to give access to a small gland which was removed and crushed. The crushed gland gives a milky fluid that becomes red or purple on exposure to the air. Piles of these broken shells still remain on the coast at Sidon and Tyre.

(2 Chronicles 3:14) [The veil in Solomon's Temple, separating the Holiest of Holies], *"And he made the veil of blue, purple, crimson, and fine linen, and wove cherubim into it."*

- **ISBE** – Scarlet and Crimson probably refer to the same dye, and applies to the brilliant dye obtained from a bug.

(Daniel 5:16) [Belshazzar to Daniel], *"And I have heard of you, that you can give interpretations and explain enigmas. Now if you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed with purple and have a chain"*

of gold around your neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.”

- **Gold, stones, pearls (4)**

- Same as above. Signs of alluring wealth. Precious jewelry that appeals to the worldly and sensual.

- **Golden cup (4)**

- A significant part of the golden cup. Beautiful on the outside, but filled with abominations and filth.

(Matthew 23:25-28), “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence.²⁶ Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.²⁷ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.²⁸ Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.”

- **Babylon the Great (5)**

- Full title on head of the harlot: Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth
- Title indicates this woman's ungodliness. She was evil, corrupt, and seducer of kings
- Mystery producing awe and amazement to a world which is seduced by her shallow beauty
- Note: Spiritual fornication (whoredom) associated with idolatry.

(Psalms 106:35-39) [Sins of Israel], *“But they mingled with the Gentiles and learned their works; ³⁶ They served their idols, which became a snare to them. ³⁷ They even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons, ³⁸ and shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; and the land was polluted with blood. ³⁹ Thus they were defiled by their own works, and played the harlot by their own deeds.”*

- **Note:** We identify Babylon the Great (in her evil) being used as a reference to the city of Rome

• **Drunk with the blood of saints and martyrs (6)**

- Here an indication of persecution even unto death. (As we have shown in other parts of the book)
- Being drunk indicates the effort, extent and obsession with destroying God’s people
- Consider being one of the oppressed, how relevant this description would be to them.
- **Take in the picture:** This harlot, resplendently dressed and admired, sitting upon this terrible beast, drunk with the blood of the people of God. (No greater picture of evil than this). Satan’s tool!

• **Bottomless pit (8)**

- Mentioned also in 9:1-2; 11:7; 20:1-3
- The habitation of Satan and his agents
- Note: This beast will go to “perdition” (utter ruin)

• **Book of Life (8)**

(Revelation 13:8), *“All who dwell on the earth will worship him [the beast], whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”*

- **The roll of those redeemed by God (those who have the seal of God on their forehead)**

(Revelation 3:5), *“He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.”*

(Revelation 20:12-15), [The Great White Throne Judgment],

“And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”

• **The Lamb (14)**

- Victorious over the kings that fought against him at the beast’s behest
- Lord of Lords and King of Kings
- Several times and clearly identified as Jesus Christ

(Revelation 5:6-7), *“And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out*

into all the earth.⁷ Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.”

• **The waters (15)**

- The beast (Empire) and woman (Rome) sitting upon... (dominating)
- Peoples, multitudes, nations, tongues
- This another strong indication (because of the breadth of the rule) that the beast and woman represent the Roman Empire, and the city itself.

• **Note: In response to the idea that there are two women in chapter 17. Following notes seem to indicate that all references in that chapter refer to the great harlot/Babylon the Great**

- 1 - (Note: Angel promises to show her to John)
- 3 - Here the woman is shown sitting on a scarlet beast
- 4 - Arrayed in purple and scarlet, adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls. Having a golden cup in her hand.
- 5 - Name on forehead - Babylon, Mother of Harlots
- 6 - Drunk with blood of saints and martyrs of Jesus
- 7 - Angel says, why marvel? I will tell you the mystery.
Note: Still talking about the harlot.
- 8 - First, tells about the beast
- 9 - Next, tells about woman (sitting on seven mountains)
- 15 - Waters you saw (upon which the woman sits)
- 16 - Same woman, hated by 10 horns, identified as harlot.

- 18 - Same woman, identified as that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.
 - Woman (Harlot) described as sitting on waters, beast, seven hills.
 - Woman (Harlot) described as seducing kings (2), 7 hills as 7 kings (or kingdoms) (10-11)
 - Woman described as being harmed by the 10 kings (16-17).
 - Either 10 kings are enemies of the woman, or paramours who have turned against her.

SCENE 18 (18:1-24) - PICTURE

- Amazed at the audacity of the declaration, *“Babylon the great is fallen.”*
- Attentive to warning, *“Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins...”*
- Enlightened regarding perspective: 1) Kings and merchants mourn at her destruction; 2) Heaven, the apostles and the prophets rejoice at being avenged by God.

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Introductory thoughts:

- The description of Babylon is given in the previous chapter. We have sought to identify her in keeping with our view that Revelation deals with the judgment of God of the Roman Empire as the enemy of God’s people.

- In this chapter, a single intent is found. To describe the fall of the Babylon the Great. (Described as the Great Harlot in the previous chapter). This still refers to a city (cf. 17:18).
 - *“that great city Babylon, that mighty city”* (18:10)
 - *“Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen...”* (18:16)
 - *“What is like this great city?”* (18:18)
 - *“Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth”* (18:19)
 - *“The great city Babylon shall be thrown down”* (18:22)
 - Still described using the picture of a harlot. A corrupt woman who seduces.
 - (cf. 18:3; as compared to 17:1-2)
- Consider the complete destruction of the city in the day of God’s judgment upon her as we read the text.

Scene 18 (Chapter 18:1-24) The Fall of Babylon

READ THE TEXT

- First, ask for perceptions and emotions that arise with the initial reading of the text
- My thoughts
 - I was amazed at the audacity of the declaration of Babylon’s fall. (cf. 18:2)
 - As example, note Joe Namath’s guarantee that the Jets would win. (NFL/AFL) Superbowl 3, 1/12/69.
 - He was fortunate. Victory was not guaranteed (They beat heavily favored Baltimore Colts 16-7).
 - Not so with God. His will determines with surety what will happen

(Isaiah 21:9), [Babylon's fall declared as a *fait accompli* by the prophet 150 years before it happened] *"And look, here comes a chariot of men with a pair of horsemen!"* Then he answered and said, *"Babylon is fallen, is fallen! And all the carved images of her gods He has broken to the ground."*

(Revelation 6:15-17), [Opening of the sixth seal. When God brings His judgment, no man can withstand Him], *"And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains,¹⁶ and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!¹⁷ For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"*

- **We should be attentive to the warning of verse 4 (cf. 18:4)**

(2 Corinthians 6:14-18), *"Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?¹⁵ And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?¹⁶ And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people."¹⁷ Therefore "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you."¹⁸ "I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."*

- Note: Sharing in Sin ends with sharing in Plagues (God's judgment, cf. 18:5).
- Kings *"stand at a distance for fear of her torment"* (cf. 18:10)
- Merchants *"will stand at a distance for fear of her torment"* (18:15)
- Every shipmaster *"stood at a distance and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning"* (18:17-18)
- **It is always enlightening to notice the different perspective that the friends of evil, and those who are opposed have toward the judgment of God!**
 - In previous point we see the kings, merchants and shipmasters mourning the destruction
 - They were prospered by the unholy partnership with the Harlot Babylon
 - But, Heaven, the holy apostles and prophets rejoiced! (18:20)

(Revelation 22:20-21), [John's attitude toward the Lord's coming in judgment], *"He [Jesus] who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"* ²¹ *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."*

SCENE 18 (18:1-24) - PRINCIPLE

- God intends here to describe the totality and inevitability of God's judgment.
- The text relates the truth that human alliances are ineffectual against God. Ultimately, Babylon is alone and vulnerable.
- Her fall is complete and final.

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What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

- **God intends here to describe the totality and inevitability of God's destruction of Babylon the Great**
- He relates the truth that no matter who is allied with her, she will be alone and vulnerable to God (cf. 18:7-8)
 - Use Edom as an example

(Obadiah 3-4), "The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who dwell in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; you who say in your heart, 'Who will bring me down to the ground?' ⁴ Though you ascend as high as the eagle, and though you set your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down," says the Lord."

- Alliances of Kings not effective against God

(Obadiah 7-8), *“All the men in your confederacy shall force you to the border; the men at peace with you shall deceive you and prevail against you. Those who eat your bread shall lay a trap for you. No one is aware of it. ⁸ “Will I not in that day,” says the Lord, “Even destroy the wise men from Edom, and understanding from the mountains of Esau?”*

- **The Fall of Babylon the Great would be complete and final.**

SCENE 18 (18:1-24) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- *“Come out of her, my people”* (4)
- Rejoice at the end of the great harlot (20)

TO US

- We too should refuse to have fellowship with such evil/immorality
- We should rejoice at God’s final victory over evil.

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Start Here on 1/2/22

Practice – Application to them and us

• Them

- **“Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins”**

(Revelation 2:20-22) [Corrupt church in Thyatira], *“Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My*

servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.²¹ And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.²² Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds.”

- Consider the sins of the pagans mentioned in Romans 1:18-32

- **Rejoice at the end of Babylon the great. (Heaven, the apostles and Prophets did, there was reason for their rejoicing as well!**

- *“God has **avenged** you on her” (20)*

- **Homer Hailey:** “This is not an expression of glee over the fall of a great city or people, but a rejoicing over the defeat of evil and the victory of righteousness.” (369)

- **Us**

- **We too should refuse to have fellowship with such evil/immorality**

(Ephesians 5:11), “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.”

(Matthew 7:14), “Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.”

- **We should rejoice at God’s victory over evil.**

(Hebrews 10:29-31), “Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?

³⁰ For we know Him who said, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,”

says the Lord. And again, “The Lord will judge His people.”³¹ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”
 (Psalms 3:5-8), “I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord sustained me.⁶ I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around.⁷ Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God! For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone; You have broken the teeth of the ungodly.⁸ Salvation belongs to the Lord. Your blessing is upon Your people.”

SCENE 18 (18:1-24) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Another Angel (1) | • Kings/Merchants/Ship-masters/Sailors (3,9,11,15,17) |
| • Babylon the great (2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,15,16,18,19,20,21,22,23,24) | • Plagues (4,8) |
| • Demons (2) | • Merchandise (12-14) |
| • Every foul spirit (2) | • Millstone (21/22) |
| • Hated birds (2) | • Light of lamp (23) |
| • Wine/wrath/fornication (3) | • Voice of bride and bridegroom (23) |

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 15:1-8

• Identify and define

• Another Angel (1)

- We have talked at length re: important roles the angels play in John’s visions
- Messengers of God’s will / Agents through which God’s will is executed

- This angel is an important one “having great authority”
- It stands to reason, different angels, different responsibilities and positions
- **Ex: Michael the archangel (led the army of the Lord against Satan)**

(Jude 9), “Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!”

(Revelation 12:7), “And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, ⁸ but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer.”

- His authority and importance seen in “the earth was illuminated with his glory.”

• **Babylon the great (2,3-11,15,16,18-24)**

- **Note:** We spent the last chapter identifying the city. Note the description given before and after the judgment of God.
- Fornication, drunkenness (kings of the earth) luxury, sinfulness, Sorcery (deception), Murderous (blood of the prophets and saints).
- Sits as a queen (arrogant) clothed in fine linen, purple, scarlet. Adorned with precious stones, gold & pearls.
- Mighty City. Great city.
- Fallen (Has become a dwelling place of demons, prison for every foul spirit, a cage for every unclean and hated bird.)

- Receive plagues / torment and sorrow / death and mourning and famine / burned with fire.
- Judgment has come.
- No more merchandise to be sold by the merchants. Riches are gone, and you shall find them no more at all.
- Thrown down, and shall not be found anymore.
- No more music, crafts, light, marriage/feasting
- **Demons (2) “Dwelling place of demons”**
 - “the habitation of devils” (KJV)
 - The description of verse 2 includes those things that are filthy and objectionable.
 - It is a graphic and highly symbolic depiction of her fall.
 - Demon – (daimon) among the Greeks, referencing lesser gods or goddesses, in the NT having reference to an evil spirit or being opposed to God.

(James 2:19) [A form of the word used here], *“You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!”*

- **Every foul spirit (2)**

- **Foul** - not cleansed, unclean... in a moral sense: unclean in thought and life
- **Note:** Luke describes the demon that overpowered the Jewish exorcists in Ephesus to be an “evil spirit”

(Acts 19:15-16), *“And the evil spirit answered and said, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?”¹⁶ Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.”*

• Hated birds (2)

- The imagery of birds (used as unclean and hateful) is found in the OT, in Isaiah, speaking of the judgment of Edom.

(Isaiah 34:11-15), "But the pelican and the porcupine shall possess it, also the owl and the raven shall dwell in it. And He shall stretch out over it the line of confusion and the stones of emptiness. ¹² They shall call its nobles to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all its princes shall be nothing. ¹³ And thorns shall come up in its palaces, nettles and brambles in its fortresses; it shall be a habitation of jackals, a courtyard for ostriches. ¹⁴ The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the jackals, and the wild goat shall bleat to its companion; also the night creature shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. ¹⁵ There the arrow snake shall make her nest and lay eggs and hatch, and gather them under her shadow; there also shall the hawks be gathered, every one with her mate."

• Wine/wrath/fornication (3)

- Babylon also seduced others to partake in her sin.
- The idolatry of paganism was characteristic of the world under her influence

• Kings/Merchants/Shipmasters/Sailors (3,9,11,15,17)

- Kings of the earth became rich by allying themselves with her (3) *"lived luxuriously"* (19)
- Merchants (those who have the mark of the beast) grow rich by trade (11, 15)
- Sea trade was also successful, and the shipmasters and sailors grew rich in the shadow of her excess and indulgence (17)

- Note: They all deserted her in her judgment. Bewailing their losses, and fleeing in fear of God's reprisals.
- Civil power, economic power, nothing that man authors can stand up against God's judgment

START here ON January 9,2022

• **Plagues (4,8)**

- Definition: plēgē - **Thayer:** a public calamity, heavy affliction
- Consider the dire chastisements and judgments of God we have already noted in the opening of the seals, blowing of the trumpets, and pouring out of the bowls of wrath.
- The same is described here in the judgment of Babylon the great

• **Merchandise (12-14)**

- A large number of commodities are listed
- Gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, fine linen, purple, silk, scarlet, citronwood (a fragrant and pretty wood), ivory, precious wood figures, bronze, iron, marble, cinnamon, incense, fragrant oil, frankincense, wine and oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle, sheep, horses, chariots.
- Interesting – *“and bodies and souls of men”* ends the list. Perhaps a reference to slave trading?
- Economic alliances can be as corrupting and oppressive as any other kind of power. They were profiting off of Babylon the great's evil.

- **GREAT Millstone (21) Millstone (22)**

- Used as an allusion to the violence of Babylon's fall in verse 21). Refers to the end of normal life in 22.
- **Definition: millstone (Thayer: mulos - 1) a mill stone; 1a) a large mill consisted of two stones, an upper and an under one; 1b) the "nether" stone was stationary, but the upper one was turned by a donkey**
- **[CLICK]** I saw a millstone setup in Capernaum in my visit to Israel 20 years ago.
- A very large and heavy stone. The destructive force as it is thrown down to the sea is an arresting picture for our minds.

- **Light of a lamp (23)**

- Harkrider associates this with night celebrations...
- Can you imagine such an influential, large and boisterous city suddenly dark and desolate?
- **[CLICK]** Have you seen satellite pictures of America at night? Compare that to the New York City going completely dark.
- Africa is referred to today as the "dark continent" because of the dearth of electricity.

- **Voice of the Bride and Bridegroom heard no more (23)**

- No more celebrations or feasts
- No normalcy. No happy celebrations. Only desolation

Note: Next scene: (19:1-10) Heaven Rejoices over the Fall of Babylon

SCENE 19 (19:1-10) - PICTURE

- A cause for rejoicing as the scales are balanced. What was wrong is made right.
- The praise of Revelation 4 & 5 is anticipatory. In Revelation 19 it is realized hope.
- The reference to the marriage of the Lamb brings to mind Ephesians 5.
- Realize the fact that who you worship is important!

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Introductory thoughts:

- **Up to the point in the book of Revelation, we have focused on the evil oppression of Satan and his servants, and the distress of the saints to which the book is written**
 - That is not to say that there is not much said about victory in Jesus, and God's judgment upon the wicked
 - But, with the fall of Babylon, we move again to a final emphasis in the book
 - We have talked much about the victory in Jesus. Now we find the words of ultimate victory, and the joy that is coming because of it.
 - This overriding theme will continue through the end of the book.
- **As we read the words of this chapter, I would encourage you to think back to the praise offered to God and His Son in the throne room scenes in chapters 4 and 5.**

- There

- 4 living creatures (Holy God who is eternal) (4:8)
- 24 elders (God is Worthy as creator) (4:11)
- Living creatures and elders (Lamb worthy because of His blood sacrifice) (5:9-10)
- Heavenly host (Lamb worthy) (5:12)
- All of creation (Blessings both to God and the Lamb forever) (5:13)

- Here

- Heavenly host (God is righteous in judging the great harlot) (19:1-4)
- Great voice from the throne (Praise to God) (19:5)
- Voice of a multitude (God reigns, the marriage of the Lamb present) (19:6-8)

Scene 19 (Chapter 19:1-10) Heaven Rejoices Over the Fall of Babylon

READ THE TEXT

- First, ask for perceptions and emotions that arise with the initial reading of the text
- **My thoughts**
 - A cause for rejoicing as the scales are balanced. What was wrong is made right in the judgment of Babylon the Great.
 - The cause of rejoicing is intensified in the realization that the judgment is complete and permanent. *“Her smoke rises up forever and ever.”*

(Revelation 14:11), [God’s punishment of those who worship the beast], *“And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and*

ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.”

(Revelation 20:10), [Satan, the beast and the false prophet], *“The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”*

- **The praise of Revelation 4 & 5 is anticipatory. In Revelation it is the product of a realized hope as Babylon is fallen!**

- (4-5), The seals would be opened. The victory would be won
- (19), Babylon has been judged. The marriage of the Lamb has come!

- **The reference to the marriage of the Lamb (7-9) brings to mind Ephesians 5.**

(Ephesians 5:25-27), *“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.”*

- (Eph. 5) Wife – holy without blemish
- (Rev. 19) Wife – arrayed in white linen (the righteous acts of the saints).

- **Realize the fact that who you worship is important!**

- *“Worship God!”* (10)

SCENE 19 (19:1-10) - PRINCIPLE

- Ultimately it is the ungodly that will mourn, and it is the place of the righteous to rejoice in God's judgment!
- God is worthy of Praise
- The Marriage of the Lamb is come!

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What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

- Ultimately, it is the ungodly that will mourn, and it is the place of the righteous to rejoice in God's judgment.

- It is all a matter of perspective, as we have noted before
- The righteous rejoice at God's judgment

*(cf. Revelation 22:20-21), "He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"²¹
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."*

- **God is worthy of Praise!**

- *(Revelation 4:11), "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created."*
- *(Psalms 63:1-4), "O God, You are my God; early will I seek You; my soul thirsts for You; my flesh longs for You in a dry*

and thirsty land where there is no water. ² So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, to see Your power and Your glory. ³ Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise You. ⁴ Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name.”

- **The Marriage of the Lamb is come! (READ verses 7-9)**

- To understand this section of the passage, we need to know the first century practice regarding weddings and marriages among the Jews.

- **First, the betrothal (Engagement). Much more serious and binding than our engagements.**

(Matthew 1:18-19), “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.”

- Betrothal is binding (considered husband and wife before actual marriage and consummation).
- A woman would have to be divorced if the betrothal was not followed by the marriage.

- **Second, a dowry had to be paid by the bridegroom to the father of the bride**

- Jesus paid the dowry. The price was His own blood shed on the cross.

(Acts 20:28), “Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to

shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.”

- **Third, the bride had to wear suitable garments for the wedding (adorned properly)**

(Ephesians 5:27), “that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.”

(cf. Revelation 19:8) READ

- Note: Those not dressed properly will not be welcome at the wedding feast!

(Matthew 22:11-13), “But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. ¹² So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. ¹³ Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

- **Quote: (Harkrider),** “The analogy of the Lord with his people of the New Testament era is expressed in the same terminology. Therefore the church is the bride of Christ (John 3:29; Rev. 21:9). Christ has paid the dowry for the church; he has bought his bride with his own blood (Eph. 5:25; Acts 20:28). The actual occasion of the perfect union of Christ, the complete and final blessed consummation of the church with Christ, is reserved until after the final judgment day. This great union is described in chapters 21 and 22. During the betrothal period the bride must make

herself ready by arraying herself in righteous apparel.

SCENE 19 (19:1-10) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- Don't grow weary in doing good. Victory comes to the steadfast.
- Praise to God (Note the four Alleluiah's of 19:1-6)

TO US

- Don't grow weary in doing good. Victory comes to the steadfast.
- Praise to God. (Are we less likely to express that praise due to the Charismatics?)

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Practice – Application to them and us (Identical)

• Them

- Do not grow weary in doing good. Victory comes to the steadfast.
- Praise to God (Four Hallelujah's of 19:1-6)
- Alleluiah (Definition and Frequency) variant spelling is Hallelujah
 - (ἀλληλουϊά) – An imperative statement, an exclamation “Praise the Lord”
 - The word is found only these four times in the New Testament
 - It, however, is found 21 times in the Septuigent (GK. Translation of the O.T.)

- From the Hebrew, the imperative form of “Haw’lal” (to praise) and “Ja” (a shortened form of Jehovah)
- The many times in the Psalms when the singer says to “Praise the Lord”, these Hebrew words are used. (Psalm 150:1,6) Beginning and end of final Psalm
 - Interestingly, in Judaism it was a call to Praise God (an imperative)
 - In Christianity, it seems to be more praise in and of itself! (“Praise be to God”)
 - Variant spellings come from the two origins (Hebrew and Greek) into the English
 - Hebrew: Hal ja Halleluja
 - Greek: ἀλληλουϊά (allelouia) alleluia
 - These are transliterations. (Made up, taking the place of “Praise Yahweh”)

• Alleluiahs in this text

- “Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God” (19:1)
- “Her [Babylon’s] smoke rises up forever and ever” (19:3)
- “Amen” (Direction to all servants and those who fear Him to praise God, small and great) (19:5)
- “For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns” ... “For the marriage of the lamb has come” (19:6)

• Us

- Don’t grow weary in doing good. Victory comes to the steadfast.

(Galatians 6:7-10), *“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸ For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. ⁹ And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. ¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.”*

(2 Thessalonians 3:13) [After admonition for those who had ceased working, and were being busybodies while waiting for the coming of the Lord], *“But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary in doing good.”*

- **Praise to God**

- It should be a facet of every prayer we offer to God
- It should be a component of the spiritual songs we sing to Him
- We should be quick to offer Him praise in our interactions with others.
 - “Are you feeling better?” “Yes, I am, praise God.”
 - “Did you get that new job?” “Yes, praise God, I am truly blessed.”
 - “Were you able to talk with your family about the Lord?” “Yes, and I give all the glory to God!”
- We can become uncomfortable with the excesses of the Charismatics, who pepper their language with such praise, said as an interjection rather than true praise.

- Sometimes their worship reaches the point of being disorderly because of their one-upping each other with these expressions. (Much like the Corinthians, as related in 1 Corinthians 14).
- We can't let the excesses and perversions of others keep us from offering up daily our praises to the Lord (in private, and before others).
- Paul didn't!

(Romans 16:25-27) [Paul's closing benediction in his letter to the Romans], *"Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began²⁶ but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith—²⁷ to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen."*

SCENE 19 (19:1-10) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- | | |
|---|--|
| • Loud voice of a great multitude in heaven (1) | • Voice of a great multitude (6) |
| • The great harlot (2) | • Waters & Thunderings (6) |
| • Smoke (3) | • The Lamb (7,9) |
| • 24 elders (4) | • His wife (7,8) |
| • Four living creatures (4) | • Fine linen (8) |
| • Voice from the throne (5 & 9-10?) | • Marriage supper (9) |
| | • Testimony of Jesus/spirit of prophecy (10) |

Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 19:1-10

- Identify and define

- Loud voice of a great multitude in heaven (1)

- In contrast with the great despair of the kings, merchants and sailors of chapter 18
- Praise coming from heaven. (Heavenly host).

(Luke 2:13-14) [An angel has just told the shepherds of the birth of the Christ], *“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: ¹⁴ ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!’”*

- The great harlot (2) (taking the late date of writing)

- Identified in Chapter 17, and Judged in Chapter 18
- Controls the beast (the Empire), is a great city (Rome)
- Judged because of her evil influence over the world. (violence, idolatry, immorality)
 - Note: In verse 2, specifically (fornication/idolatry; murder of the saints)

- “Her smoke rises forever and ever!” (3)

- An indication of everlasting punishment
- God’s judgment of evil is final.

(Revelation 14:9-11), *“Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰ he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹ And the smoke of their*

torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.”

(Matthew 25:46), [The judgment scene], “And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

- **24 elders (4)**

- Appear numerous times throughout the book
- Present in the throne room of God (cf. Revelation 4)
 - 12 a number associated with God’s people in each covenant
 - 12 patriarchs of the tribes of Israel
 - 12 apostles who brought the whole counsel of God to the disciples of Christ
- 24 representative of all of God’s covenant people (Both OT and NT)

- **Four living creatures (4)**

- Referred to as Seraphim in Isaiah 6:1-3
- Significant angels, created to praise and serve God before His throne

- **Voice from the throne (5, for sure; is this the same voice in 9-10?)**

- The speaker is not identified. It emanates, however, from the throne of God.
- Note: There is a possibility that this voice and the voice of the great multitude in the next verse are the same voice (one individual). Harkrider believes this to be so.

- Hendriksen does not think so, thinking this voice to be possibly one of the seraphim, or another angel.
- If so, verse 6 describes the sound of the voice in verse 5
- If not, the identification of the voice in 9 and 10 “*he*” could very well be the same as the voice in 5.
- Whether so or not, the voice of verse 9 and 10 overcame John, as he offered to worship him.
- Regardless, the identity not as important as the praise being offered
- **Voice of a great multitude (6)**
 - Possibly the same voice mentioned in verse 1?
 - Perhaps inclusive of both angels and men in heaven? (Hendriksen) Similar to the gradations of praise mentioned in Revelation 5:8-14
 - Regardless, the identity not as important as the praise being offered
- **Sound of many waters/the sound of mighty Thunderings (6)**
 - Characterization of the nature of the voice in verse 6
 - Waters and Thunderings – An overwhelming sound, praising the Lord
 - Consider how we react to loud waves (we even call loud sounds waves of sound, washing over us)
 - Same with Thunderclaps. They are powerful and memorable.
- **The Lamb (7,9)**
 - Identified from Revelation 5:6. A reference to Jesus Christ

- The lamb “as though it had been slain” references His sacrifice, which makes Him worthy of our worship and adoration.
- In this context (as the bridegroom), that sacrifice is the dowry for the bride (the church).

(Ephesians 5:25), *“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.”*

• His wife (7,8)

• The church is “espoused” (betrothed) unto the Lord **(2 Corinthians 11:2)**, [Paul wrote to the Corinthians these words, expressing concern for their faithfulness to the Lord], *“For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.”*

- This is why the relationship can be described in Ephesians 5 as a wife
- Note: This context refers to a marriage supper, which is a part of the great consummation of our relationship with the Lord in eternity.

• Fine linen (8)

- Appropriate dress for a wedding, indicating purity and chastity

(2 Corinthians 11:2), *“For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.”*

(Ephesians 5:25-27), *“Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,²⁷ that He might present her to*

Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.”

(Revelation 16:15) [Note the Lord’s warning], “Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.”

- **Marriage supper (9)**

- In Jewish culture, the great feast that signifies the end of the betrothal, and ushers in the consummation of the marital relationship.
- In this context, referencing the Lord and His church, the feast emphasizes those who are invited in (the sanctified) to be one of the party that will be in heaven eternally!
- Similar imagery in Revelation 3:20

(Revelation 3:20), “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.”

- **Note:** Those who have not obeyed the gospel or have not been faithful will be excluded. (cf. Luke 14:15-24, Parable of the great supper, when those who make excuses or are unprepared to come are excluded. While the poor, maimed and the blind are invited to the feast)
- As a feast, we must be among the sanctified to attend. As a part of the bride, our garments must be white.
- **“For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (10)**
 - The angel who spoke is not deity, he is a fellow servant.
 - He is like John in the sense that he is *“of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus.”*

- Note: as he is not Deity, he is not to be worshipped. Only God is to be worshiped.
- Jesus is God! (cf. John 1-2, 14; Matthew 1:23)
 - He on several occasions, while on earth, accepted worship!

(cf. John 9:35-38), *“Jesus heard that they had cast him [the blind man Jesus had healed] out; and when He had found him, He said to him, “Do you believe in the Son of God?”³⁶ He answered and said, “Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?”³⁷ And Jesus said to him, “You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you.”³⁸ Then he said, “Lord, I believe!” And he worshiped Him.”*

- A power aspect of the testimony (gospel) of Jesus is fulfilled prophecy
- It is what convinced the Ethiopian that Jesus was the Christ (Acts 8, cf. Isaiah 53).
- Jesus is the TRUE Christ, identified by the prophecies of old.

(Matthew 5:17-18), *“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.¹⁸ For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.”*

- As such, the true facts of the gospel are the spirit (the essence) of the prophecies of old.
- This is one simple and straightforward explanation of this admittedly difficult sentence.

SCENE 20 (19:11-21) - PICTURE

- The splendor of the description given of the Christ on the white horse is inspiring.
- Consider the preeminence described in the phrase, “King of Kings and Lord of Lords”
- The opposition to Him who sat on the white horse is mighty.
- The defeat of the opposition is total (beast and false prophet captured, and the rest killed with the sword).

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Introductory thoughts:

- In scene 20, we have revealed what is commonly referred to as the battle of Armageddon, first revealed in Chapter **16:12-16 (READ)**
 - Here referred to as the *“battle of that great day of God Almighty”*
 - Led by 3 unclean spirits (like frogs) from the mouths of the dragon (satan), beast (Empire), and the false prophet (false religion).
 - The kings of the earth and of the whole world come against God
 - The place is called in the Hebrew Armageddon (again, Hill of Megiddo)
 - Where is Megiddo? From notes on 16:12-16
 - Located in the valley of Jezreel (SW of the Sea of Galilee. East of Mt. Carmel)

- There were towns located there, referenced at the time the Israelites sought to conquer the land.

(Judges 1:27), *“However, Manasseh did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth Shean and its villages, or Taanach and its villages, or the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, or the inhabitants of Ibleam and its villages, or the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages; for the Canaanites were determined to dwell in that land.”*

- There is a reference to the *“waters of Megiddo”* (Judges 5:19), and the *“Valley of Megiddo”* (2 Chronicles 35:22).
- Note: There is no known geographical site known as the mount of Megiddo
- **(Harkrider:** *“Since there is no geographical site known as Mount Megiddo, this should give us more than a faint hint that the battle is not a literal battle.”*)

Scene 20 (Chapter 19:11-21) The Victory of the Christ

READ THE TEXT

- **The description of Christ on the white horse is inspiring. It is beautiful, and it is fierce!**

- Note the three names given:

- Faithful and True (11)

(1:5), *“Jesus Christ, the faithful witness...”*

- The Word of God (13)

(John 1-2, 14), (1-2), *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.² He was in the beginning with God.... (14), “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

- **King of Kings and Lord of Lords**

(17:14), **[10 Kings who receive their authority from the beast]**, *“These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.”*

(1 Timothy 6:13-16), *“I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate,¹⁴ that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing,¹⁵ which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,¹⁶ who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.”*

- We will discuss the significance of the description when we get to the characters and symbols

- **The Phrase “King of kings and Lord of lords” especially helpful in explaining the victory of the Christ**

- His authority and power overshadows any opposition. He is above all!

(Ephesians 1:19-21) **[“that you may know”]**, *“what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power²⁰ which He worked*

in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.”

- **The opposition to Him who sat on the white horse is mighty.**

- We would quail at the power of the enemy if Christ were not the captain of our Salvation
- Kings, captains, mighty men, horsemen, people both small and great
- Beast, Kings of the earth, and their armies
- False prophet who deceived those who received the mark of the beast

(Psalms 23:4-5), “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. ⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.”

- **The defeat of the opposition is total**

- Beast and False prophet captured, cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone
- Their armies were killed with the sword of Christ
- (In the next chapter we will deal with Satan and his end), he eventually joins the beast and the false prophet (20:10).

SCENE 20 (19:11-21) - PRINCIPLE

- Christ is and remains preeminent in the world.
- Because of His power and His preeminence we who are with him are victorious.
- Consider the rod of iron!

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What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

- **Christ is and remains preeminent in the world**
- Because of His power and His preeminence we who are with Him are victorious.
- **Consider the rod of iron!**

(Psalm 2:7-12), [The Messiah's kingdom and Power under consideration], *"I will declare the decree: the Lord has said to Me, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You. ⁸ Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession. ⁹ You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.' "* ¹⁰ *Now therefore, be wise, O kings; be instructed, you judges of the earth. ¹¹ serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. ¹² Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish in the way, when*

His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.”

(Psalm 110:1-2), “The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”² The Lord shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies!”

(Isaiah 11:1-5), [The Rod who comes forth from the stem of Jesse] *“His delight is in the fear of the Lord, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, nor decide by the hearing of His ears;⁴ but with righteousness He shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.”*

- This indicates His absolute authority and power
- The Christ is irresistible (in the most literal sense).

SCENE 20 (19:11-21) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- Prepare for the battle.
- The Christ is your champion
- The battle will be quick, and the victory will be complete

TO US

- Put on God’s armor to fight against evil
- Christ is your champion
- Our battle on earth is short, and eternity in God’s presence is sure!

Practice – Application to them and us (Identical)

• Them

• Prepare for the battle.

- The division (Those with the mark of the beast, those with the seal of God)
- Regarding those who received the mark of the beast, and worshipped his image

(19:21), “And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.”

(19:5) [In contrast], “Then a voice came from the throne, saying, ‘Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great.’”

• The Christ is your champion.

• The battle will be quick, and the victory will be complete.

- Interesting, the description given of the two armies.
- It might be thought that a long and exhausting war would be in the picture.
- Actually, described in brief paragraph: (19:20-21). The beast and the false prophet are captured and thrown into the lake of fire. The rest were killed with Christ’s sword.

• Us

- We are to put on the whole armor of God that we “may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil” (Eph. 6:11).

(Ephesians 6:12-13), *“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”*¹³ *Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”*

- Christ is our champion as well (The Preeminent One)
- Our battle on earth is short, and eternity in God’s presence is sure!

(Hebrews 13:5-6), *“Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”*⁶ *So we may boldly say: “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. what can man do to me?”*

SCENE 20 (19:11-21) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- White horse (11)
- Eyes/Flame of fire (12)
- Many crowns (12)
- Unknown name (12)
- Robe/blood (13)
- Name: Word of God (13)
- Linen/White horses (14)
- Sharp sword (15)
- Rod of Iron (15)
- Winepress/fierceness & wrath of Almighty (15)
- King of Kings/Lord of Lords (16)
- Angel/sun (17)
- Beast (19)
- False prophet (20)
- Mark of the beast (20)
- Lake of fire (20)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 19:1-10
Identify and define

- **A White Horse (11)**

- You may remember, the opening of the first seal, the first horse was white

(Revelation 6:1-2), "Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, "Come and see."² And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer."

- On that horse was one with a bow, and a crown (stephanos), and he went out conquering
- The rider is not identified in 6:2, but many think it to have reference to Jesus Christ
- It most certainly refers to him here in 19:11
- The significance of "white" regarding the horse is purity, righteousness
- The Christ is certainly worthy of riding upon such a majestic horse

- **Eyes like a flame of fire (12)**

- Jesus described in 1:14, introducing the 7 letters, "His eyes like a flame of fire."
- In 2:18, in letter to the corrupt church of Thyatira, "who has eyes like a flame of fire,"

(Hebrews 4:13), [Reference to "the word of God"], "And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account."

- **Many crowns (12)**

- Remember, the stephanos crown, given to the victor

- Here, however, the many crowns refer to (diadem) that of royalty
- Harkrider calls to our attention the irony: The one who once wore a crown of thorns, and suffered ridicule now appears in glory, highly exalted!

(Philippians 2:8-11), *“And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.⁹ Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*

- **Unknown name (12)**

- What is the name? No one knows!
- Some things are simply beyond our knowledge (We are too arrogant if we think we can know God fully. All we can know and comprehend is what He reveals. And even that boggles our minds.

(1 Corinthians 2:11), *“For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.”*

(Matthew 11:27), *“All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.”*

Start here on 2/13/22

- **Robe dipped in blood (13)**

- Two possibilities are described by commentators, either is conceivable.
 - One, a reference to the blood of His enemies. (Winepress of His wrath, vs. 15) (similar scene in Isaiah 63:1-6)
 - Two, a reference to His shed blood on the cross

- **Name: The Word of God (13)**

- Our study of the book of John over the last months see this proclamation of Jesus

(John 1:1), "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

- **Fine Linen/White Horses (14)**

- God's army is righteous. The linen and white horses show this
- (Remember the old Westerns – White hats/Black hats)
- Also, this helps us to understand the spiritual nature of this conflict (Not the physical battle that Premillennialists suppose).

(2 Corinthians 10:3-6), "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, ⁶ and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled."

- **Sharp Sword (15)**

- Consider that the sword comes out of the mouth

- Consider the use of this concept in describing the nature of the work done by the word of God
- God's word saves the believer (Romans 1:16)
- God's word judges the ungodly

(Isaiah 11:1-5), *“There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. ² The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. ³ His delight is in the fear of the Lord, and He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, nor decide by the hearing of His ears; ⁴ But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. ⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, and faithfulness the belt of His waist.”*

- **Rod of Iron (15)**

- See the passage from Isaiah above
- Such a rod (rule) indicates strength, and absolute authority
- The judgment of the wicked is stern, but appropriate. He does not allow disobedience!

(2 Thessalonians 1:5-7), *“which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer; ⁶ since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, ⁷ and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels.”*

- **Winepress of fierceness and wrath of Almighty God (15)**

- The image introduced in chapter 14

(Revelation 14:9-10), *“Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰ he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.”*

(Revelation 14:19-20), *“So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. ²⁰ And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses’ bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs.”*

- The imagery is also found in Isaiah

(Isaiah 63:3-6), **[Jehovah’s wrath upon Edom]**, *“I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, and trampled them in My fury; their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, and I have stained all My robes. ⁴ For the day of vengeance is in My heart, and the year of My redeemed has come. ⁵ I looked, but there was no one to help, and I wondered that there was no one to uphold; therefore My own arm brought salvation for Me; and My own fury, it sustained Me. ⁶ I have trodden down the peoples in My anger, made them drunk in My fury, and brought down their strength to the earth.”*

- **King of Kings and Lord of Lords (16)**

- Though He had an unknown name, on His thigh, the Christ has a name that is well known!

- Who is Leading the fight against the dragon, beast and prophet? The Christ Himself.

(1 Timothy 6:13-16), "I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate,¹⁴ that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing,¹⁵ which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,¹⁶ who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen."

- **Angel standing in the sun (17)**

- The picture of the angel standing in the sun would have been awe inspiring
- God is in control of all creation. The heavens.
- Consider the image described in this messenger of God's words.
- A call for the birds to come and eat the flesh of those utterly destroyed by the Christ on His horse.
- This another clear indication that the battle belongs to the Lord (before it even happens)

- **Beast (19)**

- We have identified (in accord with our construct in the study (the Empire of Rome)

- **False prophet (20)**

- We have identified as well (also known as the beast from the earth).

- It is he who causes *“the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast”* (13:12).
- **Lake of fire burning with brimstone (20)**
 - That which the beast and false prophet were cast into, as they were defeated in battle (20)
 - Just a few words describe their total defeat (and cast into eternal destruction)
 - Other references

(Revelation 20:14-15), *“Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”*

(Revelation 21:8), *“But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”*

Next Scene:

21 (Revelation 20:1-10) The 1,000 Year Reign of Christ

SCENE 21 (20:1-10) - PICTURE

- Praise to God in this clear indication of His power over the devil.
- An indication of Satan's limitations. Only can do what he is allowed to do.
- 1,000 Reign (Rejoice!)
- Concern over the "little while" Satan will be released?
- Curious: Who are the beheaded who reign with Christ?
- Curious: What is the first resurrection?

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Introductory thoughts:

- **This is one of the most famous passages of scripture in the entire Bible**
 - This passage is a linchpin of religious speculation
 - The Premillennial doctrine which uses the passage to teach a literal 1,000 year reign of Jesus Christ on the literal throne of David here on earth is to the uninitiated a commonly accepted tenet of the Christian faith.
- **Principles to remember when we seek to determine the meaning of this passage**
 - The apocalyptic language of Revelation is continued in this section. Pictures and symbols. We must be careful when seeking to ascribe literal meaning to pictures and numbers

- Nothing in this passage can contradict other passages of scripture. Remember, go to the plain to interpret the difficult, not the other way around.
- Not understanding these principles brings error

• **Example, the Premillennialist takes this passage to mean that Jesus Christ has not yet begun His reign in His kingdom.**

- This contradicts several clear passages of scripture

(Mark 9:1), [Shortly before His transfiguration], *“And He said to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power.’”*

(Colossians 1:13-14), *“He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,¹⁴ in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.”*

(Philippians 2:8-9), *“And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.⁹ Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name.”*

Scene 21 (Chapter 20:1-10) The 1,000 Year Reign of Christ

READ THE TEXT

• **First, another reason to Praise God in this clear indication of His power over the devil.**

- In fact, the defeat of Satan and his imprisonment is the emphasis of our text
- The binding of Satan is not absolute (He is limited in what he can do).

- Harkrider: “He still seeks to devour as a roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8), but he is limited. A lion, for example, that is confined within a fenced area can still maul and destroy one who enters his realm. But he has no power to hurt one who remains outside of the boundary.”

- **An indication of Satan’s limitations. Only can do what he is allowed to do.**

- Here speaking of his being released for a “little while”.
- It is God who binds him, and God who will release him for that period mentioned
- As the binding coincides with the end of the beast and the false prophet, it may be that this short period will indicate another period of great wickedness and more physical oppression of the saints?
- Regardless, it is his final effort before his complete defeat.

- **Concern over the “little while” Satan will be released?**

- Do present events indicate that this time has begun?
- Only speculative. Details are too sparse to know for sure what is entailed during this time.
- We will discuss it in as much detail as we can as this lesson continues.

- **Curious: Who are the beheaded who reign with Christ?**

- We will again discuss this as the lesson continues
- One thing to note here: If the 1,000 year reign is literal and on earth, consistency would require beheaded saints living for 1,000 years with him. To say literal and earthly is ridiculous!

- These are souls, not physical beings
- **Curious: What is the first resurrection?**
 - There are several views here. For example, Harkrider holds to the view that this resurrection is not a reference to a resurrection of the dead at all.
 - James Strauss in his commentary (Bible Study Textbook) was not helpful, only stating that your view will be formed on whether you feel the resurrection to be literal or symbolic.
 - As mentioned, Premillennialists claim a literal resurrection of the beheaded saints, (though they do not require ALL of them to be beheaded), and an extra resurrection that is found nowhere else in scripture).
 - B. W. Johnson indicates it is a reference to the revival in spiritua form of the martyrs, as they reign with Christ. Not a bodily resurrection at all.

SCENE 21 (20:1-10) - PRINCIPLE

- God has Satan under chain, lock & seal.
- Christ's reign includes the thrones of saints who are reigning with Him.
- Those identified as reigning with Christ are in a position where the second death holds no sway!
- Finally, Satan's defeat is total!

What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

- **God has Satan under chain, lock and seal**

- Keys in scripture are an indication of authority. To have a key to pit is to allow it to open, or command it to stay closed!
- The chain indicates the ability to limit and control the devil, possessed by God as he confines him to the pit.
- The seal (3) likewise is an indication of God's control, as he shut him (the devil) up.

- **Christ's reign includes the thrones of saints (martyrs) who are reigning with Him.**

- Interesting. The word throne is used 47 times in Revelation. 3 of them refer to Satan (2:13) and the Beast (13:2; 16:10). The other 44 times the throne or thrones are located in heaven.
- There is NO reason to attribute Christ's throne as being earthly. (Note there is no mention of it being on earth here in this text.)
- The souls of the Martyrs are in heaven reigning with Christ in heaven!

(Revelation 6:9-10) [Opening of the 5th Seal], *“When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.¹⁰ And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”*

- **Those identified as reigning with Christ are in a position where the second death holds no sway!**

- This is true for us as well.
- In the end, the resurrection of the righteous is to life eternal (no second death)

(1 Corinthians 15:24-26), *“Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. ²⁵ For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. ²⁶ The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.”*

- **Finally (at long last), Satan’s defeat will be final!**

- A final effort on the part of Satan is defeated, and he is thrown into the lake of fire where the beast and false prophet are.
- Torment day and night forever and ever. (Note: No annihilation).
- As they are tormented, along with wicked men (cf. Matthew 25:46), God and Christ reign (forever and ever).

(Revelation 11:15) [The sounding of the 7th trumpet], *“Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”*

SCENE 21 (20:1-10) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- Christ gains the victory, binding Satan
- Those who are on Christ's side (including the martyrs) reign with Him.
- In the future, the Devil will be released for a short while

TO US

- Satan is bound today.
- The way we escape the second death is through faithfulness to Him.
- Ultimately, the Devil will be thrown into the lake of fire.

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Practice – Application to them and us (Identical)

• Them

- **In short, the key, chain and seal all indicate God's authority and power over the devil.**

- Today, Satan is bound, and not capable of the scope of deception he accomplished in the first century.
- What does that mean?
- Homer Hailey – “The binding of Satan does not render him absolutely helpless or unable to operate; for he continues to be exceedingly active. He walks about as a roaring lion, seeking who he may devour (1 Peter 5:8); but his activity is limited, as a dog chained to a wire between two trees. He can operate only within the limited distance between the trees, and to the length of the chain from side to

side. In this binding, Satan is divinely restrained from reestablishing control over the nations.”

- This contrast obviously, because when released, he goes out and deceives the nations.
- Also, it has been pointed out that Satan can no longer gain control over individuals (demonic possession). Perhaps this ability to compel is part of the binding mentioned here.
- Note: Casting the devil into the bottomless pit not punitive (that comes later). It is preventative.
- **Those on Christ's side, mentioned in verse 4, lived and reigned with the Christ through this period.**
 - First, we are in the midst of this period right now. (We will deal with this further in the next slide).
 - Those reigning with Christ: The martyrs during that present distress. (Also, may refer to all who are righteous).
 - Note: beheading is a figurative picture of such martyrdom (No evidence that beheading was practiced as a rule in the empire).
 - Use of thrones and reigning is an indication of the exaltation of those who are Christ's.
 - Though we (who live later) are not found in this vision, all who are faithful to the Lord are destined to reign with Him.

(Romans 5:17), “For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of

grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)”

- **In the future, the Devil will be released for a short while.**

- Only here do we have details regarding the circumstances and end to this release
- The devil desperately gathers together all the world against God and His people
- God will again intervene (bringing fire down from heaven to destroy the enemy).
- Satan will finally receive his eternal punishment, joining the beast and false prophet in the lake of fire.

- **Us**

- **Satan is bound today.**

- There has not been such a deception of nations since the end of the conflict with the beast and the false prophet.
- This binding is for 1,000 years (running parallel to the reign of Christ). Note: not a literal number. We will address this in the next slide.
- The power of the beast and the false prophet is broken, and Satan is bound in the pit.

- **The way we escape the second death is through faithfulness to Him.**

- Compare 20:6, and 2:11 (Letter to persecuted church in Smyrna)

(Revelation 20:6), “Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but

they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.”

(Revelation 2:11), *“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.”*

- This first resurrection is a lifting up to reign with Christ. We can accomplish the same by being steadfast in our lives, until the end.

• **Ultimately, the devil is completely defeated! That is his end!**

- First he was defeated and thrown out of heaven (12:9)
- Next, his efforts (re: what Revelation is about) were thwarted and he was imprisoned (our chapter)
- Finally, he is to be thrown into the lake of fire!
- Note: His (and the wicked’s) punishment is for an eternity

(Revelation 20:10), *“And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”*

(Matthew 25:41), *“Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels’” ... (46), “And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”*

SCENE 21 (20:1-10) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- Angel (1)
- Bottomless Pit (1,3)
- Great Chain (1)
- Dragon (3,7,10)
- 1,000 years (2,3,4,5,6,7)
- Seal (3)
- Thrones (4)
- Beheaded Souls (5)
- First Resurrection (5,6)
- Second death (6)
- Prison (7)
- Four Corners of Earth (8)
- Gog and Magog (8)
- Camp of the Saints (9)
- Beloved City (9)
- Lake of Fire and Brimstone (10)
- Beast & F. Prophet (10)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 20:1-10

- **Identify and define**
- **Angel (1)**
 - One of God's servants/messengers (To sound out or perform God's will)
 - This angel had the authority to lay hold of the dragon and bind him
- **Bottomless Pit (1,3)**
 - First referenced in chapter 9:1
 - That from when the tormenting locusts came
 - The beast ascended from it (11:7; 17:8)
 - A place of evil that can be closed to bind
 - Note: The angel had a key to the pit (Had the authority to open and close it).
- **Great Chain (1)**
 - Like the key, a symbol (Not a literal chain)

- What does a chain symbolize? The ability to bind or limit
- The angel, with this great chain would bind Satan, limiting his power as he confines him to the pit.
- Consider the binding of Satan:
 - Jesus bound the devil when he cast out demons during his ministry

(Matthew 12:28-29), *“But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. ²⁹ Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. ³⁰ He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.”*

- Jesus also limited Satan through His death on the cross

(Hebrews 2:14-15), *“Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”*

- Here the binding of Satan follows the defeat of the Beast and the prophet. They lost, Jesus won. The devil then is limited. Things he could do he no longer can do.

(Revelation 11:15), *“Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”*

- It might be noted that the Devil's ability to use an empire such as that of Rome, to deceive the world, and persecute Christians, has not shown itself since the casting of the beast and the prophet into the lake of fire, and the binding of Satan.
- Plus, the release of Satan for a little season, seems to show a final effort to use the kingdoms of men to defeat Christ and His people.
- **Dragon (2,7,10)**
 - A common reference (in Revelation) to the Devil. "the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan." (20:2)
 - Also referred to in chapter 12, seeking to devour the woman's child (12:3,4,7,9)
 - Lost the war in heaven against Michael and his angels, and was cast to the earth.
- **1,000 Years (2,3,4,5,6,7)**
 - Refers to a period of time where Satan would be bound, sealed in the pit. (2-3)
 - The period of time where Jesus reigned with the faithful martyrs (4-5)
 - To be followed by the release of Satan from his prison (7)
NOTE: he must be released for "a little while" (3)
 - 1,000 = 10 X 10 X 10. the apocalyptic equivalent of a complete amount of time.
 - Harkrider: "The thousand years symbolizes a full, uninterrupted period of time. Neither Satan of any

other force can alter God's purposes. His kingdom "cannot be moved" (Heb. 12:28).

- Note: Premillennial doctrine is based upon assumptions, and misrepresentations of this text.
 - There is no mention here of a reign of Jesus on an earthly throne
 - Taking the 1,000 years as literal years comes with consequences
 - Beheaded saints literally living and reigning on earth for 1,000 years
 - The Messianic kingdom is on earth (when scripture states it is a spiritual kingdom)

(John 18:36) [Jesus to Pilate], *"Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.'"*

- The Kingdom existing at some future date, not yet realized.

(Mark 9:1), *"And He said to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power.'"*

- The text indicates a long and uninterrupted period of time where Satan would be limited and Christ's reign would be sustained and successful. (This accurately represents the time we are in at present).

- **Jeffery Hamilton:** "In prophecy, the number "one thousand" isn't used literally. It can represent a large value which cannot be counted. For example, God

stated, “For every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills” (Psalm 50:10). God is not saying that there are literally one thousand hills on which He owns the cattle. Instead, He is claiming the cattle on every hill. In the same way, Revelation 20 is not saying that Jesus would only reign a thousand years. John is stating that Jesus would reign for all the remaining years of the world.” (LaVista c of C website).

- **Seal (3)**

- In context, to seal up, to stop. Referencing a seal placed on Satan for security against Him.
- Seals (signets) close up. Sometimes for privacy or secrecy – sometimes for security.

- **Thrones (4)**

- Consistently in the book of Revelation, the references to thrones (re: Christ and those who are his) are found in heaven.
- Paul clearly indicated that those who belong to the Lord will reign with Him in exaltation

(2 Timothy 2:10-13), “Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. ¹¹ This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him. ¹² If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. ¹³ If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.”

- **Beheaded Souls (5)**

- Use of “they” and “them” indicates the martyrs who had suffered death at that time. (Not here a reference to us, but them.... Those who had suffered at the hands of the beast and the false prophet).

- Souls (not physical bodies) reigning with the Christ

(Revelation 6:9-11) [Finally avenged!], *“When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.¹⁰ And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”¹¹ Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.”*

- **First Resurrection (5,6)**

- The first resurrection is here described as the victory of the martyred souls
- The rise to their thrones to reign with Christ for this period of time (the resurrection is a figurative one, as seen by the context).

- Harkrider (Also, Hailey, Hendriksen, Foy E. Wallace and others): “The first resurrection is not a bodily resurrection of the dead, but figuratively it describes the saint’s triumph over Satan.”

- They went from resting while the persecution continued (cf. Rev. 6:9-11); unto a rising to thrones of exaltation at the end of that period (Rev. 20).

- Another example of resurrection symbolizing a revival. Would be the return of Judah from Babylonian captivity characterized in the vision of Ezekiel (a valley of dry bones rising up again as a nation (Ezekiel 37:10-14).
- Note: Others who died during this time (not faithful to God) would not participate in this first resurrection.

- **Second Death (6)**

- Those who are exalted to thrones with the Christian will not be touched by the second death
- This has reference to eternal condemnation

(Revelation 20:14), "Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."

(Revelation 21:8), "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

- First death is physical death (the end of all until Christ comes, cf. Heb. 9:27). The second death is reserved only for the ungodly.

- In the margin of Martin Luther's Bible: "Born once, die twice; born twice, die once."

- **Prison (7)**

- The bottomless pit. Where Satan was held for the 1,000 years
- For a short time (indeterminate, but an intense and short interval of upheaval).
- Not much known. No details about how long.

- It seems that in this short period, something similar to what they were experiencing then would come about again. All nations of the earth coming together to war against the Christ.
- **Four Corners of Earth (8)**
 - Every place in the world. Inclusive symbol. Nations from all over the earth
- **Gog and Magog (8)**
 - The other reference to Gog and Magog is found in Ezekiel, chapters 38 and 39
 - Magog is referred to in Ezekiel 38:15 as being “far north”
 - Gog is referred to as the prince of that land in Ezekiel 38:3. The two words are, however, used interchangeably in the text
 - A nation with a large and well armed army with horsemen and horses (38:4)
 - This pagan nation would sometime in the future come against physical Israel (38:16), but would be judged by God (38:21-23)
 - Gog’s armies would be destroyed (39:1-6) and Israel would be restored (39:25-29)
 - Here, the imagery was used to describe the heathen nations that would arise against the Christ.
 - All of Satan’s pagan forces marshalled for this final conflict in his last desperate and doomed attempt to overcome the Lord
 - Again note, NOT a physical battle. Like the one with which Revelation is concerned, a last period of conflict

that will test the faith of the Saints. Victory will be won by those who remain true to the Lamb of God.

- **Camp of the Saints (9)**

- A reference to the people of God
- The church

- **Beloved City (9)**

- A reference to Spiritual Jerusalem
- Again, a reference to the people of God
- B.W. Johnson: “Assailed the true Church and sought to destroy it. How the Church shall be assailed cannot now be told, but there will be a determined attempt to extirpate it. The beloved city, the spiritual Jerusalem, the Church, shall be surrounded, but in the day of her extremity the Lord will hear her cry for help.”
- **Note:** The text indicates the complete victory of Christ over the devil and the pagan nations.
- “And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them” (9)

- **Lake of Fire and Brimstone (10)**

- The final abode of the beast, the false prophet (19:20), and now the Devil himself.
- All who reject Jesus as Savior will end up in this place

(Matthew 25:41), *“Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’”*

(Revelation 20:15), *“And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”*

(Revelation 21:8), *“But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”*

- **Beast and the False Prophet (10)**

- The evil forces of that day (pagan empire, false religion), that were defeated in the Great battle of the Lord, and preceded the Devil into the Lake of Fire (19:20)

SCENE 22 (20:11-15) - PICTURE

- This scene depicts the Christ (judge) in all of His glory.
- Consider Christ’s power, *“from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away”* (11)
- Q: Does a depiction of judgment bring trepidation or joy?
- The symbolism of the Book of Life is found in several places in scripture.

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Introductory thoughts:

- In our discussion (in the last scene) we have effectively described the events which will end man’s habitation of earth.
- The final battle against the eternal reign of Christ, with the final defeat of the devil and his eternal punishment in the lake of fire

- This sets the stage for the judgment of mankind, discussed in our text today.

- **Other passages that describe the day of judgment...**

(Matthew 25:31-33), *“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. ³³ And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.”*

(Matthew 25:34), *“Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’”*

(Matthew 25:41), *“Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’”*

(2 Peter 3:10-13), *“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. ¹¹ Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? ¹³ Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”*

- **We have been working from the belief that the book was written to benefit those alive at the time of its writing**

- This is undoubtedly so, and yet, this scene depicts events that have not yet happened.
- It is not out of the character of the book. Depicting the victory of Christ on earth, to then speak of the eternal end of all men.

Scene 22 (Chapter 20:11-15) The Great White Throne Judgment

READ THE TEXT

- **The scene depicts Jesus Christ as the glorious judge of mankind**

- Great white throne
- The dead judged according to their works

(2 Corinthians 5:10), *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”*

(John 5:26-29), *“For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself,²⁷ and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.²⁸ Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice²⁹ and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.”*

- **Consider the depiction of Christ’s power: “from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away”**

- Christ had the power to bring the universe into existence

(John 1:1-3), *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.² He was in the beginning with*

God.³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.”

- He also has the power to bring the present creation to an end, leading to something new!

(2 Peter 3:13) [In speaking clearly of the destruction of the universe by fire in the day of the Lord, Peter further states], *“Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”*

(Revelation 21:1), *“Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.”*

• Q: Does a depiction of judgment bring trepidation or joy?

- *“And the dead were judged according to their works” (12), “And anyone not found in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire” (15)*
- Consider the proper attitude and action of the child of God

(2 Peter 3:11-12), *“Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?”*

• The symbolism of the Book of Life is found in several places (Philippians 4:3), *“And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life.”*

- (Revelation 3:5, 13:8, 17:8, here, 20:15,17; 22:19)

- Also see (Luke 10:20; Hebrews 12:22-23; Daniel 12:1; Exodus 32:31-33; Psalm 69:27-28; 56:8; 139:16; Malachi 3:16)

SCENE 22 (20:11-15) - PRINCIPLE

- All men will be judged in the day of the Lord.
- That day will be the end of the heavens and the earth.
- That day will bring the ultimate victory to God's people, as Death and Hell are cast into the lake of fire.

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What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

- **The Judgment of Christ will be upon all men**

- Note: 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18 is not referring to a different day
 - Paul is merely answering the question, what will happen to the righteous dead
 - The righteous, dead and living, will be resurrected to eternal life
- However, the unrighteous will be resurrected to eternal **condemnation**

(Matthew 25:41), *“Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’”*

- **That day will be the end of the heavens and the earth.**

- Consider the parallel of the phrases

(2 Peter 3:10-11), *“the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.¹¹ Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved”*

(20:11), *“from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.”*

- Also

(2 Peter 3:13), *“Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”*

(21:1), *“Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.”*

- **That day will bring the ultimate victory to God’s people, as Death and Hades are cast into the lake of fire.**

- Note: Word Hades in NKJV, incorrectly translated in KJV as Hell (hades, not Gehenna)

- Both are referred to as enemies of Christ and His church

(Matthew 16:18), *“And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”*

(1 Corinthians 15:24-26), *“Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.²⁵ For He must reign till He has put*

all enemies under His feet. ²⁶ The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.”

SCENE 22 (20:11-15) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- Books will judge as the works of men are judged against the standards that God has set.
- For the Christians then, the book that will judge them is the Law of Christ

TO US

- Books will judge as the works of men are judged against the standards that God has set.
- For us, the book that will judge us is the law of Christ

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Practice – Application to them and us (Identical)

• Them

• Books will judge as the works of men are judged against the standards that God has set

- It is interesting that the books by which we will be judged are stated in the plural
- **Q:** Is the book that judged the Patriarchs the same as that which judged the Israelites?
 - No, the law of Moses came later than the time of the Patriarchs
- Were the Israelites and the Gentiles judged by the same book?

(Romans 2:10-16), “but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹¹ For there is no partiality with God. ¹² For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law ¹³ (for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified; ¹⁴ for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, ¹⁵ who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them) ¹⁶ in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.”

- **Us**

- **The same thing is true with us, though we should remember that when God sent Jesus, He was sending His Son last of all! (cf. Hebrews 1:1-2)**

(Hebrews 2:1-4), “Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. ² For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, ³ how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, ⁴ God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?”

- **For us, the book that will judge us is the law of Christ**

(John 12:48-50), “He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. ⁴⁹ For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. ⁵⁰ And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.”

SCENE 22 (20:11-15) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- Throne (11)
- Great White (11)
- Him (11)
- Dead (12)
- Opened books (12)
- The Book of Life (12)
- Things written in books (12)
- The dead (12,13)
- Judged (12,13)
- Death and Hades (13,14)
- Lake of fire (14,15)
- Second death (14)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 20:1-10

- **Identify and define**
- **Throne (11)**
 - The word throne indicates authority
 - We have here stated the authority of Jesus Christ to judge all men

(2 Corinthians 5:9-10), “Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. ¹⁰ For we must all

appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”

- **Great White (11)**

- Great (μέγας mégas, meg'-as) big, great, high, large, mighty

- White – Indicates purity (absolute white, as Jesus is absolutely pure)

- **Him (11)**

- Christ (see 2 Corinthians 5:9-10, quoted above)

(Philippians 2:9-11), “Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

- Absolute authority – *“from whose face the earth and heaven fled away”*

- **Dead (12,13)**

- Every man, righteous and wicked, who has lived on the earth

- *“small and great”* (Sea gave up the dead, 13; Hades delivered up the dead, 13)

- **Note:** Those living at the second coming are not exempt from judgment

- (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:51-57)

- **Note:** The purpose of judgment if Hades has great gulf?

- Not to decide (as this text shows, but to mete out the sentence)
- At judgment, the justice of God is proclaimed!

(Hebrews 9:27), *“And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.”*

- **Opened Books (12)**

- These books indicating something different than the book of life
- The dead are judged “by the things written in the books.”
- The standard to which they are held by God

(Hebrews 1:1-2), *“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,² has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds...”*

- **The Book of Life (12)**

- Harkrider: *“God’s roll of righteous people throughout all ages”*

(Exodus 32:31-32) [Moses’ intercession on behalf of the people who sinned at Mt. Sinai], *“Then Moses returned to the Lord and said, “Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold!³² Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written.”³³ And the Lord said to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book.”*

(Luke 10:20) [Jesus to the apostles], *“rejoice because your names are written in heaven.”*

- **Things written in books (12)**

- The actual requirements God has given to any people
- For us today... (cf. Heb. 1:1-4), the words of Jesus

(John 12:48), *“He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.”*

- **Judged (12,13)**

- Judgment comes as a result of God’s righteousness. Because of who He is, He is compelled to punish unrighteousness
- He establishes the standard. We obey or do not obey. Our destiny is set.
- *“the dead were judged according to their works”* **It is imminently FAIR!**

- **Death and Hades (13,14)**

- The enemies of Christ (as established already, Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 15:24-26)
- **Death** – That which Jesus ultimately defeats as those who are His are given **eternal life**
 - First death – Physical (separation of spirit from body, cf. James 2:26)
 - Second death – Separation from God

(Revelation 21:8), *“But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”*

- **Hades** – The realm of the dead who await judgment (departed spirits)

- Consists of ‘Paradise’ (cf. Luke 23:43, Jesus to the thief on the cross) and a place of torment (cf. Luke 16:23, the rich man) (tartarus)
- **Lake of Fire (14,15)**
 - Place of final punishment
 - Prepared for the Devil and his angels (cf. Matt. 25:42; 19:20; 20:10)
 - The end of all whose names are not written in the book of life
 - Those whose names never appeared, and those whose names were blotted out because of sin.
- **Second Death (14)**
 - Already noted – Separation of God, leading to an eternity of torment
 - **Note:** The day in heaven is never ending... The night in hell is never ending

(Revelation 21:8), *“But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”*

Next Scene: Scene 23 (Revelation 21:1-27) The New Heaven and New Earth

SCENE 23 (21:1-27) - PICTURE

- Everything is new and changed! The evil and sorrow that is present will be no more!
- The blessings contained here are available only to those who overcome.
- The ornamentation and glory of the heavenly Jerusalem is beyond our comprehension.
- Rejoice, we will be in the very presence of God and His Son.

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Introductory thoughts:

- In our last two scenes, we have symbols of glory and reward
- Keep in mind that those oppressed have been shown their victory over Satan and evil
 - The Christ has been victorious
 - The Beast, false prophet, and even the devil have been utterly defeated
 - The judgment of the Christ has taken place
- The visions we will discuss here in chapters 21 and 22 demonstrate the nature and extent of the reward of the faithful
 - The promise had been given

(Revelation 14:12-13), *“Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.”* ¹³ Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, *“Write:*

'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' ” *“Yes,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.”*

- Now listen to the wonderful description of that rest for the faithful

Scene 23 (Chapter 21:1-27) The New Heaven and New Earth

READ THE TEXT

- **Everything is new and changed! The evil and sorrow that is present will be no more!**

- A new heaven and new earth (first having passed away)
(1)

(2 Peter 3:10-13), *“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. ¹¹ Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? ¹³ Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”*

- New Jerusalem (2) This describing the church in its exalted state.
- A change of standing. God Himself will dwell with them
(3)
- No more sorrow, crying, pain or death (4)
- *“All things new”* (5)
- Full access to the water of life (6)

- **The blessings contained here are available only to those who overcome.**
 - The ungodly will instead have *“their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone”* (8)
 - That which *“defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie”* will not enter into that exalted place (27)
- **The ornamentation and glory of the heavenly Jerusalem is beyond our comprehension.**
 - The description given here is one showing gold, pearls and precious stones (10-21)
 - Here is described a place magnificent in size and scope (gates, foundations, length, breadth, height) (14-17)
 - The glory of this place is the glory of God Himself (22-23)

(Matthew 25:34), *“Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’”*

(Luke 6:20-23), *“Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said: “Blessed are you poor, For yours is the kingdom of God.
²¹ Blessed are you who hunger now, For you shall be filled.*

Blessed are you who weep now, For you shall laugh. ²² Blessed are you when men hate you, And when they exclude you, And revile you, and cast out your name as evil, For the Son of Man's sake. ²³ Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.”

- **Rejoice, we will be in the very presence of God and His Son.**
 - Under the Old Covenant, men were kept at a distance in the tabernacle and temple

(Leviticus 16:2) [Access to the most holy place was only on the day of atonement. Otherwise...], *“and the Lord said to Moses: “Tell Aaron your brother not to come at just any time into the Holy Place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, lest he die; for I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat.”*

- Under the New Covenant, we are brought near to God through the mediation of Christ the High Priest.

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

- In eternity, we will be with God!

(Revelation 21:3), *“And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.”*

SCENE 23 (21:1-27) - PRINCIPLE

- In eternity, the righteous will have intimate access to God and the Son.
- **WARNING:** There is no place for the ungodly in heaven.
- “Heaven is a wonderful place, filled with glory and grace. I want to see my Savior’s face...” (I want to go there)

What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

- **In eternity, the righteous will have intimate access to God and the Son.**

(Colossians 3:1-4), *“If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.² Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.³ For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.⁴ When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”*

- **WARNING: There is no place for the ungodly in heaven.**

(Romans 1:28-32), *“And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;²⁹ being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers,³⁰ backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,³¹ undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful;³² who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.”*

- **“Heaven is a wonderful place, filled with glory and grace. I want to see my Savior’s face...”**

(Matthew 6:19-21), *“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in*

and steal;²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

SCENE 23 (21:1-27) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- A promise – Heaven is worth the effort to go there.
- A warning – Those who are in sin will not make it to heaven

TO US

- Our focus must be on the eternal. There is value found in having our names in the book of life.
- If we don't live for God, our eternal destiny is to burn in the lake of fire.

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Practice – Application to them and us (Identical)

• Them

- **A promise – Heaven is worth the effort to go there**
- **A warning – Those who are in sin will not make it to heaven**
 - BTW, we see the fallacy of “accentuating the positive and eliminating the negative”
 - Even in this passage that details the precious nature of what the church will enjoy and experience in eternity, there are two specific warnings about the lot of the evil.

- They “shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone which is the second death” (8)
- “But there shall by no means enter it (the New Jerusalem) anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the book of life.” (27).

- **Us**

- **Our focus must be on the eternal. There is value found in having our names in the book of life.**

(Philippians 4:8-9), *“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.⁹ The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.”*

- **If we don’t live for God, our eternal destiny is to burn in the lake of fire.**

(Galatians 5:19-21), *“Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,²¹ envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”*

SCENE 23 (21:1-27) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- New heaven & earth (1)
- Sea (1)
- New Jerusalem (2,10-27)
- Adorned bride (2)
- Tabernacle of God (3)
- Alpha & Omega (6)
- Water of life (6)
- Lake (fire, brimstone) (8)
- One of 7 angels (9)
- Seven bowls/plagues (9)
- # 12 (12,14)
- Gates & desc. (12,21)
- Foundations & desc. (14, 19-20)
- Walls & desc. (14-18)
- Dimensions of city/gold reed (15-17)
- Nations (24,26)

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• **New heaven & earth (1)**

- Our text in Revelation 21 refers to the eternal, future abode of the righteous
- This is a view of life after death/**after judgment**
- The New heaven and earth indicates that the present physical universe will pass away, cf. Revelation 20:11 *“there was found no place for them”*
- With this Peter agrees

(2 Peter 3:10-13), “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.”¹¹

Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire,

and the elements will melt with fervent heat?¹³ Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”

- This phrase has reference to the new destiny of God’s people, that which follows the church age, of which we are now a part.
- **Sea (1)**
 - Specifically, there will be *“no more sea”* (Harkrider posits two possibilities)
 - A removal of the sea of glass (4:6) in front of the throne of God. In eternity there will be nothing between God and His people.
 - Or, the removal of the sea from which the beast arose (as noted in 13:1). No more conflict or war against God and His people.
 - I like the first explanation. But, if the verse is dealing specifically with the end of the physical, then the second explanation is more accurate.
- **New Jerusalem (2,10-27)**
 - The language has a special intention of declaring the people of God (in all periods of time)

(cf. Revelation 22:19), “and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book”

 - This city is the destiny (the eternal abode) of all who belong to Christ!

(Hebrews 12:22-24), *“But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels,²³ to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect,²⁴ to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.”*

- In the vision, it descends from God (so, it is itself heavenly). John in the vision, is given (by the city descending down to him), an opportunity to behold the splendor of the heavenly abode of God’s people.

(1 Peter 1:3-4), *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,⁴ to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.”*

- **Note:** The new Jerusalem is referred to be as “a bride adorned for her husband”, which is, of course an image used to represent the church in scripture.

(Romans 7:4), *“Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.”*

- There is a beautiful description given of the New Jerusalem in verses 10-27, which we will discuss as our symbols progress.
- **Adorned bride (2)**

- The preparation of the bride is found in **sanctification (2 Corinthians 11:2-3)**, *“For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. ³ But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.”*

- **Tabernacle of God (3)**

- Tabernacle references the habitation of God (the most holy place)
- In eternity, we will be in the very presence of God
- **Harkider:** “Uninterrupted fellowship and total union with God will characterize heaven and the age to come. His tabernacle or dwelling place will be with men in a more personal way than He has ever been before.”

- **Alpha & Omega (6)**

- First and the last letters of the Greek New Testament
- *“The beginning and the end”* (Eternal in existence, preeminent in position).
- The claim is made here, and also in 1:8, 1:11, and 22:13
- Note the context: *“It is done”* (6). The work of redemption is finished. The reward is assured.
- (Read verses 3-7 to see the entire context of this declaration).

- **Water of life (6)**

- Also, see 22:17

(Revelation 22:17), *“And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.”*

- Remember Jesus' words to the Samaritan woman in John 4

(John 4:13-14), *“Jesus answered and said to her, “Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again,¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.”*

- A reference to God's gift of eternal life to the faithful.
- **Lake (fire, brimstone) (8)**
 - The final destination of the devil, the beast, the false prophet, Death and Hades, and all the unrighteous
 - A description of hell, and reference to eternal punishment (see also 19:20; 20:10; 20:14-15).
 - Read verse 8 for a list of the types of wickedness that leads to destruction. Note that lying is placed side by side with murder, fornication and idolatry.
- **One of 7 angels (9)**
 - God's servants and messengers
 - (This angel is first mentioned in chapter 15)
 - It is interesting here that John recognized the Angel from the previous vision!
- **Seven bowls/plagues (9)**
 - The plagues that God had visited upon the evildoers, described in 15-16
 - Interestingly, the plagues end with the judgment of the great whore, Babylon the Great

- Now, the angel shows John the Bride, (in great contrast to the great whore). This leads to a description of the Holy Jerusalem, prepared as a bride for God.
- (Before looking at some of the symbols, read again the description (10-26)
 - Note: Glory of God (like a jasper (clear) a diamond? (11)
- **Number 12 (12,14)**
 - 12 gates and 12 foundations
 - 12 represents the people of God (as seen in the 12 tribes written upon the gates).
 - Plenty of gates (3 on each side), so that all of God's people will gain entrance.

(2 Peter 1:11), "for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

- **Gates & desc. (12,21)**
 - As noted above, indicating entrance into eternal life for all of God's children.
 - A great and high wall shows the protection of God for His people (no more war or conflict)
 - The gates are on each side of the city. Each gate (21) was of one pearl.
 - Pearls were highly sought and precious in the ancient world.
- **Foundations & desc. (14, 19-20)**
 - The great high wall has 12 foundations (in them the names of the apostles).

- The apostles had, of course, the foundational work of spreading the gospel in the first century.
- The foundations adorned with precious stones. (1 - Jasper/Diamond; 2 - sapphire, clear blue; 3 – chalcedony – “green carbonite of copper”; 4 - emerald – the greenest of stones; 5 – Sardonyx – an onyx with white, red and brown; 6 – Sardius – red stone; 7 – chrysolite – a stone of golden color like our topaz or amber; 8 – beryl – a stone similar to the emerald, tinged with yellow, blue or green; 9 – Topaz – (not like ours) a stone of yellowish green color; 10 – chrysopasus – probably a pale green stone, similar to the emerald; 11 – jacinth – a darker blue like the modern sapphire; 12 – amethyst – a stone with brilliant violet or purple color).
- **Walls & desc. (14-18)**
 - The wall was 144 cubits. Seems to indicate the thickness of the wall. (12 X 12) full security.
 - Was of Jasper (diamond) with the city of pure Gold, transparent like glass.
- **Dimensions of city / gold reed (15-17)**
 - 12,000 furlongs, breadth, length and height.
 - The number is figurative (immense) 12X10X10X10. the complete, full number
 - Plenty of room for all of God’s children
 - The reed is intended to measure (gold = precious value)
 - Measures the perfection of the city (in its provisions), the gates (as means of entrance) and the walls (security of protection).

- **Nations (24,26)**

- Here the nations of necessity must have a reference to the people of God, from all times and places.
- Remember, nothing that causes an abomination can enter into the city. (27)
- God's purpose in establishing nations was to bring people to God

(Acts 17:26-27), "And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, ²⁷ so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us."

Next Scene: Scene 24 (Revelation 22:1-21) The River of Life and Jesus' Testimony

SCENE 24 (22:1-21) - PICTURE

- Images of the gifts of eternal life are beautiful & for us if we are servants of God.
- There is a wonderful exhortation given in the interim by the angel in verse 9. “Worship God!”
- The contrasts continue here between the end of the righteous and the wicked.
- The final caution not to add to or take away from God’s word is a warning we should all heed.

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Introductory thoughts:

- In chapter 21, we begin our picture of perfection, exaltation and glory. We will be in the presence of God, and there is a clear differentiation between the righteous, and the wicked, who will spend their eternity in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.
- Consider the perfection, where the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple.
 - With those whose names are written in the book of life there in their presence!
 - In our final chapter, the descriptions of glory and perfection continue.

Scene 24 (Chapter 21:1-21) The River of Life and Jesus’

Testimony

READ THE TEXT

- **Images of the gifts of eternal life are beautiful and for us if we are servants of God.**

(1 John 2:24-25), “Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.²⁵ And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life.”

- **There is a wonderful exhortation given in the interim by the angel in verse 9. Worship God!**

- God alone is worthy of worship (not the angel, as a servant, nor men).
- Also, our purpose in life is to give Him glory!

(Psalms 95:1-7), “Oh come, let us sing to the Lord! Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation.² Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving; Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms.³ For the Lord is the great God, and the great King above all gods.⁴ In His hand are the deep places of the earth; the heights of the hills are His also.⁵ The sea is His, for He made it; and His hands formed the dry land.⁶ Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.⁷ For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand.”

- **The contrasts continue here between the end of the righteous and the wicked**

(2 Thessalonians 1:3-10), “We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other,⁴ so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your

persecutions and tribulations that you endure,⁵ which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer;⁶ since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you,⁷ and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,⁸ in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁹ These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,¹⁰ when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.”

- **The final caution not to add to or take away from God’s word is a warning we all should heed.**

(James 1:25), “But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.”

(Jude 3), “Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.”

SCENE 24 (22:1-21) - PRINCIPLE

- Any sacrifice necessary to gain access to the river of water of life is worth it in the end
- The time for Christ's final advent is near!
- There is a need on our part for desire (to thirst). If we desire, we are invited to "Come!"

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What is the purpose of this scene? What does God intend for us to learn?

My Thoughts:

- Any sacrifice necessary to gain access to the river of water of life (tree of life) is worth it in the end

(Matthew 16:24-27), "Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? ²⁷ For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works."

- The time for Christ's final advent is near!

- Three times the expression that He is coming quickly is given in this chapter (7,12,20)

- His coming is certain, without forewarning

(2 Peter 3:10), *“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night...”*

- Our lesson, then, is to be prepared!

(Revelation 1:3), *“Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.”*

(Revelation 14:13), *“Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’ ”*

(Revelation 16:15), *“Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.”*

- **There is a need on our part for desire (to thirst). If we desire, we are invited to “Come!”**

- Access to the water of life is given freely to all men
- However, nothing is forced upon men. Our own volition must lead us to the water of life.

(Mark 16:15-16), *“And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.¹⁶ He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”*

SCENE 24 (22:1-21) - PRACTICE

TO THEM

- Until Christ comes again, injustice and filthiness will continue among men. Our admonition is to remain righteous and holy. (11)
- Don't alter God's Word! (18-19)

TO US

- Continue in faithfulness in the face of opposition!
- Don't add to or take away from the words of the prophecy of this book. (Consider the punishment for such action).

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Practice – Application to them and us (Note identical, because the warning of Christ's imminent coming is as relevant to us today as it was to the souls in the first century.)

• Them

- **Until Christ comes again, injustice and filthiness will continue among men. Our admonition to is remain righteous and holy. (11)**
 - Note: These words are not an encouragement for the sinner to continue to sin.
 - Instead, they reveal a practical reality. Until Christ comes, evil will continue in the world.
- **Don't alter God's Word! (18-19)**
 - These visions are from God. As such they demand respect
 - Those who hear must accept them AS IS.
 - Those who alter them do so at their own peril

- Us

- **Continue in faithfulness in the face of opposition.**

(2 Timothy 3:12-15) [Paul to Timothy], “Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. ¹³ But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. ¹⁴ But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, ¹⁵ and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

(Luke 6:22-23), “Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you, and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake. ²³ Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, for in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.”

- **Don't add to or take away from the words of the prophecy of this book. (Consider the punishment for such action).**

- As it is prophecy, it is directly from God and must be respected

(2 Peter 1:20-21), “knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, ²¹ for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

- ALL SCRIPTURE is prophetic (forth telling), and thus inspired.

(2 Timothy 3:16-17), “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for

instruction in righteousness,¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

- Thus, the punishment for altering this prophecy is the same as altering any aspect of God’s word.

(Deuteronomy 4:1-2), “Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I teach you to observe, that you may live, and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers is giving you.² You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.”

- Plagues added – name blotted out of the book of life.

SCENE 24 (22:1-21) – CHAR. & SYMBOLS

- River of water of life (1)
- Throne of God & the Lamb (1,3)
- Tree of Life (2)
- His servants (3)
- God’s name on foreheads (4)
- Alpha & Omega/ Beginning & End/ First & Last (13)
- Root & Offspring of David (16)
- Bright & Morning Star (16)

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Characters and Symbols of the Vision found in chapter 20:1-10

- **Identify and define**

First, consider the parallel to the first several verses in Revelation 22 and the text of Genesis 2 and 3 (with Adam and Eve's idyllic existence in the Garden of Eden)

- In the garden of Eden there was a tree of life (Genesis 2:9)
- There was a river running through the garden that watered the gardens (2:10)
- There was no sin initially in the Garden (and because of sin, Adam and Eve were expelled (Genesis 3:22-ff)
- God was present in the garden (3:8)
- It is interesting how closely that first, idyllic existence God created for man, mirrors the eternal destination of the righteous!
- **River of Water of Life (1)**
 - It is described as Pure, appropriate for a river that contains the water of life!
 - **The idea of “water of life” is one that echoes throughout the Bible**
 - Noah and his family were saved through water (1 Peter 3:21)
 - The Red Sea parted for Moses and the people (Exodus 14)
 - Water flowed out of a rock to quench the thirst of Israel (Exodus 17; Numbers 20)
 - **Of course, the spiritual application is the one that counts!**

(Jeremiah 2:11-13), “My people have changed their Glory for what does not profit. ¹² Be astonished, O heavens, at this, and be

horribly afraid; be very desolate,” says the Lord. ¹³ “For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water.”

(Isaiah 12:2-4), “Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; ‘For Yah, the Lord, is my strength and song; He also has become my salvation.’ ” ³ Therefore with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. ⁴ And in that day you will say: “Praise the Lord, call upon His name; declare His deeds among the peoples, make mention that His name is exalted.”

(John 4:13-14), “Jesus answered and said to her, “Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.”

(Revelation 21:6), “And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.”

- **Throne of God & the Lamb (1,3)**

- The phrase indicates joint occupancy of the throne. This is indicated several times in the book

(3:21), (Church at Laodicea), “To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.”

(12:5), (The Great woman with child), “She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne.”

- **Tree of Life (2)**

- Other versions, including the ESV, describe this tree a bit differently, and probably more correctly...

(Revelation 22:2) [ESV], *“through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”*

- Even here, the reading is a bit difficult. The tree of life (as indicated in the text of Genesis 3, has but a single type of fruit, that which brings unending life.
- In the twelve kinds of fruit, the indications are probably that it refers to the fact that a batch is borne monthly.
- In this we see another symbol of life eternal (and healing) in the presence of God

- **Harkrider:** “Therefore these elements essential to physical life - water, food and health, signify that God abundantly supplies every need for eternal life.”

- **His servants (3)**

- The greatest of privileges for the child of God is to serve Him. It brings the greatest satisfaction and joy.

(Romans 12:1), *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.”*

- What begins here, as we serve God on earth, will be continued into eternity!

- **God’s name on foreheads (4)**

- The servants are clearly identified as belonging to God!

(3:12), **[Faithful church at Philadelphia]**, *“He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go*

out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.”

(7:3), [Angels to wait for the sealing of the 144,000], *“Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.”*

(14:1), *“Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads.”*

- **Alpha & Omega/Beginning & End/First & Last (13)**

- Here are the unmistakable designations of deity
- Found also in (1:8, 11; 21:6).
- The eternal nature of the Lord
- The self-existent first cause. The preeminent one.

(Colossians 1:16-18), *“For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.¹⁷ And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.¹⁸ And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.”*

- **Root & Offspring of David (16)**

- Jesus is both the root (the source) of David, and His offspring.
- This truth was confusing to the Jews

(Matthew 22:41-46), *“While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,⁴² saying, “What do you think about*

the Christ? Whose Son is He?” They said to Him, “The Son of David.”⁴³ He said to them, “How then does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord,’ saying:⁴⁴ “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool’ ”? ⁴⁵ If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his Son?”⁴⁶ And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.”

- Jesus is both God and man. As God He is David’s Lord. As man He is David’s descendent (and the true Messiah of the World).

- **Bright & Morning Star (16)**

- **Harkrider:** “He is the bright and morning star, signaling the beginning of a new day at dawn. By fulfilling the purpose and plan of God through his birth, life and death, Jesus shines forth a morning of victory for all who follow the Lamb wheresoever he goes.”

(2:26-28), “And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—²⁷ “He shall rule them with a rod of iron; they shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels’—as I also have received from My Father;²⁸ and I will give him the morning star.”

Note: If finished, will bring a single lesson next week, and then in the next quarter we will have a single quarter’s practical study on “How to Study the Bible.” (I am presently working on the material).