

66– Revelation: The Alpha and Omega, The Plan Fulfilled

- Revelation was **written by the disciple John**, Son of Zebedee and Salome, Galilean fisherman, early disciple of John the Baptist, one of Jesus’ inner circle. John also wrote Gospel of John, and 3 letters (1 John, 2 John, 3 John).
- The **full title is The Revelation of Jesus Christ**. “Revelation” is **SINGULAR** not plural, it is the Revelation of Jesus Christ (not *revelations* of John or revelations of end). The Revelation is “given” to Jesus by the Father, to “show His servants...” This book is **SIGN-ified** (signified, rendered into signs) (1:1) for John to record.
- REVELATION is:** The consummation of all things; The only book promising a blessing to the reader; 404 verses containing over 800 allusions from O.T.; The climax of God’s plan for man
- This study is **often avoided, and often misunderstood** due to a lack of understanding of the Old Testament. It is perhaps the most controversial book of all scripture, due to its vivid images that are sometimes difficult to interpret. Like all of scripture, this book is meant to be taken literally wherever possible. There are many forms of interpretation of this book, but any other than the literal and futurist interpretation will create all sorts of difficulties in understanding. Wherever there is a problem in interpretation, we must remember that God is His own interpreter. The Word will always interpret the Word. A thorough knowledge of the rest of scripture is required to understand this book.
- Some think this book is difficult to follow, that it has no order or logical flow. That is not at all true. The book **has a very definite order, and a distinctive flow of events**. An outline of the book could be seen as:



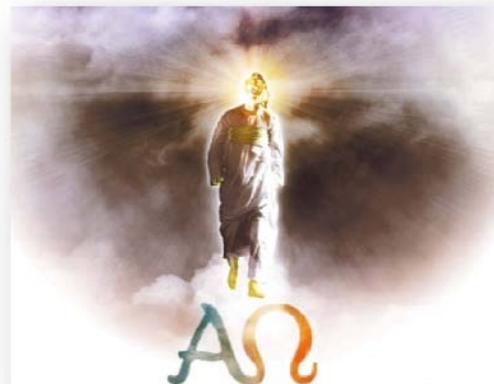
Ch 1	Things which ARE...	Introduction to the Risen Christ, John’s instructions, 7 Lampstands
Chs 2-3		Letters to the 7 Churches (<i>the Church Age</i>)
Chs 4 -5	Things which SHALL BE...	Throne Room of God, Church is Present, Problem Defined/Solution Presented
Chs 6-18		Tribulation Period on Earth, 3 sets of judgments, Babylon Doomed
Ch 19		Return of the King with His Saints, Armageddon, End of Human Government, Initial Judgments
Ch 20		Satan Bound, 1,000 Year Reign (Millennial Kingdom), Rebellion again, Final Judgment
Chs 21-22		Perfection Restored, The Bride of Christ, Reunion Forever

- “shortly” and “soon” in this book literally mean **SUDDENLY**. It will all happen quickly when it begins, and it will begin suddenly. It does not mean “soon” in our understanding of that word.
- There are **3 sets of judgments** contained in this book, **seals, trumpets, bowls**, (7 in each, total 21, but judgments are “nested” in each other).
- Revelation contains themes and elements from today’s headlines:** Israel, Jerusalem, the Temple, Babylon, Russia (Magog), rise of China, European Superstate, Ecumenical religion, global government, rise of the occult, and many other issues seen in today’s current events.
- As always, we make the following ASSUMPTION:** *The Bible is the infallible (without error) Word of God and as such contains the plan for man’s redemption, and an accurate telling of the end of time, and the consummation of God’s Plan.*
- To keep this book review from becoming a book itself, we are limiting highlights to only events and sequences with very little commentary. Wherever commentary is offered, it is from the literal perspective. (*Our normal 2-4 pg review of this book really isn’t possible, at least from our perspective!*)

Highlights

Chapter 1: The Risen, Glorified Jesus; John's Instructions

- Verses 1-8 are about the main character (Jesus!)
- A **blessing** for reading, hearing, keeping the words of this prophecy (v. 3)
- Many **names of Jesus** in this book. First here in this chapter: who is, and who was and who is to come, the faithful witness, the Firstborn from the dead, the ruler over the kings of the earth, Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, The Almighty, The First and the Last
- John on the island of **Patmos** (imprisoned for preaching the gospel) **In the Spirit on the Lord's Day** (Sunday) Hears a loud voice "**I am..**"
- John told to write what he sees in this vision, and send it to the **seven churches in Asia**.
- John sees the One speaking standing in the middle of **seven lampstands** (lampstands are the seven churches, v. 20, Jesus' presence with the churches)
- John describes Jesus' **amazing appearance**: garment down to the feet, golden band around His chest, head and hair white like wool/snow, eyes like a flame of fire, feet like brass (as refined in a furnace), voice like "many waters", 7 stars in right hand, two-edged sword out of His mouth, face like the sun (the glorified Jesus! brass = judgment, eyes seem angry and fierce, very loud voice, 7 stars are 7 "angels of the 7 churches")
- John collapses at the sight, but Jesus tells him not to be afraid
- Jesus says "**I am...**" - "...He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and Death."
- John told to write 1) **the things which ARE**, 2) **the things TO COME** - two divisions



Chapters 2 and 3: Letters to Churches, Then and Now

(What do these letters say to each of us??)

REVELATION CHAPTER 2				
CHURCH	Ephesus 2:1-7	Smyrna 2:8-11	Pergamum 2:12-17	Thyatira 2:18-29
Symbolic Church Age	Apostolic Church 30-100 AD	Persecuted Church (age of Martyrs) 100-312 AD	State Church (Constantine to 1 st Pope) 313-590 AD	Established Church (1 st Pope to Reformation) 590-1517 AD
Speaker	"He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands."	"The First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life."	"He who has the sharp two-edged sword."	"the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass."
Praise	Works, labor, patience, non-toleration of evil, tested false teachers, perseverance, hated Nicolaitans	Works, perseverance (He knew their suffering, poverty, Jewish persecution (Synagogue of Satan!))	Works, steadfastness, held to faith (He knew where they lived, Satan's throne)	More works, love, service, faith
Problems	Left first love	NONE!	False teachers in their midst (Balaamites and Nicolaitans)	Toleration of False teachers who lead others into sin (Jezebel)

Counsel or Warning	Remember from where you have fallen; repent; do first works (heart!) OR ELSE I will come quickly and remove your lampstand...	Don't be afraid, be faithful to death (would be imprisoned soon)	Repent OR ELSE He will fight them (those spreading false teachings, not whole church) with Sword of His mouth	Lord's problem with the "Jezebels" and her followers, not entire church. He would not "burden them" further, but hold fast what they have until He comes. Gave time for "Jezebel" to repent, but didn't want to, so will cast her on a bed of suffering, and her followers and kill her "children." They would ALL be judged on their "works" (condition of heart!)
Reward to Overcomer	Eat of the tree of life in Paradise (of God, with Him), <i>(eternal life in Paradise, comparable to Garden of Eden)</i>	Crown of life, not hurt by second death <i>(saved from eternal separation from God)</i>	Hidden manna to eat, white stone with unique name known only to holder and Jesus <i>(eternal sustenance, acquittal, free pass to heaven, unique love from God)</i>	Power over the nations, and the morning star <i>(will reign with Him in Millennium)</i>
Problem in a nutshell	No passion for Jesus, agape love missing	NONE	False doctrines, not testing teachers, not remaining separate from the world	Compromise, toleration of false teachers, not remaining separate from world

REVELATION CHAPTER 3			
CHURCH	Sardis 3:1-6	Philadelphia 3:7-13	Laodicea 3:14-22
Symbolic Church Age	Reformation Era 1518 AD-1750	Missionary Church 1750-1900	Apostate Church of the Last Days 1900-present +
Speaker	"He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars."	"He who is holy, He who is true. He who has the Key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens."	"the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God."
Praise	NONE! (did find a few who had not "soiled their clothes" and they would walk with Him in white)	Works, have a little strength (influence, ability), kept His word, not denied His Name. Kept command to persevere* (Missionary church)	NONE!
Problems	Works indicated they had a reputation for being alive, but they were dead. He did not find their "works" complete or perfect before God.	NONE!	Neither hot nor cold (wished they were cold or hot); lukewarm. Say they are rich, have need of nothing, but He says they are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked
Counsel or Warning	Be watchful, strengthen what remains (is about to die!) Remember what you heard, hold fast to it, repent OR ELSE I will come as a thief (suddenly) to take away what remains	<i>(This letter informs more than warns)</i> He will make those of the synagogue of Satan come and worship before their feet and know that He has loved them. "I am coming quickly!" Hold fast what you have so no one can take your crown.	I will vomit you out of my mouth! Buy from Me gold refined in the fire (that you may be rich) white garments (that you may be clothed), anoint your eyes with eye salve (that you may see) As many as I love I rebuke and chasten. Be zealous and repent. Open door to Him!

Reward to Overcomer	Clothed in white garments, will not blot name from Book of Life, will confess name before Father and His angels. <i>(covered with righteousness of Christ, remain in Book of Life, right to be with God)</i>	<i>*will keep them from the hour of trial which is coming upon the whole world to test those "who dwell on the earth"</i> Make him a pillar in temple of God, will go out no more, will write on him name of God, name of city of God, New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from God..I will write on him My new name. <i>(eternally have access to God's place, identified with His city, identified with Jesus)</i>	Will sit with Me on My throne. <i>(will share in ruling over Millennial kingdom)</i>
Problem in a nutshell	Complacency , spiritually dead, more interested in material riches	NONE	Lukewarm, pride , more concerned about material wealth than spiritual wealth

Chapter 4: The Throne Room of Heaven

- "Meta tauta" - **after these things** (logical progression from previous chapter)
- Open door, voice like trumpet, "**come up here!**" *(some think this indicates rapture of Church)*
- One on throne startling in appearance: jasper (diamond) and sardius (blood red), rainbow around throne like an emerald
- **24 elders** on 24 thrones around central throne, crowns (stephanos, victor's crown) the saints/church
- Lightning, thunder, voices from throne, 7 lampstands burning, seven Spirits of God (Is 11:2)
- Sea of glass, like crystal
- Four living creatures, eyes front and back: "Like" a lion, calf (ox), man, eagle, 6 wings each
- **Never ending** "holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!" (no rest day or night)
- 24 elders cast down crowns, **worship God**.
- V. 11 "...by **your will** they exist and were created." Everything exists by the will of God. We were created because he wanted us, not by accident. Our **purpose** is embedded here—to have fellowship with God



Chapter 5: The Unsealed Scroll, Unceasing Praise

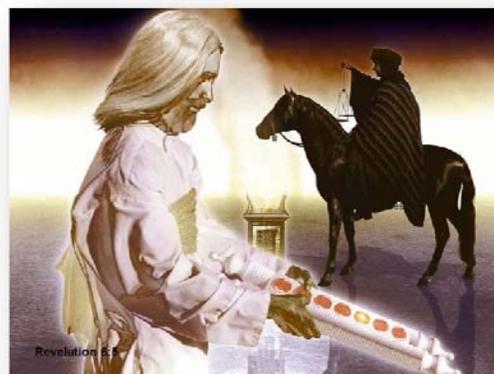
- Still in "throne room" - One on throne has a **scroll written on BOTH sides**, sealed with 7 seals. Title deed to earth?
- "**Who is worthy?**" - no one IN heaven, or ON earth, or UNDER the earth
- John **weeps**, upset no one can open scroll. Elder tells him not to weep. There IS one worthy: "the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David" has prevailed.
- A Lamb, "as though it had been slain" with 7 horns, 7 eyes (7 spirits of God)
- **Lamb takes the scroll** from One on the throne



- Elders, with harps, golden bowls of incense (prayers of the saints) sang a “new song” - *“You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals, for you were slain, and have redeemed US to God by your blood...”* and *“have made us kings and priests to our God and WE shall reign on the earth.”*
- Voices of **many angels, the living creatures, the elders praising** *“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing!”*
- EVERY creature in heaven on the earth and under the earth praising. Ongoing praise, elders and living creatures fall down in worship of One who lives forever. Awesome scene.

Chapter 6: The Scroll is Opened, First 6 Seal Judgments

- **1st Seal:** White horse, rider with bow, crown, went out conquering (Antichrist begins control)
- **2nd Seal:** Red Horse, rider/great sword, takes peace from earth (war)
- **3rd Seal:** Black Horse, rider holding pair of scales (economic disasters)
- **4th Seal:** Pale Horse, “Death” seated on horse, “Hades” follows, to kill with sword, hunger, death and beasts of the earth (great number of deaths by famine, war, violence)
- These are the famed “Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse” dispatched by the 4 living creatures
- **5th Seal:** Martyred souls under altar saying *“How long...until You judge and avenge our blood...”* Told to rest awhile longer until fellow saints killed (terrible time of martyrdom for believers)
- **6th Seal:** Great earthquake, sun turns black, moon like blood, stars fall, sky recedes like scroll, every mountain and island moved, unbelievers run for the hills!
- **The Day of Lamb’s wrath** has come: “who is able to stand?” Answer: NO ONE!
- This is seen by some as an overview of sorts of entire Tribulation period.



Chapter 7: The 144,000 Sealed, Tribulation Saints

- **“Meta tauta,”** follows 6 seals... (logical progression)
- **4 angels at 4 corners of earth** holding 4 winds back
- Another angel, with seal of living God, *“Don’t harm anything yet, until the servants of God are sealed on their foreheads.”*
- John hears the number of servants, **144,000 from ALL the tribes of Israel**, 12,000 from each of the tribes (Dan not mentioned??) God clearly indicates these are Jews. Only these are sealed.
- John sees **great multitude** from all nations, tribes, peoples and tongues standing before the throne, clothed in white robes with palm branches saying *“Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”* Angels and 4 living creatures worship with them.
- **Who are these in white robes?** Angel answers, **martyred saints** who serve the One on the throne day and night, and He dwells with them. They will not hunger, thirst anymore, sun/heat will not strike them, the Lamb will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. These are redeemed, martyred saints.



- There are two groups in this chapter, the 144,000 sealed Jewish believers, and the vast multitude of martyred saints from all peoples.

Chapter 8: First 4 Trumpet Judgments

- **7th Seal opened, silence in heaven** 1/2 hour
- **7 angels** who stand before God given **7 trumpets** (trumpets are second set of judgments, trumpets “nested” inside 7th seal)
- Another angel has **golden censer** before altar of incense (prayers of saints) fills censer with fire from altar, throws it to earth—noises, thunderings, lightnings and earthquake.
- **1st angel sounds:** hail, fire mingled with blood, 1/3 trees, all green grass burned up.
- **2nd angel sounds:** something like great mountain burning thrown into the sea, 1/3 of life in sea dies, 1/3 of ships destroyed.
- **3rd angel sounds:** Great star fell from heaven, burning, fell on 1/3 of rivers and springs water. (Name is “Wormwood” = bitterness), drinking water poisoned
- **4th angel sounds:** 1/3 sun, 1/3 moon, 1/3 stars darkened. 1/3 of day, 1/3 of night no light.
- Another angel flying through midst of heaven, **“Woe, Woe, woe to inhabitants of the earth”** because of remaining trumpets. First 4 trumpets affected natural world—earth is a mess. But next 3 are worse: they are demonic.
- These appear to be plagues on the earth. No reason to believe these are anything but literal. We accept the plagues of Egypt were literal plagues. So are these. There are many likenesses between Exodus and Revelation.



Chapter 9: 5th and 6th Trumpet Judgments

- **5th angel sounds:** “star” (“that had fallen”) from heaven to earth, given key to bottomless pit. Pit opened, smoke arose, and out of pit comes **“locusts”** (not normal locusts, demonic!) - given power (for 5 months) to torment men without seal of God, but could not kill them. Torment like scorpion sting, people will want to die, but can’t.
- **VERY strange locusts—like** horses in battle, crowns of something like gold, hair like women, teeth like lion, breastplates of iron, sound of wings like many chariots in battle. Tails like scorpions, stings in tail. Their “king” is angel of the bottomless pit. (*notice “like”....*) These are demonic beings.
- **One woe past, two more coming.**
- **6th angel sounds:** heard voice from altar saying “release the 4 angels bound at the great river Euphrates (see Jude 6) prepared for this time, released to kill 1/3 of mankind.
- **200,000,000 horses/riders.** Horsemen had breastplates of *“fiery red, hyacinth blue and sulfur yellow,”* heads like lions, fire, smoke and brimstone comes out of mouths (by these “plagues” 1/3 of mankind killed), tails like serpents with heads. Power in mouths and tails. Some have interpreted these as a great human army (i.e., China) but their description is not human.
- **Still did not repent** of worshipping demons, idols, murders, sorceries, sexual immorality, thefts. One of saddest verses in scripture. Despite knowing Who is behind these things, man does not turn to Him, but instead continues to blaspheme and reject Him.



Chapter 10: Mighty Angel, 7 Thunders, and the Little Book

- **Strange “time out”** - mighty angel comes down from heaven clothed in a cloud, rainbow on his head, face like the sun, feet like pillars of fire. Has a “little book” (scroll). Set right foot on sea, left foot on land. Some see this “angel” (*which means “messenger”*) as Jesus, others just a very powerful angelic being.
- When he shouted, **sounded like 7 thunders**. John told to “seal up” what they said. We do not know what they said, any speculation is fruitless.
- Angel swears no more delay, when 7th angel sounds (7th Trumpet judgment) the **“mystery of God”** would be finished. (The plan of God complete)
- Angel tells John to **take the little book and eat it**, will make his stomach bitter, but will be sweet as honey in his mouth. John does so. (Common in scripture for prophets to “eat” word, digest)
- Angel tells John he must **prophesy again** about “many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings” (There’s more coming; it’s not over yet!)



Chapter 11: Temple Measured, Two Witnesses

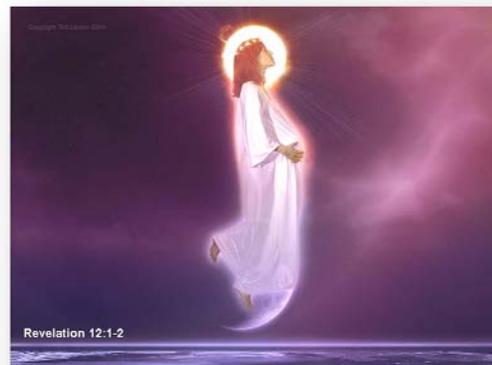
- John given a reed, told to **measure the temple of God**, the altar, and those who worship there, but omit outside court, given to the Gentiles. **Gentiles will tread the Jerusalem** underfoot for 42 months. Suggests need for actual physical temple in Jerusalem to fulfill. Measuring of those who worship is akin to taking the spiritual pulse of Jews at this time.
- God will give power to His **“two witnesses,”** they will prophesy 1,260 days clothed in sackcloth. (this 3 ½ year period of time is repeated often here. Most think this time, what we call the “Tribulation,” will be 7 years, 3 ½ years is the midpoint. This time also referenced in Daniel.)
- They are the **“two olive trees and two lampstands** standing before the God of the earth” (Zechariah 4:1-6) Lampstands are light. Light reveals truth. Light is a witness. God always has His witnesses, in every age. Olive oil is symbol for Holy Spirit in scripture.
- **Power to kill opponents with fire**, to shut heaven (no rain), to turn water to blood, strike earth with plagues. Because of these unique abilities, some speculate these witnesses are Moses and Elijah, who had similar powers on earth. Much controversy over the identities of the witnesses.
- When testimony finished, **beast from the pit kills them**. Bodies lay in the street, worldwide celebration. Antichrist finally able to kill them, but all part of God’s plan.
- After 3 1/2 days they are **resurrected**, (in full sight!) everyone is afraid. *“Come up here”* - ascend to heaven. People are terrified.
- Same hour **great earthquake**, 1/10 of city falls, 7,000 people killed, rest afraid, gave glory to God. Third woe coming.
- **7th angel sounds: (last trumpet judgment)** loud voices in heaven *“The kingdoms of the world have become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”*



- 24 elders praise God, **temple in heaven opened**, ark of covenant seen, more lightnings, noises, thunderings, another earthquake and great hail. (“...because you have taken Your great power and reigned. The nations were angry and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged...” The last set of judgments is coming, and with it the wrath of God is complete!)

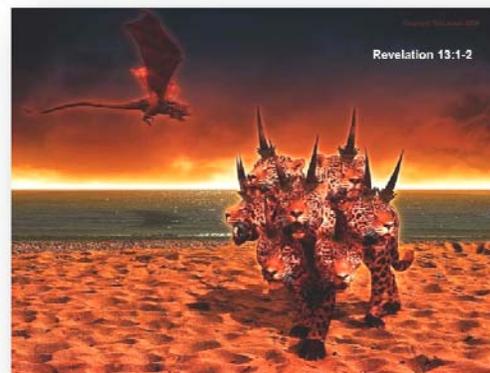
Chapter 12: Pregnant Woman, Red Dragon, The Son, War in Heaven

- Great sign in heaven, **woman clothed with the sun**, moon under her feet, garland of 12 stars, pregnant, in labor.
- Another sign in heaven, **great fiery red dragon** with 7 heads, 10 horns, 7 crowns. Tail draws 1/3 of stars in heaven and threw to earth.
- Dragon stood ready to devour woman’s Child.
- Woman has a “**male Child** who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron.” (Psalm 2:9). Child caught up to God and His throne
- Woman **flees to wilderness** to place prepared for her by God. She will be fed there 1,260 days
- Reads like a great visual drama where every player has an identity. Woman is Israel, dragon is the Enemy, woman’s child is Jesus. Satan has always attempted to destroy the Son of God. **Interpretation of this critical to understanding Revelation (woman is Israel, NO ONE ELSE!)**
- **War breaks out in heaven.** Michael and his angels against the dragon and his angels. No place in heaven for enemies anymore. Cast out. (Recall book of Job where Satan still had access in heaven to accuse believers.)
- Overcome enemy by the “blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.”
- Woe to inhabitants of earth and sea, **devil has come down**, very mad, knows his time is short.
- Dragon persecutes woman, she is given “wings of eagle,” **flees into wilderness** from serpent. Wings of eagle seen in scripture as God’s aid. Some suggest literal place in wilderness where God will protect Jews. Perhaps Petra, a place that could house/protect hundreds of thousands of Jews.
- Serpent spews “flood” but earth helps woman, swallows flood. **Dragon enraged, makes war** with “her offspring who keep commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Flood possible military action from enemy (scriptural basis for this). Now enemy pursues other believers.



Chapter 13: Dragon and Two Beasts – Unholy Trinity

- **Beast rises from the sea**, with 7 heads and 10 horns, 10 crowns on the horns, and a blasphemous name on his heads. “Sea” generally Mediterranean in scripture. Some see as reference to sea of humanity. This is the beast from the sea (Antichrist), as opposed to beast from the land (later).
- He is “like” a leopard, feet like a bear, mouth like a lion.
- **Dragon gave beast his power**, his throne, great authority. This beast has the enemy’s power.
- One of beast’s heads “**as if**” **mortally wounded**, but wound healed. Some suggest a miraculous resurrection, to mimic (counterfeit) the resurrection of Jesus. Others say enemy does not have that power (to raise from the dead) and this is a deception and trickery to fool people.



- Whole **world marveled and followed beast**, worshipped dragon and beast, saying “who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?”
- Beast given a **mouth to speak pompous words**, blasphemies, and given authority to continue for 42 months.
- **Blasphemed against God**, His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.
- Made **war with saints**. All believers are persecuted.
- **Given authority** over every tribe, tongue, and nation. All “who dwell on the earth” worship him, whose names are not in the Book of Life (of the Lamb)
- **Saints encouraged to hold on** and keep their faith.
- **Another beast** comes out of the earth, with 2 horns like a lamb, but spoke like a dragon. This is second beast, but now from the land, not the sea. Some see this as reference to land of Israel, that is second beast is Jewish. Has gentle appearance, but is of the pit of hell.
- Same authority as first beast, **causes earth to worship 1st beast** (“whose deadly wound was healed”), performs great signs, fire from heaven, deceives with signs.
- 2nd beast (false prophet) orders an “image” built of 1st beast, **image speaks** and causes those who don’t worship to be killed.
- Causes **all to receive a “mark”** on right hand or on forehead, can’t buy or sell without it.
- Number of the beast is the number of man, 666. (*“6” means incomplete. 7 means perfectly complete. 6 is one less than 7, so it is incomplete. 6 stands for mankind in scripture. The 3-6’s are likely a symbol for the unholy trinity seen in this chapter [dragon and 2 beasts] and to indicate that the beasts are indeed men.*)

Chapter 14: The Lamb and 144,000, Announcing Angels, Great Harvests, The Winepress

- **Lamb seen on Mount Zion, with 144,000**, Father’s name on their foreheads.
- Multitude with harps **sing a “new song”** in heaven. Only 144,000 and redeemed could learn this song. 144,000 Identified as “virgins” and follow Lamb wherever He goes.
- **“Redeemed from among men” said to be “firstfruits”** to God and the Lamb. No deceit in their mouths, “without fault” before throne of God. (Only Jesus can make us “without fault” before the throne!)
- Another flying angel in “the midst of heaven” with the **“everlasting gospel to preach”** to every nation, tribe, tongue and people. Angel announces *“Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His Judgment has come; and worship Him...”* (Time is running out. The last judgments are coming.)
- Another angel followed saying **“Babylon is fallen...because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”** Babylon is clear enemy of God throughout scripture. **“Tale of Two Cities”** throughout: Babylon city of man and the enemy, birthplace of every sin and occultic practice vs. Jerusalem, city of God and God’s people. Babylon is a clear symbol throughout scripture for everything, the entire world system, that opposes God. Babylon represents false religions, and the world’s way of being.
- **3rd angel** says if anyone worships the beast/image, and receives his mark, they will *“drink of the wine of wrath of God”* (poured out full strength!) and be tormented forever. Clear warning— **don’t take the mark of the beast!**
- Change in tone, **“the patience of the saints”** - *“blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.”* They will rest, although they will be persecuted and martyred first.



- Now John sees a white cloud, and **“One like the Son of Man” sits on the cloud**, golden crown on His head, holding sharp sickle. Another angel comes out of the temple in heaven and tells the “One” on the cloud to *“thrust in your sickle and reap...the time has come...the harvest of the earth is ripe.”* And the earth is reaped. This is 1st harvest in this chapter (believers)
- Yet another angel comes from temple in heaven also with **sharp sickle**. And another angel (the 6th one in this chapter), who had “power over fire” (altar of incense, prayers of the saints), gives similar command to *“thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.”* (evil has reached its peak). Angel does so, throws into the **“great winepress of the wrath of God.”** (Matthew 13:37-43)
- **Winepress is trampled** “outside the city” and blood came out up to the horses bridles, 1600 furlongs (approx 180 miles, length of valley of Megiddo). See Isaiah 63:1-4, Joel 3:9-15
- (NOTE: This chapter is almost impossible to decipher completely. May be seen as another “overview” of the rest of the book. Like chapter 6 is somewhat of an overview of the entire book. We see martyred saints, the preaching of the gospel as a last warning and chance, terrible persecution of believers, a harvest of saints by Jesus and a harvest of the wicked by an angel – which is thrown into God’s winepress of wrath. We also see unbelievable information regarding bloodshed in the Valley of Megiddo, which is the site of Armageddon.)

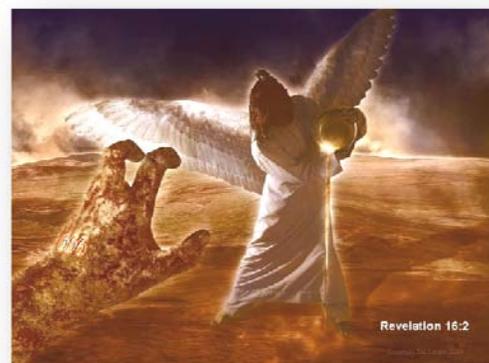
Chapter 15: Tribulation Saints Praise, 7 Angels with 7 Last Plagues Introduced, Ark Seen

- Another “sign” seen, **7 angels having 7 last plagues**—in them the wrath of God is complete.
- **Tribulation saints** seen standing on something “like” a sea of glass mingled with fire. Those who have victory over the beast, have harps and sing the **“song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb”**
- After this John sees the temple (“naos” - holy of holies, no outer courts or rooms needed to enter His presence!) of the **“tabernacle of the testimony”** (ark of covenant) opened. Out come the **7 angels having the 7 last plagues** (“calamities”), clothed in “pure bright linen”/golden sashes.
- One of the 4 living creatures gave the bowls of wrath of God to the angels.
- **Temple is filled with smoke, from glory of God.** NO ONE able to enter the temple until the 7 last plagues are completed. (see Isaiah 6:1-4) This is a very somber scene. These are the last of the 3 sets of judgments.



Chapter 16: Last 7 Judgments, Armageddon, “It is Done!”

- Loud voice from temple **“Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth.”** (Bowl, or vial judgments all poured out at once)
- **1st angel:** foul and loathsome sores (on those with mark of beast)
- **2nd angel:** bowl poured on sea, became blood like a dead man (congealed), EVERY living thing died.
- **3rd angel:** bowl poured on rivers and springs of water, became blood. Angel declares God is righteous in His judgment *“...for they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink. For it is their just due.”*



- **4th angel:** bowl poured out on sun, power to scorch men with fire. Men scorched with great heat, and blasphemed God, **did not repent**.
- **5th angel:** bowl poured on throne of beast (antichrist's seat of government), his kingdom full of darkness, gnawed tongues because of pain. Also blasphemed God, did not repent.
- **6th angel:** poured out bowl on Euphrates River, water dried up, making way for "kings from the east"
- John sees **3 "unclean spirits like frogs"** coming out of mouth of dragon, beast, and false prophet ("they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." Earth deceived into battle with God!)
- **Jesus speaks:** "Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame." (comes quickly, without warning)
- World gathered together in the place called **Armageddon**. (only mention in Revelation)
- **7th angel:** poured out bowl on the air, loud voice from heaven, from the throne says "It is done!" Noises, thunderings, lightning, a great **earthquake**, bigger than any before it.
- **God remembers Babylon**, to give her cup of wine of the "fierceness of His wrath" (coming!)
- Islands fled, mountains not found, and great hail (about 75-100 lbs each!). **Still, mankind blasphemes God!**

Chapter 17: The Great Harlot is Judged

- One of angels with 7 last judgments shows John the "**judgment of the great harlot**"
- **Clues to identity:**
 - Sits on "many waters"
 - Kings of earth "committed fornication" with her
 - "Inhabitants of earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication"
 - Sits on scarlet beast (beast full of names of blasphemy, had 7 heads, 10 horns—Antichrist)
 - Wears purple and scarlet, adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls
 - Has golden cup in hand, full of abominations, and filthiness of her fornication
 - Wears name "**Mystery Babylon** the Great, The Mother of Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth." (notice she is not alone in this harlotry—she is the "mother" of others!)
 - Drunk with blood of saints, and martyrs of Jesus.
- **John is stunned!** Can't believe this (words imply he is shocked) Angel asked John why he "marvels." Will tell him the mystery. Tells John beast was, is not, and will ascend out of bottomless pit and go to perdition. Inhabitants of earth (those who names are not written in the Book of Life) will marvel. Identity of harlot still mystery, much speculation. It is final world religion, apostate.
- Spiritual wisdom required here: "*seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits.*"
- Also **7 kings, 5 have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come** (at time John is seeing this, not in timeline of book!). "When he comes, he must continue a short time."
- This beast is the "**eighth and is of the seven...**"
- **10 horns are 10 kings**, not yet come in John's time, will receive authority "for one hour" (very short time) as kings with the beast. Will voluntarily give power to Antichrist, beast, or the "eighth."
- Will make war with the Lamb, **but Lamb will overcome them**, "for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings" and saints with Him are called chosen and faithful.



- **Angel interprets:** waters are peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues.
- 10 horns will hate the harlot, make her desolate, naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. Will give their kingdom to the beast.
- Woman is **“that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.”** (only one answer to this—at that time it was Rome!)
- (NOTE: Chapter 17 presents the harlot as the last false/apostate religious system, sponsored by Antichrist initially, but later destroyed. The Antichrist wants the world to worship him, and only him. Chapter 18 will present the harlot, “Babylon,” as the worldwide system in opposition to God—government, economy, business, etc.)

Chapter 18: Babylon the Great is Fallen!

- Another angel, with great authority (earth illuminated with his glory), cried **“Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!”**
- **Merchants** of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury (wealth, materialism)
- Another voice announces, **“Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.”**
- Her sins have **“reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.”**
- She said “I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.” “Therefore” her sudden fall will come in one day, death and mourning and famine. She will be utterly burned with fire.
- **Kings of earth** committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her, will weep and lament for her. (government)
- **Merchants of the earth** also weep and mourn, for no one buys their merchandise anymore (commerce) Follows a long list of goods, 28 cargoes, include items from mineral, plant, animal and HUMAN kingdoms (slave trades, souls of men)
- **Every shipmaster** (3rd group, global shipping) cried out, wept, mourned, alas, alas...” ..all ships on the sea became rich by her wealth!”
- **Mighty angel took millstone and threw it in sea** saying **“Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore...”** (illustrates the quickness, violence, completeness of her end)
- No more music, no more workers, no more daily activities, no light, no activity (no voice of bridegroom and bride) ever again.
- **The reason?** *“For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth.”* (The world’s idea of “great men” were “merchants” - the world’s values are all about money.) This chapter depicts the destruction of the world system (referenced as “Babylon” throughout scripture) in opposition to God. The world to come will not contain “Babylon” as she is thoroughly and completely destroyed here.



Chapter 19: Heaven Rejoices, He Comes Again

- **A great multitude in heaven praises,** “Alleluia!” Heaven is excited, judgment and justice finally come. Again, “Alleluiah!”
- **4 Alleluiah’s** (lit. “praise Yahweh”) a sacred call to worship.

- **4 living creatures worship** saying “Amen! Alleluiah!”
- A great multitude, voices sound of many waters, **“Alleluiah!”** (LOTS of praise in heaven because finally God has executed His plan and He has come to reign.) *“...for the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!”* (v. 6, Handel’s Messiah!) The marriage of the Lamb, His wife has made herself ready!
- John forgets himself and falls to the feet of the angel with him. Angels tells him no, don’t do that! “Worship God!”
- **“The testimony of Jesus is the spirit (breath/essence) of prophecy.”** In other words, all prophecy is about Him!
- John now sees heaven opened, **One on a white horse**, name is “Faithful and True,” he judges in righteousness, makes war. Eyes like a flame of fire, on his head were many crowns, had a name known only to himself, clothed in a robe dipped in blood—His Name is called the Word of God. **NO DOUBT WHO THIS IS!!!** This is the return of Jesus.
- **“Armies” of heaven** clothed in fine linen, white and clean **follow Him** on white horses also. These are the saints. (See Jude 14-15, Zechariah 14:5)
- **Sharp sword** goes out of His mouth (the Word) He will rule “with rod of iron” (Psalm 2) and with it will strike the nations.
- He **treads the “winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God”** (ch. 14:17-20, Isaiah 63:1-4)
- On robe, thigh is a name **“KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”**
- Angel **standing in the sun, cries to the birds** “Come and gather together for the supper of the great God!” (will eat the flesh of those killed, clean up land)
- Beast, kings of earth and armies **gathered to make war** against Jesus, and His army (this is the battle we call Armageddon)
- Battle over (very anticlimactic!), **beast and false prophet captured**, thrown into lake of fire.
- **Everyone else killed with sword of His mouth**, and birds gorged on their flesh.



Chapter 20: Satan Bound, Millennial Kingdom, Final Judgment

- An angel has key to bottomless pit and great chain. Took Satan, **bound him for 1000 years, threw into pit**, shut and sealed him so could not deceive the nations until 1000 years over.
- After that, he will be released for a “little while.”
- John sees thrones, **those on thrones will “judge”** (reign)
- John saw souls of **martyred tribulation saints**. They are resurrected, and **reign with Jesus for 1000 years** (millennial kingdom) (“This is first resurrection”) “Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power.” (not separated from God)
- **Rest of dead not resurrected until after 1000 years over.**
- When 1000 years over, **Satan released to deceive the nations** “in the four corners of the earth” (Gog and Magog!?), to “gather them together to battle.” So many do so, they number as the “sands of the sea.” Unbelievably, there is ANOTHER rebellion at the end of the Millennium.
- This **army surrounds the “camp of the saints and the beloved city.”** (Jerusalem)
- **Fire** came down from heaven and **devoured them** (also anticlimactic!)
- Devil who deceived them **cast into lake of fire and brimstone** (with the beast and false prophet).



They will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

- **Great White Throne** seen, heaven and earth “fled away” from the face of One on throne.
- John sees **dead standing before God**, “books are opened” also “book of life” (judgment of lost)
- **Dead judged by their works** (not grace!) (sea gives up dead, Death and Hades “delivered up the dead in them”) Their judgment is “2nd death” (separation from God) NO one saved by their works!
- **Death and Hades thrown into lake of fire.** Anyone not found in Book of Life cast into lake of fire.

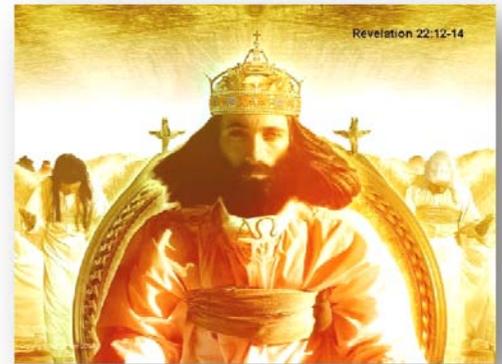
Chapter 21: New Heaven, New Earth, Bride of Christ, New City

- **“New heaven and new earth”** - old passed away, no sea.
- John sees *“holy city **New Jerusalem** coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”*
- Voice announces that God’s **dwelling place is with men**, they will be His people and He will be their God.
- God will wipe away every tear, no more death, no sorrow, no crying, no pain...**old things have passed away.**
- One on the throne says **“Behold, I make all things new.”** These words are true and faithful. “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.” Will give water of life to all who thirst, the one who overcomes will inherit all things.
- Cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters and all liars in the **lake of fire** (2nd death)
- Angel shows John **“the bride, the Lamb’s wife.”** Sees holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven with the glory of God. Very unusual description follows:
- “Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal” (diamond)
- “She” had **great high wall with 12 gates** and 12 angels at the gates, names of tribes of Israel written on them. 3 gates in each of 4 directions (NSEW)
- Wall has **12 foundations**, each with a name of the 12 apostles.
- Angel measures city, it is a **perfect cube**, 12,000 furlongs each direction (about 1500 miles) - would bridge NY to London, huge, about size of moon if this is literal!
- Wall 144 cubits thick
- Constructed of **jasper**, city pure gold, “like clear glass”
- Foundations decorated with all kinds of **precious stones**: jasper, sapphire, chalcedony, emerald, sardonxy, sardius, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase, jacinth, amethyst (12 stones, similar to priest’s breastplate in Exodus 28)
- Each gate a **single huge pearl, street gold**, “Like transparent glass.” Light will penetrate every corner of this city.
- **No temple**, not needed. God and the Lamb now dwell in the midst of man (God is the temple!). God’s glory illuminates, no need of sun or moon, Lamb is the light. All the saved will walk in His light, “kings of earth bring their glory and honor into it.”
- Gates not shut (like regular cities at night), **no night there.**
- **Nothing that defiles will enter this city.** Only those written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.
- Remember, **we cannot really imagine this.** (1 Corinthians 2:9)



Chapter 22: Reunited and Restored

- **Pure river of water of life**, clear as crystal, proceeds from throne of God.
- **Tree of Life** seen, bearing 12 fruits, yielding fruit every month. Leaves for healing of the nations.
- **No more curse**, throne of God and Lamb in city, servants will serve Him.
- We will **see His face**, His name written on our foreheads.
- **No night** there, need no lamp (no darkness!)
- Servants will **reign forever**.
- Guarantee, **“these words are faithful and true.”** Angel sent to show His servants things “which must shortly take place.”
- **“Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”**
- John again is overwhelmed and falls down to worship the angel. Angel responds, “See that you do not do that...Worship God.”
- John told to **not seal the words** of this prophecy, for “the time is at hand.”
- Strange directive: “He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still.” (it’s too late to change at this point!)
- **“And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.”**
- Those who do His commandments are blessed, have right to the tree of life, may enter gates into city.
- **Outside city** are all those evil who “practice a lie” (the BIG lie!)
- **Jesus validates** the book, says **“I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning star.”**
- Everyone says “Come!” Anyone thirsty can freely come to take the water of life freely.
- **Warning:** If anyone adds or takes away from the words of this book, God will take away his part in the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from anything written in this book.
- The one who validates the book says **“Surely I am coming quickly.”**
- John ends the book with “Amen (so be it), **even so, come Lord Jesus.**”



There is much controversy about the interpretation of the book of Revelation. It is our experience that when we attempt to literally interpret all of scripture wherever possible, instead of trying to create allegories and symbolism where they don't necessarily exist, we will be much more able to understand God's plan for all humanity. It all begins to make much more sense with a literal interpretation, rather than relying on man's wisdom. While scripture does make use of allegories and symbolism, the Bible will always interpret itself. When we manufacture these, we confuse God's Word. It is meant to be simple, and simply understood. God always says what He means, and He always means and does what He says. It really is that simple, but it does require us to do some work. We need to study and devour (to "eat" it as John was required to do!) God's Word with a hunger that keeps us filling ourselves with it. Trying to understand Revelation without a thorough knowledge of all scripture is fruitless, and even dangerous. There are still many areas we cannot yet understand, simply because they still lie in the future, but our history is filled with the fulfillment of thousands of prophecies, all brought about by God in very literal and exact measure, exactly and literally as He said He would. There are still prophecies yet to be completed, and we can expect He will fulfill those just as literally and precisely. Revelation is the completion of God's Perfect Plan, begun in Genesis, and in this book closes the age of sinful man and opens the door of eternity with Him.