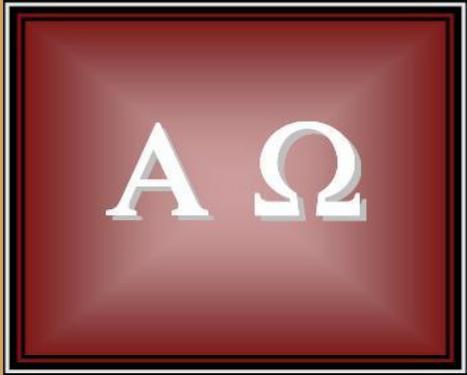


REVELATION

Seperating Fact From Fiction

Comentary on
the Book of
Revelation



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Jimmy R. Bagwell

REVELATION:
Separating Fact From Fiction

A Commentary

By

Jimmy Bagwell

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Separating Fact From Fiction
A Commentary
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Thoughts from the author:

I had no idea what I was getting myself into when I started this study. Sure I have taken classes, read commentaries and heard sermons concerning the book of Revelation, but nothing, and I mean nothing, prepared me for what I was doing.

Most of what I knew concerning the book of Revelation was bits and pieces of what I had picked up over the years. Even glancing through the book I still had preconceived notions as to what it was about. In fact, it wasn't until I had reached chapter five that I realized the time had come for me to forget everything ***I thought I knew*** concerning the book.

The book is not at all what I expected. Though symbolic in nature, its simplicity unfolded when I let go of preconceived ideas.

Revelation is a book of hope through despair. It is a promise of Gods salvation and mercy. It is a glimpse of His wrath and a picture of His love. After I understood a few simple things the mystery unfolded.

Jimmy R. Bagwell

Introduction to the book of Revelation

Authorship:

According to the book itself the author's name was John, a prophet. Traditionally this John has been identified as John the Apostle, the son of Zebedee. That the style of revelation is different from that of the gospel and the three epistle of John does not prove that some other John wrote the Revelation. The nature of apocalyptic literature, the fact that this revelation was given in a vision and the circumstances of John being exiled to Patmos could easily account for the difference in style.

Date:

Clearly the revelation was written in a period of time when Christians were threatened by Rome, undoubtedly by pressure to make them recant their faith and accept the cult of emperor worship. Some maintain that the book was written during the time of **Nero's** persecution of Christians after the burning of Rome in 64^{AD}. Some maintain that it was written during the harsh reign of **Domitian** 81-96^{AD}. Irenaus, a student of Polycarp, held this later date for the book.

The fact is, however, that the date of the writing is irrelevant. According to 1:9 he **WAS** on the isle of Patmos. This indicates that, at the time of the writing, he had already left Patmos. Thus, there was an indeterminate amount of time from when he saw the vision and when he actually wrote them down. This may have been months or even years. Also, John's use of the present tense in reference to some of the scenes indicates that, at least, some of the events were already unfolding by the time he actually wrote the book.

Purpose:

The purpose of the book was to demonstrate hope to the Christians at the seven churches of Asia. It was to demonstrate God's mercy and justice. It also was to demonstrate his retribution to those who hurt his people. The book was not written to or about a people living in some distant future.

The Nature of Apocalyptic Literature:

The Title of the book "REVELATION" is from the Greek word "Apocalypse" which means an unveiling or unfolding of things not previously known and which could not be known apart from the unveiling.

An apocalypse is a literary report of a fearful, often violent, vision that reveals truths about past, present and future times in highly symbolic and poetical terms. The poet may represent himself as transported into a heavenly realm, or the vision may be unveiled—and even interpreted—

by an angelic messenger. Apocalyptic exhortations are aimed at chastening and reforming their hearers with threats of punishment and promises of rewards.

The poetry of the Book of Revelation that is traditionally ascribed to John is well known to many Christians who are otherwise unaware of the literary genre it represents.

Approaches to the Book of Revelation

Listed below are the many different interpretive approaches used. This listing is in no way an endorsement of these methods. While many have a measure of merit they fall short in providing Biblical understanding. In short, misinterpreting Scripture is no different than not believing it at all. The conclusion is the same, you miss out on what God is really saying.

That being said, there is one method of interpretation that satisfies our present goals in understanding the truth of God's message. As you read through this list you will discover what I mean.

Predictive: Revelation depicts the plight of the church and the events surrounding the second coming of Christ.

Reformation: Revelation contains prophecies of the history of the church.

- Popular among reformers (e.g., Luther)
- Seals, bowls, trumpets, etc. are linked up with people, nations, events within church history
- Beast = papacy
- No agreement on how symbols in Revelation correspond to historical events
- Would be virtually incomprehensible for original audience

Dispensationalist

- The seven letters of Rev.2-3 *may* refer to seven periods of church history
- Church is raptured at 4:1 and thereafter appears in heaven as the 24 elders
- Tribulations of Rev.6-18 target Israel, and do not involve the church
Dispensationalism generally distinguishes between two peoples of God: Israel and the church.
- The 144,000 of Rev 7:3-8 are Jewish converts on earth during the Great Tribulation
- The 1000 years of Rev 20:4-7 involve Christ's literal reign on earth over the restored nation of Israel
- Would be virtually incomprehensible for original audience

Qualified Futurist

- Revelation has in view *both* first century events *and* subsequent generations, including the history of the church in the world (1-6) and the climax and consummation of human history (7-22).
- Rev.2-3 refer to actual first century churches rather than ages of church history
- Interprets first century history typologically; events point beyond themselves to the end of the age
- **Seals** represent forces used by God to accomplish his redemptive and judgmental purposes
- Following the 7th seal (8:1), the 7 **trumpets** are the contents of the book (5:1) = unfolding of events of end
- Would be virtually incomprehensible for original audience

Historical (*Preterist*): Revelation describes *events* that occurred *in the first century*.

- The beast of Rev 13 = Rome/Roman emperor
- The false prophet = emperor worship
- The dominant view among critical scholars today; treats Revelation like any other apocalypse
- It was written for early Christians struggling with problem of evil, to encourage perseverance under oppression
- It was not written to predict the distant future

Theopoetic (*Idealist, Symbolical*): Revelation describes *forces* and powers *at work throughout history*.

- Symbols depict God at work in the world and Satan's opposition
- Very few concrete events are predicted except God's ultimate triumph through Christ

Historical/Theopoetic (*Preterist/Symbolical*): Revelation describes *events* that occurred *in the first century* and offers hope through persecution to those who read it in the future.

- The beast of Rev 13 = Rome/Roman emperor
- The false prophet = emperor worship

- The dominant view among critical scholars today; treats Revelation like any other apocalypse
- It was written for early Christians struggling with problem of evil, to encourage perseverance under oppression.
- It was not written to predict the distant future
- Symbols depict God at work in the world and Satan's opposition.

Conclusion

The **Historical/Theopoetic** view is the only view that makes sense when one considers the audience and the events occurring in the first century. On an in-depth examination of chapter one it is undeniable that the audience is the seven churches of Asia and that the book is presented in symbolic language. Since this is the most probable interpretive method this is the approach that we will be considering in this study.

The Keys to Understanding

The book of Revelation may seem intimidating at first, but there are a few simple things one needs to both understand and remember.

Four Questions That Must be Answered:

1. What is the book?
2. Who is it written to?
3. How is it presented?
4. What is it about?

Things to remember:

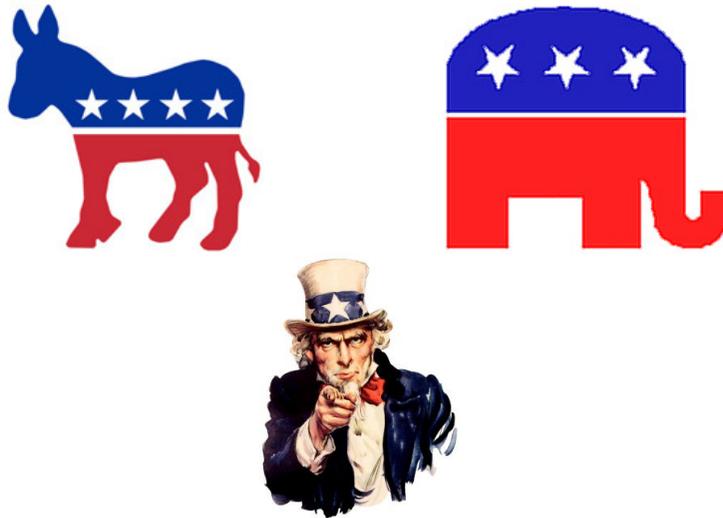
- John wrote the book based on visions he received while on the isle of Patmos.
- John was on Patmos when he received the visions
- John wrote the book after he received the visions
- John had already left Patmos when he wrote the book
- There was an indeterminate amount of time that occurred between seeing and writing.

REVELATION: A Book Of Symbols

Symbolism is used in every known language. If you can communicate at all you will eventually use symbols. You use them either as figures of speech or to identify an idea.

In the U.S. we also use symbols.

NOTE the following:



There's probably not a single one of you who does not know what most of these symbols represent, if not all of them. It's a part of our culture, politics and even our mythology.

Question: Would any of these symbols make sense to a person living in the first century? Why?

In order to understand the symbolism of Revelation we must look at it from a first century perspective.

Chapter One

1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show unto his servants, even the things which must shortly come to pass: and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John;

2 who bare witness of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, even of all things that he saw.

3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written therein: for the time is at hand.

4 John to the seven churches that 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 that are before his throne;

5 and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by his blood;

6 and he made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and Father; to him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

7 Behold, he cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over him. Even so, Amen.

8 I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

9 I John, your brother and partaker with you in tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

John describes the book as a **REVELATION**. This means that it is meant to be understood and that there are no secrets to be decoded.

The contents of the book pertain to things which "*must shortly come to pass*". In verse three it is indicated that "*the time is at hand*".

The Greek word translated as signify is (εσημανεν) ESHMANEN which is the aorist indicative active of (σημαινω) SHMAINW. It basically means, "**He showed by signs.**" Thus when He signified it, He presented it in signs.*

The book was written to "the seven churches of Asia".

Verse seven tells us that when Jesus returns a second time it will not be in secret for "*every eye shall see Him*".

In verse nine, John uses the present tense by stating "*I John, your brother and partaker with you in tribulation...*" This is an indication that the "*things which must shortly come to pass*" must occur in his lifetime. This also indicates that the events were already unfolding by the time he wrote Revelation.

There was an indeterminate amount of time between when John saw the visions and when he wrote the book. In verse nine, after using a present tense, John uses the past tense in describing where he WAS when he received the visions. This indicates that he had already left **Patmos** by the time he actually wrote the visions down.

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet

11 saying, What thou seest, write in a book and send it to the seven churches: unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamum, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And having turned I saw seven golden candlesticks;

13 and in the midst of the candlesticks one like unto a son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about at the breasts with a golden girdle.

* The Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures (1985)

14 And his head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

15 and his feet like unto burnished brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace; and his voice as the voice of many waters.

16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as one dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying, Fear not; I am the first and the last,

18 and the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.

19 Write therefore the things which thou sawest, and the things which are, and the things which shall come to pass hereafter;

20 the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks are seven churches.

John was commanded to write down the things he saw and to send them to the seven churches of Asia. As mentioned earlier there was an indeterminate amount of time between when John saw the visions and when he wrote the book.

The seven candlesticks are an indication of light. The number seven indicates that these "lights" were that of the seven churches. This is revealed in verse 20. When the word light is used in scripture in such a manner it is identified with God's word. *"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."* **Psalms 119:105.**

The symbols used to describe *"the Son of man"* are descriptions of purity: White as wool, white as snow, refined in a furnace.

His voice being compared to “many waters” reveals the power and authority of His words.

The use of the phrase “two edged sword” alludes to **Hebrews 4:12** *“...the Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any two edged sword...”* This validates the light and candlesticks as being symbolic of God’s word.

The seven stars are identified as seven angels in verse 20. The word angel is derived from the Greek word (**αγγελος**) ANGELOS, which means messenger. Angels are not always supernatural beings; they can be human messengers as well.

Chapter Two

1 To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, he that walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks:

2 I know thy works, and thy toil and patience, and that thou canst not bear evil men, and didst try them that call themselves apostles, and they are not, and didst find them false;

3 and thou hast patience and didst bear for my name `s sake, and hast not grown weary.

4 But I have this against thee, that thou didst leave thy first love.

5 Remember therefore whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works; or else I come to thee, and will move thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent.

6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. To him that overcometh, to him will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

The first message is addressed to the angel or messenger of the church at Ephesus.

The Lord is assuring them that he knows their works, toils and hardships. He also commends them for their diligence in testing the teachings to see if they were true or false.

The Lord is accusing them of leaving their first love. Since He has commended their actions He must be commenting on another aspect. **John 4:24** tells us that those that worship must do so in *Spirit and in truth*. Since their actions are commended according to truth it is the spirit in which these things were done that caused them to leave their first love.

He urges them to repent (turn away from...) or He will remove their candlestick.

As mentioned before, the candlestick is a symbolic representation of God's word. God's word is often defined as a covenant or contract. If a covenant has been violated by one of the parties involved it is justifiable for the other party to nullify the contract. To nullify simply means that the offending party will no longer receive the benefits and blessings provided by the contract. The condition set is that they repent or else.

Repentance is one of the 6 conditions laid out in the Covenant that enables people to be recipients of God's grace. (See **Romans 10:17, Hebrews 11:16, Acts 17:30, Romans 10:9, Acts 2:38 and Matthew 7:21**)

8 And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These things saith the first and the last, who was dead, and lived again:

9 I know thy tribulation, and thy poverty (but thou art rich), and the blasphemy of them that say they are Jews, and they art not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

10 Fear not the things which thou art about to suffer: behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.

11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

The second message is addressed to the angel or messenger of the church at Smyrna.

The phrase "*they say they are Jews*" is a reflection of their thinking. They presume that they are God's people. Here, the Lord says "*they are not, but are a synagogue of Satan*". We see here the beginning of denominational thinking.

"*Fear not the things which **thou** art about to suffer*". Here is yet another indication that these people are the ones to whom the prophecies apply.

The phrase **second death** may appear to be in contradiction to **Hebrews 9:27** which states; "...and inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment.

We need to take into account the word death. At its fundamental meaning it means a separation. It is appointed for man to physically die once, or to be physically separated from life, then the judgment. This final judgment determines if one is to face an eternal, spiritual separation from God. Thus the second death is a separation in a spiritual sense.

In scripture, the word death NEVER means TO CEASE TO EXIST.

12 and to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: These things saith he that hath the sharp two-edged sword:

13 I know where thou dwellest, even where Satan`s throne is; and thou holdest fast my name, and didst not deny my faith, even in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwelleth.

14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there some that hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication.

15 So hast thou also some that hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans in like manner.

16 Repent therefore; or else I come to thee quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of my mouth.

17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. To him that overcometh, to him will I give of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knoweth but he that receiveth it.

The third message is addressed to the angel or messenger of the church at Pergamum.

Once again, the phrase "*two edged sword*" is a reference to God's word.

But I have a few things against you... Here the Lord mentions individuals and doctrines that the Christians at Pergamum are practicing and teaching. He states that these people and practices are causing people to stumble, in other words, they are causing division. He goes on to describe this division as "FORNICATION".

The use of the phrase *to commit fornication* reflects upon the churches relationship with God. This relationship is often described as that of a marriage. Since the act of adultery is just cause for ending a physical marriage, the Lord makes it known that spiritual adultery or fornication is just cause for ending this relationship.

Repentance is one of the 6 conditions laid out in the Covenant that enables people to be recipients of God's grace. (See **Romans 10:17, Hebrews 11:16, Acts 17:30, Romans 10:9, Acts 2:38 and Matthew 7:21**)

18 And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet are like unto burnished brass:

19 I know thy works, and thy love and faith and ministry and patience, and that thy last works are more than the first.

20 But I have this against thee, that thou sufferest the woman Jezebel, who calleth herself a prophetess; and she teacheth and seduceth my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols.

21 And I gave her time that she should repent; and she willeth not to repent of her fornication.

22 Behold, I cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of her works.

23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he that searcheth

the reins and hearts: and I will give unto each one of you according to your works.

24 But to you I say, to the rest that are in Thyatira, as many as have not this teaching, who know not the deep things of Satan, as they are wont to say; I cast upon you none other burden.

25 Nevertheless that which ye have, hold fast till I come.

26 And he that overcometh, and he that keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give authority over the nations:

27 and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to shivers; as I also have received of my Father:

28 and I will give him the morning star.

29 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

The fourth message is addressed to the angel or messenger of the church at Thyatira.

...thou sufferest the woman Jezebel. Who calleth herself a prophetess... From all indications, the congregation at Thyatira had been led astray due to a violation of **1st Timothy 2:11, 12** which reads; *Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness.*

This individual, who symbolically is referred to as **Jezebel**, had taken control of the congregation and set herself up as the physical leader/pastor of that flock. From all indications the men of the congregation not only allowed this to happen but also followed her seductive overthrow.

“...to eat things sacrificed to idols...” is the classic reference to strife and division. In **1st Corinthians 8:13** Paul gives this warning; *Wherefore, if meat causeth my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh for evermore, that I cause not my brother to stumble.*

I know thy works, and thy love and faith and ministry and patience, and that thy last works are more than the first. There is no indication that the teachings in, and of themselves were false: It is the fact that a woman has taken control, and assumed a position of authority that has been forbidden by God, that resulted in sin.

The words fornication and adultery are used in the spiritual sense. The churches relationship with God is often described as that of a marriage. Spiritual adultery or fornication is just cause for ending this relationship.

The reference to "*her children*" is directed at those who follow her.

Chapter Three

1 And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars: I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and thou art dead.

2 Be thou watchful, and establish the things that remain, which were ready to die: for I have found no works of thine perfected before my God.

3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and didst hear; and keep it, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

4 But thou hast a few names in Sardis that did not defile their garments: and they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy.

5 He that overcometh shall thus be arrayed in white garments; and I will in no wise blot his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

6 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

The fifth message is addressed to the angel or messenger of the church at Sardis.

In contrast to the church at Ephesus, who had left their first love due to the wrong spirit, the church at Sardis was corrupt in their practice of doctrine as conforming to truth. This is clearly identified in verse two when the statement is made; "*I have found no works of thine perfected before my God*".

The word perfected is translated from a form of the Greek word (το τελιον) TOTALION, which is properly translated as complete.

The Lord calls them to remember the true gospel they have heard. Not only to keep it but to repent for their failure to do so in the past.

In verse four the Lord comments on a few who refused to be led astray into the realm of false doctrine and practices. The comment "*they did not defile their garments*" is an indication of how serious this issue of disobedience is.

7 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and none shall shut, and that shutteth and none openeth:

8 I know thy works (behold, I have set before thee a door opened, which none can shut), that thou hast a little power, and didst keep my word, and didst not deny my name.

9 Behold, I give of the synagogue of Satan, of them that say they are Jews, and they are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

10 Because thou didst keep the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

11 I come quickly: hold fast that which thou hast, that no one take thy crown.

12 He that overcometh, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out thence no more: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and mine own new name.

13 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

The sixth message is addressed to the angel or messenger of the church at Philadelphia

"*I know thy works*", "*Thou didst keep my word*" and "*Didst not deny my name*" are indications that the Lord was pleased with both their practice and their faith.

The phrase "*them that they say they are Jews*" is a reflection of denominational thinking. They presume that they are God's people. Here, the Lord calls them "*a synagogue of Satan*". This kind of division is forbidden by scripture.

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

I Corinthians 1:10ff

"*Hold fast that which thou hast*" the Lord is admonishing them on every level to keep up the good fight.

From all indications, the church at Philadelphia was keeping God's word in faith and practice, spirit and truth. This admonition shows the serious nature of keeping God's word.

"*The new Jerusalem which cometh down out of heaven*" is present tense, not future tense. It is a reference to His church (His kingdom) which is not of this earth and is continually '*coming down*'. It is not a prophecy of some kind of future kingdom.

14 And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God:

15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou were cold or hot.

16 So because thou art lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spew thee out of my mouth.

17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and have gotten riches, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art the wretched one and miserable and poor and blind and naked:

18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold refined by fire, that thou mayest become rich; and white garments, that thou mayest clothe thyself, and that the shame of thy nakedness be not made manifest; and eyesalve to anoint thine eyes, that thou mayest see.

19 As many as I love, I reprove and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

21 He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with my Father in his throne.

22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

The seventh message is addressed to the angel or messenger of the church at Laodicea.

"...thou are neither hot nor cold..." is a reference to their lazy nature. The mindset of doing just enough to get by is prevalent at this church.

"I will spew you out of my mouth" literally means *'to vomit'*. The Lord is basically saying that this churches enthusiasm for mere mediocrity is making Him sick.

"I am rich...and have need of nothing" is an indication that they are satisfied with mediocrity.

In verse eighteen the Lord let's them know, in no uncertain terms, that true riches are found in Him.

In verse nineteen the Lord encourages them to be zealous and to repent.

Chapter Four

1 After these things I saw, and behold, a door opened in heaven, and the first voice that I heard, a voice as of a trumpet speaking with me, one saying, Come up hither, and I will show thee the things which must come to pass hereafter.

2 Straightway I was in the Spirit: and behold, there was a throne set in heaven, and one sitting upon the throne;

3 and he that sat was to look upon like a jasper stone and a sardius: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, like an emerald to look upon.

4 And round about the throne were four and twenty thrones: and upon the thrones I saw four and twenty elders sitting, arrayed in white garments; and on their heads crowns of gold.

5 And out of the throne proceed lightnings and voices and thunders. And there was seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

6 and before the throne, as it were a sea of glass like a crystal; and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, four living creatures full of eyes before and behind.

"After these things" is a literary device for presenting the visions and their sequence. John is beginning his record of the visions that show God's deliverance of His people from the peril of persecution that they were to face in the near future.

"Come up hither, and I will show thee the things which must come to pass hereafter"—see it from my (God's) point of view, from the throne in heaven (3:21). John is here "in the Spirit" (1:10).

Jasper stone is pure white and reflects holiness and majesty. **Sardius** is blood red and reflects righteousness. The rainbow is a symbol of hope and mercy (**Gen. 9:12-17**). **Emerald** is green, a living color.

Four and twenty elders in white (pure) garments with crowns of gold (2:10; **James 1:12**).

The tribes of Israel and the apostles number twelve. $12 \times 2 = 24$.

The seven lamps of fire are the seven spirits of God. This is not to be confused with the seven candles mentioned in **1:12**

Lightning and thunder show the power of God (**Ex. 19:16**).

A crystal sea is majestic. It separates God from people. Note that this sea is gone in **21:1**.

7 And the first creature was like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face as of a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle.

8 and the four living creatures, having each one of them six wings, are full of eyes round about and within: and they have no rest day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come.

9 And when the living creatures shall give glory and honor and thanks to him that sitteth on the throne, to him that liveth for ever and ever,

10 the four and twenty elders shall fall down before him that sitteth on the throne, and shall worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and shall cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

11 Worthy art thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power: for thou didst create all things, and because of thy will they were, and were created.

The four living creatures exhibit many of the attributes of God. A lion is noble; a bull has great strength; a man has intelligence; and an eagle is swift.

The four creatures are heavenly beings (**Ezek. 1:6-10**) with six wings (like the seraphim of **Isa. 6::2-3**). They are full of eyes and see around

and within (**Prov. 15:3**). They continually speak of God's Holiness, power and eternity.

The purpose of the living creatures is to *give glory and honor and thanks to him that sitteth on the throne.*

The four and twenty elders fall down and worship God, casting their crowns before the throne (**1Cor. 4:7**).

God is worthy of glory, honor, and power, because He is the creator of all things. *Because of Thy will they were, and were created.*

Chapter Five

1 And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back, close sealed with seven seals.

2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a great voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?

3 And no one in the heaven, or on the earth, or under the earth, was able to open the book, or to look thereon.

4 And I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open the book, or to look thereon:

5 and one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not; behold, the Lion that is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath overcome to open the book and the seven seals thereof.

6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth.

7 And he came, and he taketh it out of the right hand of him that sat on the throne.

8 And when he had taken the book, the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

9 And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy art thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou was slain, and didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation,

10 and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon earth.

The book in the right hand of Him on the throne has seven seals. The book had writings on the inside and on the back. What is this book? A book of justice, destiny and lamentation (**Ezek. 2:9-10**).

And no one in heaven, or on the earth, or under the earth, was able to open the book, or to look into it.

The Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals. Jesus is the Lion (**Gen. 49:9-10**) and the Root (**Isa. 11:1,10; Rom. 15:12**). He can open what no one else can.

"...and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon earth." Again, the kingdom is a present reality, not a future hope. The song speaks of the making of the kingdom as a past event.

Since Christians are priests (**1 Pet. 2:5,9**), then the kingdom is a present reality. This fulfills the prophecy of John the Baptist, Jesus, the Twelve and the Seventy (**Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; Luke 10:1, 7**), that the kingdom of heaven was "at hand" or has "come near."

If the kingdom of heaven was not a reality in the 1st century, why would the heavenly host, at this time, speak of it in the present tense?

The church is the kingdom (**Col. 1:13**).

You cannot spend the same dollar twice. The blood of Jesus which purchased the church (**Acts 20:28**) also purchased the kingdom (**Rev. 5:9-10**).

11 And I saw, and I heard a voice of many angels round about the throne and 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 great voice, Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might and honor, and glory, and blessing.

13 And every created thing which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the

sea, and all things are in them, heard I saying, Unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honor, and the glory, and the dominion, for ever and ever.

14 And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the elders fell down and worshipped.

On the Lord's side, around the throne, are ten thousands of ten thousands and thousands of thousands of angels. The persecuted Christians of Asia Minor, overwhelmed by the military power of Rome, needed to know that they were not alone. God's host (army) is greater than any army of Rome.

"Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might and honor, and glory, and blessing." The slain Lamb is worthy to receive all these, and the slaying of innocent Christians does not rob them of the blessings Christ gives to His own.

Verse thirteen denotes the idea of intelligent design. Nothing exists that was not created by God. Their very existence is proof of creation and symbolically speaks forth... *"To Him who sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and the dominion forever and ever."*

Chapter Six

1 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, Come.

2 And I saw, and behold, a white horse, and he that sat thereon had a bow; and there was given unto him a crown: and he came forth conquering, and to conquer.

3 And when he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, Come.

4 And another horse came forth, a red horse: and to him that sat thereon it was given to take peace from the earth, and that they should slay one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

5 And when he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, Come. And I saw, and behold, a black horse; and he that sat thereon had a balance in his hand.

6 And I heard as it were a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, A measure of wheat for a shilling, and three measures of barley for a shilling; and the oil and the wine hurt thou not.

7 And when he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, Come.

8 And I saw, and behold, a pale horse: and he that sat upon him, his name was Death; and Hades followed with him. And there was given unto them authority over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with famine, and with death, and by the wild beasts of the earth.

Horses are generally mentioned in Scripture in connection with the concepts of strength, terror, warfare and conquest (Isa. 30:16; 31:1; Job 39:22-28).

White Horse: Symbolizes an outside conquest. A rider with a bow and crown is not a picture of a Roman soldier. Roman soldiers did not carry a bow nor wear a crown.

Red Horse: Signifies war; sword is made to draw blood, to slaughter. He will take peace from the earth.

Black Horse: Famine usually follows war. Luxuries would flow freely; Luxuries but no food.

Pale Horse: Death sat on it, followed by Hades. Hades is a reference to the grave

“They” were granted authority over one fourth of the earth to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth. The plural used indicates an army or multitude of persecutors.

Each horse symbolizes a course of events.

- **There is an outside conquest by a rival power.***
- **This is followed by all out war.**
- **The hardships that follow war such as famine.**
- **Death and the grave for those who did not survive.**

9 And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

10 and they cried with a great voice, saying, How long, O Master, the holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

11 And there was given them to each one a white robe; and it was said unto them, that they should

* There were several military insurrections and civil wars that occurred during the last half of the first century. A short-lived rebellion in 89^{AD} was led by the German general **Antonius Saturninus**. There were also several Jewish rebellions within this time frame not to mention the total destruction of Jerusalem in 70^{AD}.

rest yet for a little time, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, who should be killed even as they were, should have fulfilled their course.

12 And I saw when he opened the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the whole moon became as blood;

13 and the stars of the heaven fell unto the earth, as a fig tree casteth her unripe figs when she is shaken of a great wind.

14 And the heaven was removed as a scroll when it is rolled up; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

15 And the kings of the earth, and the princes, and the chief captains, and the rich, and the strong, and every bondman and freeman, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains;

16 and they say to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

17 for the great day of their wrath is come; and who is able to stand?

Martyred Saints (9-11): These are the same people mentioned in 1:9; they were persecuted because of "the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ" (1:2). John was on the island of Patmos when the cycle of events began to unfold therefore their fulfillment was already in progress at the final writing of the book

Judgment against sin is an essential part of the righteousness of God (**Rom. 12:19**).

God is waiting for a little while longer, "*until their fellow servants also and their brethren who should be killed even as they were, should have fulfilled their course.*"

They are given a white robe or purity and salvation (3:5). Be patient; God acts in His time.

The Earthquake and Cataclysm: The people will see the power of God and His wrath and be afraid; no one will be able to stand.

This is the same language used in **Matthew 24:7** when Jesus was speaking of the total destruction of Jerusalem. In Matthew Jesus refers to these calamities as *the beginnings of birth pains*. **KJV**

Great men hid themselves in caves, crying out, "*Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come; and who is able to stand?*"

This is the same language used in **Luke 23:28-30**. Here Jesus foretold the destruction of Jerusalem.

Chapter Seven

1 After his I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that no wind should blow on the earth, or on the sea, or upon any tree.

2 And I saw another angel ascend from the sunrising, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a great voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3 saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we shall have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.

4 And I heard the number of them that were sealed, a hundred and forty and four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the children of Israel:

5 Of the tribe of Judah were sealed twelve thousand: Of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand;

6 Of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand;

7 Of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand;

8 Of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.

God holds His angels back from harming those who have His seal (protective, ownership) on their foreheads. This does not indicate a physical mark on their foreheads but a symbolic seal of commitment. This is similar to what happened during the ten plagues of Exodus including the Passover (Ex. 8:22; 9:4; 12:7-13).

And I heard the number of them that were sealed, a hundred and forty and four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the children of Israel.”
This indicates the redeemed of the nations.

The church is spiritual Israel (Rom. 9:6-8; 10:12; Gal. 3:26-29).

John makes no distinction between Jewish and Gentile Christians in the book of Revelation. God is no respecter of persons (**Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:6-11**).

Numerical symbolism is often used in prophesy:

- 12 = the people of God
- 1000 = completeness.
- The enumeration of the tribes and the multiples are to emphasize God's protection of every single true believer.

9 After these things I saw, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands;

10 and they cry with a great voice, saying, Salvation unto our God who sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb.

11 And all the angels were standing round about the throne, and about the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

12 saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, These that are arrayed in white robes, who are they, and whence came they?

14 And I say unto him, My lord, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they that come of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

15 Therefore are they before the throne of God; and they serve him day and night in his temple: and he

that sitteth on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them.

16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat:

17 for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.

After these things indicates the beginning of a new vision.

The cry is "Salvation" to God and the Lamb, a shout of praise, gratitude and victory.

Angels and elders worship God. *Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.*

Amen means, "Let it be so."

The "great tribulation" is the tribulation they are already facing (1:2, 9; 2:10, 13; 6:9-11).

They are now before the throne of God. This is a symbolic representation of the physical act of worship.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat: for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.

This is in keeping with the promise given in **Matthew 6:33**. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

Chapter Eight

1 And when he opened the seventh seal, there followed a silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

2 And I saw the seven angels that stand before God; and there were given unto them seven trumpets.

3 And another angel came and stood over the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should add it unto the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand.

5 And the angel taketh the censer; and he filled it with the fire of the altar, and cast it upon the earth: and there followed thunders, and voices, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

6 And the seven angels that had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

7 And the first sounded, and there followed hail and fire, mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of the earth was burnt up, and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

8 And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;

9 and there died the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, even they that had life; and the third part of the ships was destroyed.

The First Trumpet (8:7): Hail and fire mixed with blood, burns a third of the earth, trees, and all green grass

The seven churches of Asia were located in, what is now, modern Turkey.

Turkey is located on a highly active Eurasian Geological Plate, which has caused numerous big scale earthquakes throughout history.*

The Second Trumpet (8:8-9): A volcano turns sea into blood, destroying one third of the sea life and one third of the ships.

Turkey's varied landscapes are the product of complex earth movements that have shaped the region over thousands of years and still manifest themselves in fairly frequent earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.*

The earliest earthquake records date back to 411 B.C. There have been nearly 100 earthquakes with magnitudes 7.0 or greater in Turkey. Also 14 earthquakes with casualties more than 10,000 have occurred since 342 A.D.*

This vision predicts a series of naturally occurring seismic catastrophes. Even though naturally occurring, these events were the results of God's judgment.

10 And the third angel sounded, and there fell from heaven a great star, burning as a torch, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of the waters;

11 and the name of the star is called Wormwood; and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

12 And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; that the third part of them should be darkened, and the day should not shine for the third part of it, and the night in like manner.

13 And I saw, and I heard an eagle, flying in mid heaven, saying with a great voice, Woe, woe, woe,

* *Brief Seismic History of Turkey.* University of South California, Department of Civil Engineering.

for them that dwell on the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, who are yet to sound.

The Third Trumpet (8:10-11): A great star, named Wormwood, fell from heaven and turned a third of the rivers and springs into bitter water; and many died.

This is an area of intense seismic activity, which is related to the east-west trending graben complexes in the Aegean region.*

Wormwood is a genus of toxic plants. The use of this symbolizes the contamination of fresh water cause by earthquakes and volcanic eruptions in the area of Turkey.

The Fourth Trumpet (8:12-13): God smote a third of the sun, stars and moon, so that darkness fell on them and on 1/3 of the day.

Turkey ranks high among the countries, which have suffered significant losses of life and property due to earthquakes.*

Three Woes. *And I saw, and I heard an eagle, flying in mid heaven, saying with a great voice, Woe, woe, woe, for them that dwell on the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, who are yet to sound.* This indicates that the series of events is just beginning.

* *Brief Seismic History of Turkey.* University of South California, Department of Civil Engineering.

Chapter Nine

1 And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven fallen unto the earth: and there was given to him the key of the pit of the abyss.

2 And he opened the pit of the abyss; and there went up a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

3 And out of the smoke came forth locusts upon the earth; and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

4 And it was said unto them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only such men as have not the seal of God on their foreheads.

5 And it was given them that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when it striketh a man.

6 And in those days men shall seek death, and shall in no wise find it; and they shall desire to die, and death fleeth from them.

7 And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared for war; and upon their heads as it were crowns like unto gold, and their faces were as men`s faces.

8 And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as teeth of lions.

9 And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to war.

10 And they have tails like unto scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt men five months.

11 They have over them as king the angel of the abyss: his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek tongue he hath the name Apollyon.

12 The first Woe is past: behold, there come yet two Woës hereafter.

The Fifth Trumpet sounds.

Locusts are symbolically used to describe invading armies.

The power of a scorpion is its ability to kill creatures many times its size. This symbolizes that the invader was armed in such a way that it could defeat the multitudes despite being outnumbered by them.

The seal of God: Those who were faithful and true Christians. They were not immediately killed but were taken captive and tortured for a period of time.

Locusts, Horses and Men: All of these are symbols of war and pestilence.

The word crown is used here in a different manner than in 6:2. Here it symbolizes the authority that an earthly emperor (angel) has given to his military.

The angel of the abyss: Angel means messenger. This could refer to a king, emperor or commanding general.

The abyss or Abaddon refer to the place of torment.

Apollyon means destroyer.

This invasion is clearly in retaliation to the events that occurred in 6:1-8.

The first woe is past: This invasion sets in motion another series of events. *"behold there come yet two more woës hereafter."*

13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the horns of the golden altar which is before God,

14 one saying to the sixth angel that had one trumpet, Loose the four angels that are bound at the great river Euphrates.

15 And the four angels were loosed, that had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, that they should kill the third part of men.

16 And the number of the armies of the horsemen was twice ten thousand times ten thousand: I heard the number of them.

17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates as of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone: and the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceedeth fire and smoke and brimstone.

18 By these three plagues was the third part of men killed, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone, which proceeded out of their mouths.

19 For the power of the horses is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails are like unto serpents, and have heads; and with them they hurt.

20 And the rest of mankind, who were not killed with these plagues, repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and the idols of gold, and of silver, and of brass, and of stone, and of wood; which can neither see, nor hear, nor walk:

21 and they repented not of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

The Sixth Trumpet sounds.

The four angels who were bound at the great river Euphrates are released. They had prepared for the day and hour and were to kill one third of mankind.

An army of horsemen numbering 200 million is devastating. *The riders had breastplates as of fire and the smoke and of brimstone; and the heads of the horses are like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceedeth fire and smoke and brimstone.* These symbolic descriptions indicate their power, ferociousness and bloodlust.

The "*great river Euphrates*" indicates location and limitations of destruction. This was not a worldwide event but a local one.

Three plagues came from their mouths: fire, smoke and brimstone, which killed a third of mankind. Hyacinth is a dark purple or blue color somewhat like the smoke produced by brimstone and sulfur.

The tails are like serpents; indicates the fact that they are deadly.

Chapter Ten

1 And I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, arrayed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire;

2 and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left upon the earth;

3 and he cried with a great voice, as a lion roareth: and when he cried, the seven thunders uttered their voices.

4 And when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying, Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.

5 And the angel that I saw standing upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his right hand to heaven,

6 and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created the heaven and the things that are therein, and the earth and the things that are therein, and the sea and the things that are therein, that there shall be delay no longer:

7 but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then is finished they mystery of God, according to the good tidings which he declared to his servants the prophets.

8 And the voice which I heard from heaven, I heard it again speaking with me, and saying, Go, take the book which is open in the hand of the angel that standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.

9 And I went unto the angel, saying unto him that he should give me the little book. And he saith unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but in thy mouth it shall be sweet as honey.

10 And I took the little book out of the angel`s hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and when I had eaten it, my belly was made bitter.

11 And they say unto me, Thou must prophesy again over many peoples and nations and tongues and kings.

A glorious and strong angel who has a book in his hand speaks with authority.

Seven thunders uttered their voices. Instead of revealing what the thunders are saying, John is charged to seal up the things which the seven thunders have said and "*write them not.*" Sealing means the case is closed and **will not** be made known.

Man will never know all of God's ways (**Deut. 29:29**). *The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God; but the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.*

"In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then is finished the mystery of God, as He preached to His servants the prophets." The finished mystery of God, according to other scripture, is not speaking of the end time, because the third woe is yet to come.

Peter notes that the prophets wanted to know of Christ and the salvation through Him (**1 Pet. 1:10-12**).

It is a joy to receive revelation from God, but hard sayings can be bitter to deliver. John's prophecy was to affect many "peoples and nations and tongues and kings."

Chapter Eleven

1 And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and one said, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

2 And the court which is without the temple leave without, and measure it not; for it hath been given unto the nations: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.

3 And I will give unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

4 These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks, standing before the Lord of the earth.

5 And if any man desireth to hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies; and if any man shall desire to hurt them, in this manner must he be killed.

6 These have the power to shut the heaven, that it rain not during the days of their prophecy: and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they shall desire.

7 And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that cometh up out of the abyss shall make war with them, and overcome them, and kill them.

8 And their dead bodies lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified.

9 And from among the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations do men look upon their dead bodies three days and a half, and suffer not their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb.

10 And they that dwell on the earth rejoice over them, and make merry; and they shall send gifts

one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwell on the earth.

The Jerusalem temple was destroyed in 70_{AD}. Regardless of the time when John wrote Revelation, it appears that he received the vision before 70_{AD}.

The Lord knows those who belong to Him (2 Tim. 2:19).

The period of 42 months = 1260 days = 3½ years, an incomplete and uncertain period of time.

The holy city is trampled by the Gentiles. This is exactly what happened in 70_{AD}.

Two witnesses prophesy clothed in sackcloth, displaying grief and repentance (**Jonah 3:5-6**). Two witnesses make a strong case (**Eccl. 9:4; Matt. 18:16**).

Two witnesses; this reference is to true prophets as opposed to false ones.

They have remarkable success, see God's power in miracles, and have God's protection

The beast from the abyss will overcome and kill them. Their bodies will be left unburied in the streets for 3½ days.

John 16:20 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.* Jesus spoke these words to comfort them and to tell them that he will be resurrected. Here the beast thinks he has triumphed, and the people rejoice.

The one thing we need to remember is that there was an indeterminate amount of time between when John saw the visions and when he wrote the book.

11 And after the three days and a half the breath of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them that beheld them.

12 And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they went up into heaven in the cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

13 And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell; and there were killed in the earthquake seven thousand persons: and the rest were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

14 The second Woe is past: behold, the third Woe cometh quickly.

15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there followed great voices in heaven, and they said, The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever.

16 And the four and twenty elders, who sit before God on their thrones, fell upon their faces and worshipped God,

17 saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who art and who wast; because thou hast taken thy great power, and didst reign.

18 And the nations were wroth, and thy wrath came, and the time of the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear thy name, the small and the great; and to destroy them that destroy the earth.

19 And there was opened the temple of God that is in heaven; and there was seen in his temple the ark of his covenant; and there followed lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and great hail.

The Seventh Trumpet signals the triumph of the Kingdom of God and of "His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever".

This is a picture of the triumph of Christ and his church. Christ began to reign over his kingdom (Col. 1:12-13) when he arose from the dead. He began reigning when he sat on David's throne (Acts 2:30-33).

As long as the Levitical Priesthood continued to offer sacrifices according to the Law, Christ's kingship was not fully recognized.

The Hebrew writer addressed the struggle many Jewish Christians had (**Heb. 13:10-14**). For this reason, the holy city had to be trampled and the temple destroyed. This is exactly what happened in 70^{AD}.

The kingdom of Christ now stands alone where once had stood the physical, worldly kingdom of the physical temple. The kingdom of Christ is not a physical kingdom.

The ark is revealed to comfort the people; God has not forgotten His covenant (Heb. 8:10-12). God's spiritual house, the church continues. It is an open temple, so that all men may approach God through Jesus Christ (Heb. 9:8-9; 10:20).

The open veil allows the ark of the covenant to be clearly visible, reminding the church that God's promises are secure. This is an indication that there is no more separation.

And there was opened the temple of God that is in heaven. Jesus said that His kingdom was not of this earth.

Chapter Twelve

1 And a great sign was seen in heaven: a woman arrayed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars;

2 and she was the child; and she crieth out, travailing in birth, and in pain to be delivered.

3 And there was seen another sign in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads seven diadems.

4 And his tail draweth the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon standeth before the woman that is about to be delivered, that when she is delivered he may devour her child.

5 And she was delivered of a son, a man child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and unto his throne.

6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that there they may nourish her a thousand two hundred and threescore days.

7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels going forth to war with the dragon; and the dragon warred and his angels;

8 And they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven.

9 And the great dragon was cast down, the old serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.

Before John presents the next prophecy he elaborates on the events that led up to it.

Satan's Challenge against the Radiant Woman. The Radiant Woman represents God's redeemed people

"...and she was the child; and she crieth out, travailing in birth, and in pain to be delivered." In Matthew Jesus refers to *"the beginnings of birth pains."* **Matthew 24:8 KJV.** This is the growth cycle of a new church (i.e. growing pains.)

The dragon is Satan.

- Horns = powers;
- heads = kings.
- Diadems are kingly crowns.

Satan means "accuser." Devil means "evil one," "deceiver."

"And the great dragon was cast down," Satan's greatest weapon was the fear of death. This fear was defeated when Christ was resurrected.

When Christ was resurrected he set in motion the founding of a kingdom. This came to pass in the second chapter of Acts.

Although Satan has been defeated and his fate sealed, he still roams the earth seeking whom he may devour.

10 And I heard a great voice in heaven, saying, Now is come the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accuseth them before our God day and night.

11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life even unto death.

12 Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe for the earth and for the sea: because the devil is gone down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time.

13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman that brought forth the man child.

14 And there were given to the woman the two wings of the great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness unto her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

15 And the serpent cast out of his mouth after the woman water as a river, that he might cause her to be carried away by the stream.

16 And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the river which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

17 And the dragon waxed wroth with the woman, and went away to make war with the rest of her seed, that keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus:

Satan always loses. God protects His children.

Christ is the victor through His blood.

When has the kingdom come? It came when the salvation and the power came (**Matt.28:18-20; Eph. 1:20-23**).

Jesus overcame at the cross and through the preaching of the Word. Notice **John 12:31-32; Acts 26:18; Heb. 2:14; James 4:7, 8; 1 John 3:8-9**.

After God saves the woman (the redeemed), Satan turns his wrath upon her seed (the church).

Chapter Thirteen

1 and he stood upon the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns, and seven heads, and on his horns ten diadems, and upon his heads names of blasphemy.

2 And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his throne, and great authority.

3 And I saw one of his heads as though it had been smitten unto death; and his death-stroke was healed: and the whole earth wondered after the beast;

4 and they worshipped the dragon, because he gave his authority unto the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? And who is able to war with him?

5 and there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and there was given to him authority to continue forty and two months.

6 And he opened his mouth for blasphemies against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, even them that dwell in the heaven.

7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and there was given to him authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation.

8 And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, every one whose name hath not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that hath been slain.

9 If any man hath an ear, let him hear.

10 If any man is for captivity, into captivity he goeth: if any man shall kill with the sword, with the

sword must he be killed. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

The Beast of the Sea was powerful; his throne comes from the dragon (Mt. 4:8-9) *Again, the devil taketh him unto an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and he said unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.* This signifies the military might of the pagan Roman Empire.

The beast recovers from what appears to be a death-stroke; The suicide of Nero resulted in several internal civil wars almost tearing the empire apart.

The beast is a blasphemer. *and there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and there was given to him authority to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth for blasphemies against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, even them that dwell in the heaven.* The beast is arrogant and boastful.

The beast is allowed to make war and to rule over all the earth; he has freedom within limits.

11 And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like unto lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

12 And he exerciseth all the authority of the first beast in his sight. And he maketh the earth and them dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose death-stroke was healed.

13 And he doeth great signs, that he should even make fire to come down out of heaven upon the earth in the sight of men.

14 And he deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by reason of the signs which it was given him to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast who hath the stroke of the sword and lived.

15 And it was given unto him to give breath to it, even to the image to the breast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as should not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

16 And he causeth all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the bond, that there be given them a mark on their right hand, or upon their forehead;

17 and that no man should be able to buy or to sell, save he that hath the mark, even the name of the beast or the number of his name.

18 Here is wisdom. He that hath understanding, let him count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man: and his number is Six hundred and sixty and six.

The second beast represents one carrying the authority in the absence of the first beast.

"And it was given unto him to give breath to it, even to the image to the breast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as should not worship the image of the beast should be killed". The emperor appointed an official body known as the ***praefectus urbi*** for the enforcing of worship in each town.*

Another group, called the ***concilia***, had the primary duty to build images of the emperor, altars for his worship. They forced the people to worship the emperor and punished all who refused.*

Without the mark, they are not able to buy or sell. Those who refused to burn incense to the royal image were boycotted commercially.

The number "**666**" is translated in some versions as "the number of a man". It is correctly translated "the number is that of man" or "mankind." The **NIV** has "it is man's number" and the **RSV** says, "It is a human number." Despite all his power he is still just a man. As a man he cannot win against God.

* William Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities* (1870).

* Bunson, Matthew. *Encyclopedia of the Roman Empire*. 1994

The name, the mark and the number are three different things.

- **Name** = Ruling Empire (ROME)
- **Mark** = commercial documentation to buy and sell based on willingness to worship the emperor.
- **Number**= 666 = describing as being just a human.

Chapter Fourteen

1 And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on the mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his name, and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads.

2 And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and the voice which I heard was as the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

3 and they sing as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders: and no man could learn the song save the hundred and forty and four thousand, even they that had been purchased out of the earth.

4 These are they that were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were purchased from among men, to be the firstfruits unto God and unto the Lamb.

5 And in their mouth was found no lie: they are without blemish.

6 And I saw another angel flying in mid heaven, having eternal good tidings to proclaim unto them that dwell on the earth, and unto every nation and tribe and tongue and people;

7 and he saith with a great voice, Fear God, and give him glory; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made the heaven and the earth and sea and fountains of waters.

8 And another, a second angel, followed, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, that hath made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

9 And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a great voice, If any man worshippeth the

beast and his image, and receiveth a mark on his forehead, or upon his hand,

10 he also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of his anger; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

The Lamb and the 144,000 are singing an unknown song. They were purchased from the earth by the blood of Christ. They are pure and unblemished. These are the redeemed.

They have the name of the Father on their foreheads. This symbolically means that they follow the Lamb wherever He goes.

The **First Angel** proclaims good tidings: "Fear God and give Him glory."

The **Second Angel**: "*Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!*" The outcome is announced; Rome will fall because she has made all the nations drink "*the wine of the passion of her immorality.*" They forced emperor worship.

The **Third Angel** proclaims eternal torment for beast worshippers. Both sides will suffer losses during these events. Those who are faithful to the Lord will receive peace. Those who were not, eternal punishment.

The "**Mark of the Beast**" is the means by which those who worship the image of the emperor are identified. This mark is a sign of their deception by the false prophet.

Those who were faithful to Jesus Christ did not have this mark.

11 and the smoke of their torment goeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, they that worship the beast and his image, and whoso receiveth the mark of his name.

12 Here is the patience of the saints, they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

13 And I heard the voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from

henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them.

14 And I saw, and behold, a white cloud; and on the cloud I saw one sitting like unto a son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand sharp sickle.

15 And another angel came out from the temple, crying with a great voice to him that sat on the cloud, Send forth thy sickle, and reap: for the hour to reap is come; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

16 And he that sat on the cloud cast his sickle upon the earth; and the earth was reaped.

17 Another angel came out from the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

18 And another angel came out from the altar, he that hath power over fire; and he called with a great voice to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Send forth thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.

19 And the angel cast his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vintage of the earth, and cast it into the winepress, the great winepress, of the wrath of God.

20 And the winepresses are trodden without the city, and there came out blood from the winepress, even unto the bridles of the horses, as far as a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.

Jesus is sitting on a white cloud with a golden crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand.

Another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, *Send forth thy sickle, and reap: for the hour to reap is come; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.* This is very similar to **Matthew 6:37, 38** when Jesus said "*The harvest indeed is plenteous,*

but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest." The angels mentioned may very well be such laborers.

Being laborers in the harvest is the ongoing mission of the church. Even in times of tribulation the harvest is ripe.

Another angel had a sickle. He was told by the angel who has power over fire to gather clusters from the vine and throw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God.

The wrath of God represents his judgment.

Angel means messenger. This messenger is not necessarily a supernatural being.

The use of the word blood is symbolic. It more often represents life not death. There is no definite indication that these statements are negative.

The use of wine indicates a covenant since our covenant with Christ is symbolized by the "*fruit of the vine*" which represents His blood. This may very well represent the redeemed.

Chapter Fifteen

1 And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having seven plagues, which are the last, for in them is finished the wrath of God.

2 And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that come off victorious from the beast, and from his image, and from the number of his name, standing by the sea of glass, having harps of God.

3 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty; righteous and true are thy ways, thou King of the ages.

4 Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy; for all the nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy righteous acts have been made manifest.

5 And after these things I saw, and the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened:

6 and there came out from the temple the seven angels that had the seven plagues, arrayed with precious stone, pure and bright, and girt about their breasts with golden girdles.

7 And one of the four living creatures gave unto the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.

8 And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and none was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels should be finished.

Seven angels appear with seven plagues, which are the last, because in them the wrath of God is finished. This does not mean that they are the

last plagues ever to happen, but they are the last plagues to be poured out on the Empire.

Hebrews 12:29 seems to summarize chapters 15 and 16, telling us "*our God is a consuming fire.*"

The appearance of the seven angels is the third sign specifically identified in the book, the woman and the dragon being the others (cf. 12:1, 3).

The sea of glass is first mentioned in 4:6 and stands before the throne. Here it is mingled with fire. The sea of glass speaks to the holiness of God and how He is separated from others.

Bowls (15:7) were vessels used in the Temple for the ministry of offerings and incense (Rev. 5:8). Other large banquet bowls were used for wine (Amos 6:6); and ritual bowls were used to collect the blood of sacrifices (Ex. 27:3). Golden bowls were often associated with the temple services (1 Kings 7:50; 2 Kings 12:13; 25:15).

The smoke which filled the temple shows the solemnity of the situation.

Smoke filled the temple on several occasions in the OT (cf. Ex. 40:34ff; 1 Kings 8:10-11; 2 Chron. 5:13-14; Isa. 6:4; Ezek. 11:23; 44:4). This indicates God's special presences and that He is the source of the judgments. His presence in the temple allows for the presence of no one else (Isa. 6:4; Hab. 2:20).

This vision reveals the events that led up to the fulfillment of God's work.

Chapter Sixteen

1 And I heard a great voice out of the temple, saying to the seven angels, Go ye, and pour out the seven bowls of the wrath of God into the earth.

2 And the first went, and poured out his bowl into the earth; and it became a noisome and grievous sore upon the men that had the mark of the beast, and that worshipped his image.

3 And the second poured out his bowl into the sea; and it became blood as of a dead man; and every living soul died, even the things that were in the sea.

4 And the third poured out his bowl into the rivers and the fountains of the waters; and it became blood.

5 And I heard the angel of the waters saying, Righteous art thou, who art and who wast, thou Holy One, because thou didst thus judge:

6 for they poured out the blood of the saints and the prophets, and blood hast thou given them to drink: they are worthy.

7 And I heard the altar saying, Yea, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.

8 And the fourth poured out his bowl upon the sun; and it was given unto it to scorch men with fire.

9 And men were scorched men with great heat: and they blasphemed the name of God who hath the power over these plagues; and they repented not to give him glory.

10 And the fifth poured out his bowl upon the throne of the beast; and his kingdom was darkened; and they gnawed their tongues for pain,

11 and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they repented not of their works.

The seven angels with the seven bowls pour out "the seven last plagues".

Notice that these are not partial judgments, as with the seven trumpets described earlier.

In the pouring out of these plagues "the wrath of God is complete".

In the **first four bowls**, God's wrath is poured out on the earth, the sea, the rivers and springs, and the sun.

Affected by these plagues are those who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image.

God's judgment upon them is proclaimed righteous and just, because they had been guilty of shedding the blood of saints and prophets.

Their response is to blaspheme God, and refuse to repent and give Him glory.

The **fifth bowl** is poured out on the throne of the beast and his kingdom, resulting in darkness.

The painful sufferings of the wicked continue, as does their blasphemy and refusal to repent of their deeds.

12 And the sixth poured out his bowl upon the great river, the river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way might be made ready for the kings that come from the sunrising.

13 And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits, as it were frogs:

14 for they are spirits of demons, working signs; which go forth unto the kings of the whole world, to gather them together unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.

15 (Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walked naked, and they see his shame.)

16 And they gathered them together into the place which is called in Hebrew Har-magedon.

17 And the seventh poured out his bowl upon the air; and there came forth a great voice out of the temple, from the throne, saying, It is done:

18 and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunders; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since there were men upon the earth, so great an earthquake, so mighty.

19 And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and Babylon the great was remembered in the sight of God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

20 And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

21 And great hail, every stone about the weight of a talent, cometh down out of heaven upon men: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof is exceeding great.

The **sixth bowl** is poured out on the river Euphrates, preparing the way for the kings from the east.

John then saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet.

Described as the spirits of demons, they perform signs and gather the kings of the earth to the place called Armageddon, for the battle of the great day of God.

At this point Jesus speaks both a warning and blessing, for those who watch and keep their garments will be blessed, as He is coming as a thief.

The **seventh bowl** is poured out and a loud voice from the temple in heaven cries out, "It is done!" The declaration is followed by thunder, lightning, and a great earthquake.

The judgments will be final and just, for even with these outpourings of wrath there is no willingness on the part of the beast and those who worship him to repent of their evil deeds!

Chapter Seventeen

1 And there came one of the seven angels that had the seven bowls, and spake with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the judgment of the great harlot that sitteth upon many waters;

2 with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and they that dwell in the earth were made drunken with the wine of her fornication.

3 And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness: and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stone and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations, even the unclean things of her fornication,

5 and upon her forehead a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I wondered with a great wonder.

7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou wonder? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and the ten horns.

8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and is about to come up out of the abyss, and to go into perdition. And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, they whose name hath not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast, how that he was, and is not, and shall come.

John is carried away into the wilderness where he is shown **the great harlot "Babylon"**, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication and the inhabitants of the earth were drunk with the wine of her fornication.

She is seen sitting on **a scarlet beast** with seven heads and ten horns. She is dressed in purple and scarlet, adorned with gold, precious stones and pearls. In her hand is a gold cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication.

On her forehead is written: **MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH**

Seeing the woman drunk with the blood of the saints (Old Testament saints?) and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, John marvels with great amazement.

The angel then proceeds to tell John the mystery of the woman and the beast that carries her.

He begins with **the beast** first, described as one who "**was, is not, and is about to come**". The use of past, present and future tense indicates a time from one ruler who persecuted to the time of another ruler who will also persecute.

9 Here is the mind that hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth

10 and they are seven kings; the five are fallen, the one is, the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a little while.

11 And the beast that was, and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is of the seven; and he goeth into perdition.

12 And the ten horns that thou sawest are ten kings, who have received no kingdom as yet; but they receive authority as kings, with the beast, for one hour.

13 These have one mind, and they give their power and authority unto the beast.

14 These shall war against the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they also shall overcome that are with him, called and chosen and faithful.

15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the harlot sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

The **seven heads** of the beast represent seven mountains upon which the woman sits. There are **seven kings**, five of whom have fallen, one is, and the other has yet to come. The beast is then described as **the eighth king**, though of the seven.

The "ten kings" who gave their power and authority to the beast appear to be vassal kings that supported the emperor in times of persecution.

The **ten horns** represent ten kings who give their power and authority to the beast, make war against the Lamb, and eventually turn on the harlot herself. **The harlot** is finally described as that "great city" which reigns over the kings of the earth.

The beast did not exist at the time of the Revelation! It had existed, and was about to come, but at the time John was shown the vision, it **"is not"**.

The seven (actually eight) kings represent Roman emperors, starting with Augustus. This would make Nero the fifth king, whose death in 68 A.D. left the empire in an uproar and may be the "deadly wound" referred to **Re 13:3,12,14**. Discounting Galba, Otho, and Vitellius whose insignificant reigns were short-lived during the turmoil, the sixth king ("**one is**") would be Vespasian who restored order to the empire. This would make Titus the seventh emperor and Domitian the eighth.

The beast that **"was, and is not, and will ascend"** therefore depicts the persecuting Roman emperor, seen first in the person of Nero (the beast who **"was"**) and later in the person of Domitian (the beast who **"will ascend"**).

16 And the ten horns which thou sawest, and the beast, these shall hate the harlot, and shall make

her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and shall burn her utterly with fire.

17 For God did put in their hearts to do his mind, and to come to one mind, and to give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God should be accomplished.

18 And the woman whom thou sawest is the great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

The harlot represents **Jerusalem** who was supported in her persecution of the church by the Roman Empire but then was destroyed by Rome in A.D. 70.

This is not the first time that Jerusalem is referred to as the "Harlot of Babylon": **Ezekiel 23:1-4, 17**.

When you compare such verses as **Rev 17:6; 18:20, 24; 19:2** with Jesus' statements in **Mt 23:31-39** it is obvious that the same events are being spoken of.

As foretold by Jesus in both Matthew and Revelation, God was about to avenge His apostles and prophets on this city *"who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her"* (**Rev 18:20; Mt 23:37**).

While the identity of the beast, the kings, and the harlot might be unclear in the minds of some, the outcome of the conflict described in this chapter is certain.

In what may be described as the theme of this book, we are told that: *"These will make war with 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."* (**Rev 17:14**)

Chapter Eighteen

1 After these things I saw another angel coming down out of heaven, having great authority; and the earth was lightened with his glory.

2 And he cried with a mighty voice, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, and is become a habitation of demons, and a hold of every unclean spirit, and a hold of every unclean and hateful bird.

3 For by the wine of the wrath of her fornication all the nations are fallen; and the kings of the earth committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth waxed rich by the power of her wantonness.

4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come forth, my people, out of her, that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues:

5 for her sins have reached even unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

6 Render unto her even as she rendered, and double unto her the double according to her works: in the cup which she mingled, mingle unto her double.

7 How much soever she glorified herself, and waxed wanton, so much give her of torment and mourning: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall in no wise see mourning.

8 Therefore in one day shall her plagues come, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judged her.

9 And the kings of the earth, who committed fornication and lived wantonly with her, shall weep and wail over her, when they look upon the smoke of her burning,

10 standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.

The fall of Babylon is proclaimed by an angel with great authority, who illuminated the earth with his glory. The reasons for her fall include how the nations and kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and how the merchants have become rich through her abundance.

Meanwhile, a voice from heaven calls for the people of God to come out of her lest they receive the plagues to come upon her.

Her judgment will involve death, mourning, famine, and utter destruction by fire, for it is the Lord God who judges her.

The fall of Babylon is mourned by the kings of the earth who committed fornication with her, and the merchants and sea-traders who had become rich by her.

They all cry out "*Woe, woe that great city...*" as they observe her judgment. They bemoan that in just one hour her riches came to nothing and she has become desolate. On the other hand, heaven itself, along with the apostles and prophets, are called to rejoice, because God has avenged them on her.

11 And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, for no man buyeth their merchandise any more;

12 merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stone, and pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet; and all thyine wood, and every vessel of ivory, and every vessel made of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble;

13 and cinnamon, and spice, and incense, and ointment, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and cattle, and sheep; and merchandise of horses and chariots and slaves; and souls of men.

14 And the fruits which thy soul lusted after are gone from thee, and all things that were dainty and

sumptuous are perished from thee, and men shall find them no more at all.

15 The merchants of these things, who were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning;

16 saying, Woe, woe, the great city, she that was arrayed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stone and pearl!

17 for in an hour so great riches is made desolate. And every shipmaster, and every one that saileth any wither, and mariners, and as many as gain their living by sea, stood afar off,

18 and cried out as they looked upon the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like the great city?

19 And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and mourning, saying, Woe, woe, the great city, wherein all that had their ships in the sea were made rich by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.

20 Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye saints, and ye apostles, and ye prophets; for God hath judged your judgment on her.

Jerusalem, "the "harlot". This chapter refers to the destruction by the Romans in August, 70 A.D.

This would be in harmony with **17:16**, where those who first supported the harlot eventually turned on her.

So it was with Jerusalem, who depended upon the approval of the Roman authorities to persecute the church, and later became the object of Roman persecution herself.

Jerusalem is depicted as a harlot, for she should have been a great spiritual city. Instead she became a commercial center because of the roads that passed through her between Europe, Asia and Africa.

Her spiritual adultery was also manifested by rejecting the many prophets and apostles sent to her.

Compare (**Matt 23:31-39** with **Rev 17:6; 18:20, 24; 19:2**).

21 And a strong angel took up a stone as it were a great millstone and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with a mighty fall shall Babylon, the great city, be cast down, and shall be found no more at all.

22 And the voice of harpers and minstrels and flute-players and trumpeters shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft, shall be found any more at all in thee; and the voice of a mill shall be heard no more at all in thee;

23 and the light of a lamp shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the princes of the earth; for with thy sorcery were all the nations deceived.

24 And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that have been slain upon the earth.

A strong angel throws a large stone into sea to symbolize with what great violence Babylon will be thrown down.

The sounds and sights of music, crafts, even weddings will be gone. The city was totally destroyed in 70_{AD}

The fall of Babylon is justified, for her merchants were great, by her sorcery the nations were deceived, and in her was found the blood of prophets, saints, and all those slain on the earth.

Chapter Nineteen

1 After these things I heard as it were a great voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, Hallelujah; Salvation, and glory, and power, belong to our God:

2 for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great harlot, her that corrupted the earth with her fornication, and he hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

3 And a second time they say, Hallelujah. And her smoke goeth up for ever and ever.

4 And the four and twenty elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God that sitteth on the throne, saying, Amen; Hallelujah.

5 And a voice came forth from the throne, saying, Give praise to our God, all ye his servants, ye that fear him, the small and the great.

6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Hallelujah: for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigneth.

7 Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, and let us give the glory unto him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

8 And it was given unto her that she should array herself in fine linen, bright and pure: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they that are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are true words of God.

10 And I fell down before his feet to worship him. And he saith unto me, See thou do it not: I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren that hold the testimony of Jesus: worship God; for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

John hears a great multitude in **heaven rejoicing over the fall of Babylon.**

The multitude is joined by the twenty-four elders and four living creatures, and a voice from the throne calling upon all God's servants to praise Him.

John then hears **heaven rejoicing in preparation for the marriage of the Lamb.** His wife has made herself ready, and she is adorned in fine linen, signifying the righteousness of the saints.

John is then told to write that those invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb are truly blessed.

John falls down to worship the one speaking to him, but is immediately rebuked and told to worship God.

11 And I saw the heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and he that sat thereon called Faithful and True; and in righteous he doth judge and make war.

12 And his eyes are a flame of fire, and upon his head are many diadems; and he hath a name written which no one knoweth but he himself.

13 And he is arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

14 And the armies which are in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and pure.

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

16 And he hath on his garment and on his thigh a name written, KINGS OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that

fly in mid heaven, Come and be gathered together unto the great supper of God;

18 that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of them that sit thereon, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, and small and great.

19 And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat upon the horse, and against his army.

20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought the signs in his sight, wherewith he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast and them that worshipped his image: they two were cast alive into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone:

21 and the rest were killed with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, even the sword which came forth out of his mouth: and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

The scene quickly changes as John sees heaven opened and **the warrior king on a white horse**, followed by the armies in heaven on white horses. He is ready to strike the nations and rule them with a rod of iron, even as He treads the winepress of the fierce wrath of Almighty God. As inscribed on His robe and His thigh, Jesus is truly "King of kings and Lord of Lords" .

With an angel standing in the sun and inviting the birds to gather for the supper of the great God, John then sees the beast and his forces gathered to make war against Christ and His army.

But immediately **the beast and the false prophet** (the earth beast of **13:11-18**) **are captured and cast alive into the lake of fire.**

Their armies are killed with the sword proceeding from the mouth of Christ, and all the birds were filled with their flesh (**17-21**).

This chapter reinforces the idea that Christ in His kingly rule will defeat those who have been persecuting His people.

The church is His kingdom.

Just as Babylon the harlot would be destroyed, so the beast and false prophet would be overcome.

Since the beast and the false prophet represent the Roman Empire in its persecution against the church, this was fulfilled by 313^{AD} when Constantine brought an end to Roman persecution.

Chapter Twenty

1 And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand.

2 And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years,

3 and cast him into the abyss, and shut it, and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years should be finished: after this he must be loosed for a little time.

4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as worshipped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

5 The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection.

6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: over these the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

7 And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

8 and shall come forth to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to the war: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

9 And they went up over the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and

***the beloved city; and fire came down out of heaven,
and devoured them.***

Binding is freedom within limits; Satan has been put on a leash. His power is limited by the gospel and by the death of Jesus.

John 12:31-32 *"Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world shall be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself."*

The thousand-year reign of the souls of the martyrs was for them a respite from emperor worship. It was an answer to the question of **Rev. 6:10**, *"How long, O Lord, holy and true, wilt Thou refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"* It is now these beheaded saints who are reigning instead of being persecuted. They are glorified with the Lord rather than hated by men.

This resurrection and reign is special if not figurative. There is no indication here that all the righteous were reigning with the Lord. Neither is there an indication that this reign was on earth; it is rather in heaven.

The number 1000 here is figurative not literal.

10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works.

13 And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

14 And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, even the lake of fire.

15 And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire.

Every person from every nation, time period, and walk of life gathered before the great white throne to be judged out of the books according to their works.

Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death.

Anyone whose name was not found written in the Lamb's book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

What books were opened?

- **Old covenant books** for those under the old covenant.
- **New covenant books** for those under the new covenant
- **Books of remembrance** (Malachi 3:16) *Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD gave attention and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who esteem His name.*
- **Book of Life**

Chapter Twenty-One

1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more.

2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven of God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God:

4 and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away.

5 And he that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he saith, Write: for these words are faithful and true.

6 And he said unto me, They are come to pass. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

7 He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

8 But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.

The New Jerusalem is depicted here as the bride of Christ.

The church is identified as the Bride of Christ. "*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her*".
Ephesians 5:25.

The New Jerusalem is the church. This depicts the ending of old ways and the beginning of a new kingdom.

The church is Christ kingdom and it was established in Acts chapter two.

This aspect of the vision is not prophetic but informative to reveal to the reader that Christ is king.

The second death is what happens after the final judgment. Death means separation. The second death is an eternal separation from God.

9 And there came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls, who were laden with the seven last plagues; and he spake with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the wife of the Lamb.

10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

11 having the glory of God: her light was like unto a stone most precious, as it were a jasper stone, clear as crystal:

12 having a wall great and high; having twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:

13 on the east were three gates; and on the north three gates; and on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.

14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15 And he that spake with me had for a measure a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

16 And the city lieth foursquare, and the length thereof is as great as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs:

the length and the breadth and the height thereof are equal.

17 And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel.

18 And the building of the wall thereof was jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto pure glass.

19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald;

20 the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst.

21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the several gates was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

The symbolism used depicts

- purity
- worth
- strength
- beauty

Her light depicts the purity of the church.

A stone most precious depicts the worth of the church.

A wall great and high depicts the strength of the church.

Jasper, pure Gold and sea of glass depict the beauty of the church.

21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the several gates was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple thereof.

23 And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb.

24 And the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof: and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it.

25 And the gates thereof shall in no wise be shut by day (for there shall be no night there):

26 and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it:

27 and there shall in no wise enter into it anything unclean, or he that maketh an abomination and a lie: but only they that are written in the Lamb`s book of life.

The temple is no longer. It was destroyed in 70_{AD} along with its worship.

The new kingdom is now the avenue by which people enter.

The church is the new kingdom.

And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb.

Light is a reference to God's word and Christ, who is the word. **John 1:1** "In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God". **And** "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." **Psalms 119:105**

Only those who are willing to submit to Christ' rule will enter this kingdom. These are those whose names are written *in "the Lamb's book of life"*.

Chapter Twenty-Two

1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb,

2 in the midst of the street thereof. And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

3 And there shall be no curse any more: and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be therein: and his servants shall serve him;

4 and they shall see his face; and his name shall be on their foreheads.

5 And there shall be night no more; and they need no light of lamp, neither light of sun; for the Lord God shall give them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

6 And he said unto me, These words are faithful and true: and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angels to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass.

7 And behold, I come quickly. Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book.

8 And I John am he that heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel that showed me these things.

9 And he saith unto me, See thou do it not: I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren the prophets, and with them that keep the words of this book: worship God.

10 And he saith unto me, Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand.

John's vision of the glorious future for the people of God is completed with a brief description of **the river of life, the tree of life, and the throne of God and of the Lamb.**

The river of life proceeding from the throne, and the tree of life bearing fruit every month along with its healing leaves, the picture is one of provision from God.

Eternal fellowship with God is emphasized again with the promise of seeing His face and having His name on one's forehead.

There is no night or need for the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. The redeemed will also reign forever and ever.

"Seal not up the words..." this indicates that these things are revealed and not to be mysterious or unknown.

"The time is at hand". This is another indication that the prophecy contained in this book is not of some distant future.

11 He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still: and he that is filthy, let him be made filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him do righteousness still: and he that is holy, let him be made holy still.

12 Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is.

13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

14 Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city.

15 Without are the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie.

16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star.

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take the water of life freely.

18 I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book:

19 and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book.

20 He who testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly. Amen: come, Lord Jesus.

21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints. Amen.

Jesus, Himself, states three times that He is coming quickly.

This refers to His coming in judgment, as described throughout this book, and not to his second coming for the redeemed.

The book ends with a fearful warning not to add to or take away from the book, a final promise of the Lord's coming.

A two-fold prayer calling for the Lord Jesus to come, and for His grace to be with all the saints' ends the book.

Appendix: Just More Facts

- The word RAPTURE is not found in the book of Revelation or in any other Biblical text.
- The phrase ANTI-CHRIST is never used in the book of Revelation.
- The book of Revelation is written in symbolic language not to be taken as literal scenarios.
- There is no mention of a nuclear holocaust in the book of Revelation.
- The book of Revelation was written to the seven churches of Asia about things which were at hand.
- The book of Revelation was not written about people 2000+ years in the future.
- Jesus said that His kingdom was not of this earth. Therefore there will be no physical kingdom established at some future time.
- The Bible identifies His church and His kingdom as being one and the same.
- The book of Revelation does not contain signs of the end of time.
- The book of Revelation must be interpreted as to not contradict any other book in the Bible.
- 1st Thessalonians 4:16 describes the second coming as being quick, final and very public. There will be no warning or signs.
- The prophecies in Matthew 24:4-29 concern the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, not the end of time.

- Things Revelation 20:1-10 Does Not Mention:
 - 1. Jerusalem in Palestine
 - 2. The establishment of a kingdom on earth
 - 3. Rebuilding the Temple
 - 4. Christ setting foot on the earth

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E-BOOK

REVELATION:

**Separating Fact From Fiction
A Commentary**

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