



True Jesus Church

1,2,3 John, Jude & Revelation



B I B L E S T U D Y G U I D E

1,2,3 John, Jude & Revelation

TRUE JESUS CHURCH

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Suggestions for Bible Study

Read Carefully

Observation is the most basic step in Bible study. Misinterpretation is often the result of careless reading. Only when we know what the passage says can we interpret what it means. Before each lesson, read the passage closely. Read it a few times until you become familiar with it. Observe words, phrases, paragraph structure, relationships, emphases, as well as anything that seems unusual. In doing so, you will discover things that you could never have if you read it casually.

Use A Pencil

Keep your pen or pencil busy by recording your observations and thoughts as you go through the passage. Mark key words and phrases. Take note of the relationship between words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. Jotting your observations down on paper helps you focus your mind on the Bible text and leaves a much deeper impression on your mind. Your notes will also become valuable reference material the next time you come back to the passage.

Study with Prayer

“No one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God” (1Cor 2:11). The guidance of the Holy Spirit is key to understanding and being inspired by God’s word. Pray everyday and ask God to reveal to you the truth in His words. Whenever you come across a difficult passage, rely on the Holy Spirit by putting it in your prayer. Through your life of prayer, God will open your inner eyes to know His will and give you the strength to put it into practice.

Let the Word Speak to You

Bible study is not an intellectual exercise. Its aim is to change the reader in his thoughts, behavior, and lifestyle to conform to God’s will. The final goal of every Bible study is to apply God’s word in our lives. God reveals His will to the humble. So always approach the Bible with an attitude to be taught and corrected. When you are willing to let God’s word be a mirror to reflect your shortcomings and are determined to carry out His command, your Bible study will have achieved its intended purpose.

Using This Guide

Hands On Approach

This guide is not meant to be your coffee-table reading. Use it as a tool to make your study or discussion more effective. Make use of the spaces in the lessons to record your thoughts and observations.

Outline

One of the exercises under the section “observation” is to record an outline of the passage. Spend time to work on this important exercise because it helps you get the big picture of the entire passage as well as see the relationship between the parts. It also trains you to read the passage carefully and thoughtfully. Try to write the outline without copying the headings from your Bible. Each entry in the outline should accurately reflect the main idea of the paragraph.

Key Words

Key words are words that give meaning to the text or are related to the main idea. Key words are often repeated to mark emphasis. Key words tell you about who, what, when, where, why, or how. Since there are no right or wrong key words, your list may be different from the one provided at the end of the book.

Length of Lesson

Although the lessons are also designed for group Bible study, sometimes a lesson may be too long for a study session. If this happens, the Bible study leader who began the lesson should inform the next leader of where the passage was left off and the discussion results from the first study.

Thoughts on Questions

The end of this book contains suggested answers that serve as pointers when you need help. Since many of the questions do not have standard answers, use the answers provided only as reference. With these thoughts on questions as a starting point, you should be able to come up with more complete answers on your own.

Preparing for Group Bible Studies

Before leading a group Bible study, you should go through the lesson in advance to get a good understanding of the material. Then select questions based on the amount of time you have for discussion and the group’s size, makeup, level of biblical knowledge, etc. Try to also

design additional application questions that you think would suit the particular needs of the group.

The Inductive Method

The inductive approach is an effective way to study the Bible. It follows 3 basic steps: observation, interpretation, and application.

- 👁 **Observation**—*What did God say? How did He say it?* This type of questions helps you look at the Bible passage carefully and equips you for a sound interpretation.
- 🔑 **Interpretation**—*What does it mean?* When answering this type of questions, let the Bible interpret itself whenever possible. Look at the immediate context (the surrounding verses) as well as the broader context (the surrounding chapters and the whole Bible) to derive at the intended meaning. Also ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten your heart to know the spiritual things that God wants to convey to you.
- 👣 **Application**—*How can I put this into practice?* Application questions encourage you to think about what God is teaching you personally through your study. What are His commands? What shortcomings in you is He pointing out? What message of encouragement does He have for you today? It is in examining your relationship with God and acting out God’s word that the words of the Bible can truly come to life.

Because the order of the questions in this guide generally follows the order of the Bible text, we did not group the questions according to the 3 steps mentioned above. Instead, we have used symbols to identify the type of question. By helping you become acquainted with these 3 basic types of questions, we hope that you will acquire the ability to develop meaningful questions for future personal studies as well as group discussions.

Footnotes

Two numbers follow each quote, e.g. (4/134). The number before the slash refers to the reference source listed at the end of this book. The second number indicates the page where the quote is located in the reference source.

1

Introduction to the Epistles of John

Fellowship with God**Author**

Although the epistles do not identify the author, the witness of the early church supports John's authorship.


Recipient

The epistles make it clear that the author was writing to believers (2:12-14,19; 3:1; 5:13). Early Christian sources tell us that John spent most of his latter years in Ephesus and that the epistle was read in the province of Asia. Since the epistles make no mention of specific locations or names, it is probable that the epistles were meant to circulate among the believers in Asia.

Date

Probably between 85 to 95 A.D.

Purpose/Occasion

1. The author states in four places the purpose of his epistle. Try to locate them and record them below. 

False teachers had come out at that time to deceive the people and had even separated themselves from the community of believers (2:19). These teachers also tried to lead the believers astray (2:26).

2. Go through the epistles and record the false teachings and the actions of these teachers. 

To combat these deceptive teachings, the apostle once again proclaimed the word of eternal life to the believers and urged them to remain in the Son and in the Father. He taught them to live a life of fellowship with God that is marked by obedience to God and love for one another. By knowing what it means to be the true children of God, they would be able to discern and guard against the spirit of falsehood.

In 2 John, the elder stressed again the command to love one another and warned the believers not to show hospitality to the false teachers. 3 John, which was addressed to a brother called Gaius, seems to suggest a possible division led by Diotrephes and encourages the recipient to be faithful to what is good.

So in all three epistles, we can see the threat of false teachings and schisms. The writer aimed to battle against evil and deception while preserving the faith of the true believers.

Unique Characteristics

1. The style of 1 John does not have a linear development found in many other epistles. It constantly repeats and revisits themes that has been mentioned before in the book.
2. The author often drew distinctions of sharp contrasts in 1 John (e.g. light and darkness, truth and lies, children of God and children of the devil, life and death, and love and hatred).

Central Verse

“But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1Jn 1:7).

Survey of 1 John

Although it is difficult to identify a discernible structure in this epistle because of its unique literary style, try to go through the entire book and record a heading for each of the section divisions in chart A.

Themes

Our Savior Jesus Christ

The writer of the epistles places utmost importance on faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God (4:15; 5:1). Against the beliefs of the false teachers, the author stresses the important fact that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. Every spirit that does not acknowledge this truth is the spirit of the antichrist (4:3; 2Jn 7).

Jesus was manifested in the flesh as the propitiation for our sins in order to destroy the works of the devil (2:2; 4:10; 3:8), and His atoning sacrifice was for the sins of the whole world (2:2). Through our faith in Christ, we are cleansed by His blood (1:7,9; 5:6) and have received life through Him (5:11-13). God also lives in us through the anointing of the Holy Spirit (2:20,27; 3:24). Not only so, those who are born of God are safe from the harm of the evil one (5:18).

Righteousness

A believer, who has been born of God, keeps God's commandments and walks as Jesus did (1:7; 2:3-6,29). He does not sin but practices what is right and good (3:6-10; 3Jn 11). He does not love the world or the things in the world (2:15-17). Instead, he purifies himself, just as God is pure (3:3). It is with such a life of righteousness that he truly abides in God (2:6,24).

Love

The righteous life of a believer is rooted in love. God is love (4:8,16) and love is of God (4:7). He demonstrated His love by giving us His Son (4:9,10). If we live in God and He lives in us, we will love one another (4:11,12,16,19). The author makes numerous references to the "new command" given by our Lord to love one another as He had loved us (see Jn 13:34). Loving our brothers whom we can see is the way we show our love for God whom we cannot see (4:20; 5:1). Whoever does not love his brothers walks in darkness and still remains in death (2:9-11; 3:14,15).

Fellowship

Although the word "fellowship" appears only four times in 1 John, the concept of fellowship underlies all three epistles. As 1:3 states, this fellowship is with other believers, with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. Love is the bond that brings together the members of

the fellowship. Just as God loves us and gave us His Son, we also ought to love one another (4:9-11).

With the coming of the antichrist, believers all the more need to remain in fellowship with one another by obeying the truth and not succumbing to evil (4:5-6; 2Jn 9; 3Jn 3). Ultimately, fellowship with the children of God is only possible if we have fellowship with God, and having fellowship with God enables us to receive eternal life (5:10,13, 20). So John urges us, time and again, to remain in God and allow God to remain in us (2:24,27,28).

Truth

In the epistles, we see a recurring contrast between the truth and lies. God is true (5:20), and His Spirit is truth (2:27; 5:6). It is through Jesus Christ that we may know and live in Him who is true (5:20). We are to remain in God through His anointing, which is true and not a lie (2:27). Those who obey God's commandments are walking in the truth (2:4; 2Jn 4). They show that they belong to the truth by loving others with actions rather than words (3:18,19).

A liar is one who denies that Jesus is the Christ (2:22; 5:10) and denies his own sins (1:10); he claims to be in God but walks in darkness (1:6,10; 2:4). He says, "I love God" but hates his brother (4:20). He is of the spirit of error because he chooses to listen to the world and refuses to listen to the children of God (4:6).

Knowing

The word "know" appears more than thirty times in the epistles. According to John, true knowledge is a mark of believers. This knowledge refers to the knowledge of God (2:13,14; 5:20), which is not based on mere claims but on actions (2:4; 4:7,8).

The knowledge according to the epistles also has to do with understanding the things of God (5:20). Believers know the truth through the anointing (2:20,21; 2Jn 1). We know love because Christ laid down His life for us (3:16). We know that He hears us when we ask Him (5:15). We know that we have eternal life through belief in the Son of God (5:13). We also know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him (3:2).

John also offers tests of spiritual discernment. We know that we know God if we keep His commandments (2:3,5). We know that we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren (3:14-16). We know that God abides in us by the Spirit He has given us (3:24; 4:13).

We know that every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God (4:2). We know that whoever is born of God does not sin (5:18).

End Times

The coming of the antichrist is a sign of the end time. Seeing the appearance of many antichrists, the author reminds us that the last hour has come (2:18; 4:3). These false teachers are liars and deceivers who try to lead the believers astray (2:22,26; 2Jn 7). We must abide in God so that we will not be ashamed before Him when He comes (2:27,28). If we walk as Christ did and have perfect love, we will have no fear on the day of judgment (4:17-18). We must guard against the deception of false teachings so that we may receive a full reward (2Jn 8). Since we are the children of God, we will be like Him when He is revealed (3:2). With this hope, we purify ourselves, just as God is pure (3:3).

Key Words/Phrases

Know, love, Son, fellowship, darkness, spirit, Father, children, light, believe, sin, truth, commandments, abide, life.

Modern Relevance

In an age of apostasy and disbelief, we need to be aware of the deception of false teachings. The apostle teaches us to not believe in every spirit but to test the spirits, whether they are of God (4:1). The spirit that denies Jesus’ saving works and refuses to obey the teachings of the apostles is from the devil. It claims to know God but does not live according to God’s word.

How then can we guard against the works of the devil in the end times? We must believe in Jesus Christ, who gives us eternal life, enables us to overcome the world, and protects us from the evil one. We must remain in fellowship with Jesus Christ. Such fellowship is not just confession of our faith but obedience to the Lord’s commands. The three epistles help us examine ourselves to see if we actually practice purity and love. We can know that we are true children of God only if we imitate Christ in our daily lives.

1:1-4	Light of fellowship	God is light	Joyful—victorious life	Joy of fellowship
1:5-7				
1:8-10				
2:1-2				
2:3-6				
2:7-11				
2:12-14				
2:15-17				
2:18-19				
2:20-21				
2:22-23	Love of fellowship	God is righteousness	Life of knowledge	Way of fellowship
2:24-25				
2:26-27				
2:28-29				
3:1-3				
3:4-10				
3:11-18				
3:19-24				
4:1-6				
4:7-12				
4:13-16	Way to fellowship	God is love	Benefits of fellowship	
4:17-21				
5:1-3				
5:4-5				
5:6-8				
5:9-12				
5:13				
5:14-17				
5:18-21				
				Certainty of fellowship

Chart A: Survey of 1John

2

1John 1:1-4

Fellowship through the Word of Life

The Basics

Setting

This short section is like a preface to the entire epistle. It tells us the origin, nature, content, and purpose of the message that the apostle is declaring. Much information and teaching is packed into these four verses. So take the time to think about the passage and its significance.

Key Verse

“The life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us” (1:2).


Did You Know...?


1. **Fellowship** (1:3): “Hellenistic literature uses [this word] to describe partners in business, joint owners of a piece of property, or shareholders in a common enterprise.” ^{9/307}

Observation

Key Words/Phrases


Segment Analysis


1. Compare verse 1-5 with John 1:1-18 and write down the similarities and the teachings behind them.  

2. To understand the first three verses, we need to read the sentence carefully first and see what it says. 
- 2a. What is the content of the message that John is declaring?

- 2b. What is the nature of this message?



- 2c. What is the purpose for declaring this message?

3. What does it mean that John has “heard,” “seen,” “looked upon,” “handled,” and is “bearing witness” to the Word of life? 


4. The sentence structure of verses 1-3 is quite unusual. It starts with the object, and we do not see the subject and verb until verse 3. This is what the sentence would be like if it was written another way. “We declare to you concerning the Word of life, which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen....” Why do you think the author structured his sentence this way? 

5. What does the word “fellowship” mean? Read these N.T. passages in which the word is used and try to provide a definition based on these verses: Acts 2:42; 1Cor 1:9; 5:2 (NIV); 10:20; 2Cor 6:14; 8:4; 13:14 (NIV); Gal 2:9; Phil 1:5; 2:1; 3:10; Phm 6 (NASB).




6. How does John’s description serve as a powerful defense against the denial that Jesus came in the flesh?  


7. Why is it important to us, the readers, that what the apostle declares is something he has seen, looked upon, and handled?



8a. What can we learn from John in his role as a witness?  

8b. In what ways have you also seen, heard, and touched our Lord?




8c. The apostle bears witness to what he has seen. Do you bear witness to what you have seen? Write down things in your faith that you have seen, heard, and touched that you could witness to others about. 

9. Why is the message we have received and share with others the “Word of life”?  

10a. How does the writer have fellowship with his readers?  

10b. How is our fellowship with other believers also fellowship with God? 

11. Think about or discuss ways we can have fellowship with one another and with God. You may refer to John’s epistles as your guide. 

Walking in the Light

The Basics

Setting

The introduction of the epistle ended with the fellowship with God as the purpose of the epistle. This section goes into descriptions of the members of this fellowship (God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the believers) and the condition for entering into the fellowship

Key Verse

“But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1:7).

Did You Know...?

1. **Advocate** (2:1): “The Greek word (*parakletos*) translated “advocate” literally means “one called to one’s side,” or a helper. In New Testament days the word was used in a court of justice to denote a legal assistant, or counsel, for the defense.” ^{2/42}


Observation

Outline

_____ (1:5-7)
 _____ (1:8-10)
 _____ (2:1-2)


Key Words/Phrases


General Analysis

1. What kind of lie is meant in these verses? 
 - 1a. 1:6

 - 1b. 1:8


 - 1c. 1:10


2. What is taught about Jesus Christ in this section? 


3. What are the requirements, according to this section, for fellowship with God? 


Segment Analysis

1:5-7

- 1a. What does darkness refer to? 

 - 1b. What does it mean that God is light? 

2. Have you ever felt that you lived in darkness and lie? What was it like? 

 - 3a. How do we walk in the light? 

3b. How is walking in the light fellowship with God and with one another? 🔑

4. What does verse 6 teach us about saying and doing? 👁

5. How does Jesus enable our fellowship with God and with one another? 👁 🔑

1:8-10

6. What does this paragraph teach us about God’s character? What does it have to do with forgiveness? 👁 🔑

7a. Why would a person say he is without sin? 🔑

7b. Why does God make confession of sins a condition for forgiveness and cleansing? 🔑

2:1-2

8. What is the significance of the author’s statement “...these things I write to you, so that you may not sin”? 🔑

9a. What does an “advocate” do?

9b. How is Jesus our advocate? 🔑

9c. Does Christ’s advocacy mean that our sins are automatically forgiven whenever we sin against God? 🔑

10a. What is propitiation? 🔑

10b. How is God the propitiation for the sins of the whole world? 🔑

4

1John 2:3-17

Abiding in Christ

The Basics

Setting

Having declared that God is light, the author sets the direction of his exhortation. In order to have fellowship with God, we must walk in the light and receive the atonement of Jesus Christ. This section further teaches us that keeping God’s commandments is the way to remain in fellowship with God.

Key Verse

“Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments” (2:3).

Did You Know...?

- Little children** (2:12,13): “In verse 12 the Greek word is *teknia*, representing kinship. So John writes this verse as to those spiritually related to him. In verse 13 the Greek word is *paidia* suggesting subordination, or listening to instruction.” ^{2/51}
- World** (2:15): “The Greek translated ‘world’ is *kosmos*, an ordered system (opposite of chaos).” ^{2/51}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (2:3-6)
- _____ (2:7-11)
- _____ (2:12-14)
- _____ (2:15-17)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

- What are the three false claims that John discusses in this section?

- How can we truly know God?

- How can we overcome the wicked one?

Segment Analysis

2:3-6

- How is God’s love perfected in those who keep God’s word?

- What are some ways you can walk as Jesus walked?

2:7-11


- 3a. What is the commandment mentioned in verses 7 and 8?

- 3b. Why is the commandment both old and new?

- What does love and hatred have to do with light and darkness?


2:12-14

5a. How is this paragraph unique? 

5b. What three things are again emphasized here? 

5c. What do you think is the purpose of this paragraph? 

6. Who is the wicked one? How have the believers overcome him?



7. How can we let God's word abide in us (v.14)?  

2:15-17

8a. What does it mean to love the world? 

8b. Why shouldn't we love the world?  

9. Explain each of these and think of some real-life examples:






9a. Lust of the flesh

9b. Lust of the eyes

9c. Pride of life

10a. What does it mean that the world and its lust are passing away?



10b. What does this verse teach you about what is meaningful and valuable in life?  

5

1John 2:18-27

Warnings against the Antichrist

The Basics

Setting

From the start of this epistle, John has been warning the believers of the evil that opposes true fellowship with God. Sin, darkness, Satan, and the world can make a person blind and can cause him to stumble. Therefore, believers need to be aware of them. In this passage, John discusses another element of evil—the antichrist—in order to guard the believers against the deception of heresy.

Key Verse

“But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him” (2:27).















Observation

Outline



- _____ (2:18-19)
- _____ (2:20-21)
- _____ (2:22-23)
- _____ (2:24-27)
- _____ (2:28-29)


Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

1. What are the ways and teachings of the antichrist? 
- _____
- _____
2. What is “the last hour”? 
- _____
- _____
- 3a. Explain the meaning of verse 19. Who does “us” refer to ?  
- _____
- _____
- 3b. According to this verse, where might the antichrist come from in the last days?  
- _____
- _____
- 4a. What is “the anointing”? 
- _____
- _____
- 4b. What is the purpose of the anointing? Explain how the anointing accomplishes this purpose.  
- _____
- _____
- 5a. What does it mean by “you know all things”? 
- _____
- _____
- 5b. Do you “know all things”? Explain.  
- _____
- _____
6. How do we know that the antichrist is from the wicked one?  
- _____
- _____

7. How do we acknowledge the Son?  

8. Does verse 27 mean that we do not need to be taught by others about anything? What is the context of this statement?  

9a. List all the recordings of “abiding” in this passage. 

9b. How can we abide in Christ?  

10. Review the passage and write down how we can guard against the antichrist.   

6

Beloved Children of God (1)

The Basics

Setting

The author has drawn a clear distinction between the false believers and true believers. He also assures the true believers of their knowledge of the true gospel and the promise of eternal life. In this and the following sections, he calls the believers “children of God” and emphasizes again the theme of living a life that imitates Christ.

Key Verse

“Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God” (3:9).

Observation


Outline

- _____ (2:28-3:3)
- _____ (3:4-6)
- _____ (3:7-10)

Key Words/Phrases


General Analysis


1. According to this passage, what characterize the children of God?






Segment Analysis



3:1-3


- 1a. What is the tone of 3:1? 



- 1b. What is the author asking his readers to behold? 


- 1c. What significance does the declaration that we are the beloved children of God have on subsequent teachings?  

- 2a. How does the world not know God? 


- 2b. What does it mean that “the world does not know us”? In your daily life, do you experience this feeling of being a stranger to the world?  

- 3a. Explain the teaching in verse 2 about our future likeness. 

- 4. What is the connection between verses 2 and 3?  

- 5. How can we purify ourselves? 


3:4-10


- 6. Record your observations about the following 
- 6a. A definition of sin


- 6b. Source of sin


- 6c. Power over sin


- 6d. An example of sin

- 7. Isn't verse 7 contradictory to justification by faith alone? (See Rom 3:20-28) 

- 8. How does Christ destroy the works of the devil? 

- 9. What does this passage say about the children of the devil? 

- 10. Does verse 9 teach that believers never commit sin in their lives? 

- 11. What is the seed that is in the believer? 

Final Thoughts

- How does the coming of Christ inspire you in your walk of faith?



7

Beloved Children of God (2)

The Basics

Setting

In the previous study, we contemplated on the marvelous love of God, who has called us His children. We also learned that those who are born of God do not live in sin. They practice righteousness in the likeness of the Father who has given them birth. In this study, we will look at how the children of God also live a life of love.

Key Verse

“By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (3:16).

Observation

Outline

_____ (3:11-15)

_____ (3:16-18)

_____ (3:19-24)


Key Words/Phrases


General Analysis


- Go through the entire passage and record the reasons for loving our brothers and sisters.


Segment Analysis

3:11-15



- 1. Do we sometimes have an attitude like that of Cain? What causes such an attitude? 


- 2. What is the "world" in verse 13? 


- 3. What kind of life and death does verse 14 refer to? 


- 4. Why is hatred equivalent to murder? 


3:16-18


- 5a. How should we lay down our lives for our brethren?  

- 5b. As we try to love others, we will surely encounter hatred from those who belong to the world. How then can we love in such a hostile world? 


- 6a. Think of some real-life examples in which we only love in word and tongue. 

- 6b. What does it mean to love in deed and in truth? 

- 6c. How does loving in deed and in truth fulfill the spirit of laying down our lives for our brethren? 

- 7. List the needs of those around you that you have overlooked in the past, and that you want to meet through your love now. List as many as possible. 


3:19-24



- 8. What does this paragraph say about the following: 


 - 8a. Confidence in heart

- 8b. Confidence in prayer

- 8c. Confidence in abiding

- 9. Explain the teaching of verses 19-21. 

- 10. Compare the commandments in 23 with Mt 22:34-40.  

11a. According to verse 24, what are the two ways by which we can know that we abide in God and He in us? 

11b. How is the Spirit an evidence of God’s abiding in us?  

The Basics

Setting

After John sets forth love as a requirement of God’s children, he discusses the dichotomy between truth and lie by showing how to discern the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. Then, continuing with the theme of loving one another, he goes on to emphasize the divine origin of love as a basis for our love for one another.

Key Verse

“You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world” (4:4).

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God” (4:7).

Observation

Outline

(4:1-6)

(4:7-21)

(7-12)

(13-16)



(17-18)

(19-21)

Key Words/Phrases



Segment Analysis

4:1-6



1a. According to this paragraph, what are the two tests that help us discern the spirits?  

1b. How are the two tests related? 


1c. How do these tests apply to the situation of the world today? 

2. The passage implies that the spirit of error works through his agents. Who are the agents of the false spirit and in whom does the false spirit work?  

3. Why is the belief that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh a crucial doctrine? 

4a. Who is “them” in verse 4?  

4b. How have the true believers overcome them?  

4c. Explain “He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.” 

4:7-21

5. Record the teachings in this passage about 

5a. God’s love for us

5b. Our love for God


5c. Our love for one another

5d. What God is

5e. Our relationship with God

6. How is the teaching of love an expansion of verses 5 and 6?



7. How does love enable us to know God (7,8)? 


8. What is the significance of the statement “no one has seen God”? 

9a. According to 12-16, what are the manifestations of our abiding in God and His abiding in us? 

9b. What does it mean to abide in God? 

10. Why is it necessary that Jesus Christ be the Son of God in order to be Savior of the world? 

11a. What is a perfected love? (12,17,18)  

11b. What does it mean to be “made perfect in love” (18)? 

12. Why does perfect love cast out fear? 

13. Why does loving God require loving our brothers (21)? 

Eternal Life in Jesus Christ

The Basics

Setting

In the final chapter of his epistle, John turns our focus to the Lord Jesus Christ again. Through faith in the Son of God, about whom God has given testimony, we may receive eternal life. This is the gift and promise for those who are born of God, who love God, who abide in God, and who have fellowship with God.

Key Verse

“And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life” (5:20).


Observation

Outline

- _____ (5:1-5)
- _____ (5:1-3)
- _____ (5:4-5)
- _____ (5:6-12)
- _____ (5:13-21)
- _____ (5:13)
- _____ (5:14-16)
- _____ (5:17-21)



Key Words/Phrases


General Analysis

- 1. According to this passage, what are the fruits of believing in Christ? 

Segment Analysis

5:1-5

- 1. What does the word “Christ” mean? How does your belief that Jesus is the Christ manifest in your daily life?  

- 2. Why do we often think that God’s commandments are burdensome? Why are they, in fact, not burdensome? 

- 3. How does our belief in the Lord Jesus enable us to overcome the world? Define “world.” 



5:6-12

- 4. How did Jesus come by water and blood? 


- 5. How does the Spirit bear witness? 

- 6. What does it mean that the Spirit, the water, and the blood, agree as one? 


- 7a. Why is God’s testimony so important? 




- 7b. In what ways do we often value men’s witness more than God’s witness?  



- 8a. How does God’s giving of eternal life serve as a testimony? 

- 8b. How is this testimony related to water, blood, and the Spirit? 

5:14-21

- 9. What does it mean to believe in the name of the Son of God? 

- 10a. Record the occurrences of the word “know.” According to this passage, what can we be confident about?   

- 10b. On what basis is this confidence built?  

10c. When does such confidence become a false sense of security?



11a. What is “sin leading to death”?

11b. Do you pray for your brother who has sinned? Why is it important to do so?

12. What can we learn from 18-21 about God’s children and the children of the wicked one?

13a. Why does John emphasize that God is true?

13b. What is the connection between 21 and 20?

13c. How does 21 relate to the entire epistle?

The Basics

Setting

In this brief letter, John wrote with a personal tone to the “elect lady and her children.” The teachings recall those in his first epistle, with emphasis on walking in the truth and separation from the false teachers.

Key Verse

“Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son” (9).

Did You Know...?

1. **Elect lady** (1): If the term “elect lady” is interpreted literally, the epistle was written to an unnamed lady. It could also be possible that her name is Cyris (Greek *eklekta kuria*, translated “elect Cyria”), or Electa (translating the Greek as “the lady Electa”). (see 2/89).
2. **“Do not receive him”** (10): “Itinerant missionaries were the means by which Christianity spread throughout the Empire. They looked to local churches to aid in their mission by providing hospitality (Roman inns were notorious for being dirty and flea-infested). The problem was that some of the people seeking room and board were false teachers, expounding erroneous doctrines....” ^{12/1716}
3. **Paper and ink** (12): “‘Paper’ is papyrus, made from reeds and rolled up like a scroll. The pen was a reed pointed at the end, and the ink was a compound of charcoal, vegetable gum and water. Written letters were considered an inferior substitute for personal presence or for a speech, and writers sometimes concluded their letters with promise to discuss matters further face-to-face.” ^{4/749}



Observation

Outline




- _____ (1-3)
- _____ (4-6)
- _____ (7-11)
- _____ (12-13)


Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. What was the occasion and purpose of this letter? 
- _____
- _____
2. Record what the epistle says about “truth.” 
- _____
- _____
- _____

Segment Analysis

- 1-3**
1. If “the elect lady” were interpreted figuratively, what could John be referring to? 
 - _____
 - 2a. What is the connection between truth and love? 
 - _____
 - _____
 - 2b. What are some examples of “love” without truth and explain why such love can only hurt? 
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____

3. Why does John mention both the Father and the Son in his benediction (3)? 

4-6



4. What does this paragraph teach us about love? 



5. Why is keeping God’s commandments considered love (6)? 

7-11

6. What are “the things we worked for” in verse 8? 


7. What is the doctrine of Christ and what does it mean to abide in the doctrine of Christ? 

8. Why shouldn’t we receive or greet those who do not preach the doctrine of Christ? Is this instruction against the spirit of love?  

9. How does the exhortation in 4-6 prepare the readers for the exhortations to resist the wickedness of false preachers?  

12-13

10a. What is the significance of verse 12? 

10b. What is the value of speaking face to face as opposed to writing? 

11

Fellow Workers for the Truth

The Basics

Setting

Unlike 2 John, this epistle is addressed to a brother, and the author, known as “the elder,” mentions specific people by name. Yet the theme of truth and love continues in 3 John with a similar tone and language, even though the elder goes into greater detail in describing the deeds and characters of individuals as well as the situation of the local church.

Key Verse

“We therefore ought to receive such, that we may become fellow workers for the truth” (8).

Did You Know...”

1. **“I pray that you may prosper...”** (2): “This is a standard greeting in many ancient letters, which quite often began with a prayer for the reader’s health, frequently including the prayer that all would go well with the person (not just material prosperity, as some translations could be read as implying).” ^{4/751}

Observation

Outline

(1)

(2-4)

(5-8)

(9-10)

(11-12)


(13-14)

Key Words/Phrases

Did You Know...?


- 1. "Send them forward on their journey" refers to the supplying of necessary provisions for a person's journey (cf. Acts 15:3; Tit 3:13). ^{2/100}

General Analysis

- 1. Compare the following items in 2 and 3 John: 
 - 1a. Similar words and phrases that are repeated

 - 1b. Tone

 - 1c. Church problems


- 2. Record what you know about the three characters in this epistle: 
 - 2a. Gaius


 - 2b. Diotrephes

 - 2c. Demetrius



Segment Analysis


2-4


- 1. What is the "prosperity of the soul"? 


- 2. Why is it the elder's greatest joy to hear that his children walk in the truth? 


5-8

- 3a. What does this paragraph teach about hospitality?  

- 3b. What is the significance of the phrase "in a manner worth of God"? 

- 4a. Why is it admirable that Gaius received brothers who were strangers to him? 

- 4b. Who are the strangers in your personal or church life? How should you receive them? 

- 5. Why does the author stress that these witnesses were going forth "for His name's sake"? 

6. Why was receiving these missionaries so important to the church at that time, considering the situation of the church? 🔑

7. In what ways can you receive and support the workers of God today and become their fellow workers? 🦶

9-10

8a. What does this passage say about Diotrephes' thoughts, words, and deeds? 👁

8b. Could his words and actions have stemmed from his thoughts? If so, how? 🔑

11-12

9. What does it mean that Demetrius has a good testimony from the truth itself? Do you have a good testimony from the truth, not just from other people? 🔑 🦶

10a. Why do people tend to imitate evil? 🔑

10b. What reason does the author give for imitating good instead of evil? 👁

11. Do you sometimes become discouraged in the church because of the wicked deeds of some individuals? How does this passage encourage you? 🦶

13-14

12a. What is the meaning and significance of greeting the friends "by name"? (cf. Jn 10:3). How is it related to the context of this epistle? 👁 🔑

12b. Do you greet your brothers and sister "by name"? How can you enhance your relationship with other believers? 🦶

12

Jude 1-25

Keep Yourselves in the Love of God

Author

The epistle identifies the author as “Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James” (1). “Jude” is an English form of “Judas”, the Greek form of “Judah.” The James of Jude 1:1 is most likely the James of Jerusalem, leader of the Jerusalem church, who was also known as “James, the Lord’s brother” (Gal 1:19; 2:9,12; Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; 1Cor 15:7). If this assumption is correct, then Jude, the brother of James, would also be the brother of the Lord (Mt 13:55; Mk 6:3).

Recipient

The identity of the author and knowledge of Jewish background that the letter assumes suggests that the intended recipients were Jewish Christians. The author seems to be writing to a local church or a group of churches which false teachers were attempting to penetrate.

Date

Probably between 60 to 65 A.D.

Purpose/Occasion

- From the epistle itself, we can know something about the conditions at that time and the purpose for writing this epistle. Identify and record your observations.

Unique Characteristics

- Jude borrows from many Old Testament examples of wicked men and the judgment that fell on them to show that the false

teachers, whom the Lord had already prophesied about, are likewise marked out for condemnation. He uses strong words and images to depict the vile character of these false teachers and the severity of their punishment.

Central Verse

“But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life” (1:20-21).

Modern Relevance

As the apostle Paul had predicted, many will turn from the truth in the last days. They will be lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God (2Tim 3:4; 4:3,4). The prevalence of pleasure-seeking and moral relativism has corrupted the minds of people today, including many professed Christians. The epistle of Jude is a call to contemporary believers to stand up for the truth and be strong in the faith while we fulfill our mission of bringing the gospel to the world.

Observation

Outline

- _____ (1-2)
- _____ (3-4)
- _____ (5-19)
- _____ (5-7)
- _____ (8-19)
- _____ (20-23)
- _____ (24,25)

Key Words/Phrases

Did You Know...?

- Contend** (3): “‘To contend’ or ‘struggle’ translates *epagōnizesthai*, a word that occurs only here in the NT. However, related words do occur in the NT... The basic meaning of this

word is that of the intense effort in a wrestling match (cf. *agōnizomenos* in 1Cor 9:25). The verb form is a present infinitive, showing that the Christian struggle is to be continuous....” 9/388

- 2. **Lewdness** (4): “means lustful, immoral sensuality and debauchery (see Eph. 4:19; 1Pet. 4:3).” 1/1904
- 2. **“Yet Michael the archangel”** (9): “Jude is probably citing a story given in the apocryphal book *Assumption of Moses*. In so doing, Jude is not recognizing the book as having canonical status, but he is recognizing the event as being factual. The same principle applies to his quote of the book of Enoch in verses 14-15.” 2/110
- 3. **Love feasts** (12): “...the closest celebrations of believers—meals (indicated by the words eating with you), which were probably followed by the Lord’s Supper.” 16/921
- 4. **Clouds without water** (12): “Empty clouds promised rain to needy farmers but delivered nothing (Prov 25:14).” 4/755
- 4. **“Enoch prophesied”** (14): “Bible scholars are not in agreement as to whether Jude is here quoting from the apocryphal Book of Enoch or referring to an unrecorded prophecy of the Enoch of Genesis 5.” 2/110

General Analysis

- 1. Do a background study and write a brief description on each of the following Old Testament examples.
- 1a. Israelites (Num ch. 13-14; 1Cor 10:5-10)

- 1b. Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen ch. 18-19)

- 1c. Cain (Gen ch. 4)

- 1d. Balaam (Num ch. 22-24; Num 31:15,16)



- 1e. Korah (Num ch. 16)


- 1f. Enoch (Gen 5:18-24)

- 2. Identify the sins of the ungodly men depicted in this book.
- 3. What prophecies does Jude cite in the epistle?
- 4. What does this epistle say about God’s work in the believer and the work we need to do on our part?


Segment Analysis



- 3-4
 - 1a. What is “the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints”?
-
-


- 1b. How can we “contend earnestly” for this faith?  


- 2. Explain the sins of the ungodly men according to verse 4. 



5-19


- 3. What point is the author making by citing the three examples in 5-7? 

- 4. The Israelites were “saved” but were “destroyed” afterward. What does this historical example teach us?  

- 5a. What is the teaching behind the story of Michael the archangel and the surrounding verses (8,10)? 

- 5b. How does this teaching apply to us today? 

- 6. What are some present-day equivalents of “the way of Cain, the error of Balaam, and the rebellion of Korah”?  


- 7. Explain the following metaphors. 
- 7a. Spots in your love feasts

- 7b. Clouds without water (cf. Prov 25:14)



- 7c. Late autumn trees without fruit



- 7d. Raging waves of the sea (Isa 57:20)

- 7e. Wandering stars



- 8. What will the Lord judge the ungodly men of (15,16)? 

20-23

- 9. Take note of the sentence structures and how they contain main imperative verbs (commands) and qualifying “ing” verbs (NKJV; This distinction is not found in some translations).
- 9a. How do we keep ourselves in the love of God (20,21)? Explain your answer.  

- 9b. Explain the exhortations in 22 and 23. How can we apply this to ourselves today?  

Jude 1-25

10. How do the commands in this paragraph help the believers deal with the problems that the author was warning them of?  

24-25

11. How is the doxology an encouragement to believers in the midst of an ungodly generation?  

13

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Author

Four times in the book the author identifies himself as John (1:1,4,9; 22:8). It has been held since the second century that the author was the apostle John, the son of Zebedee (Mt 4:21), who was also the author of the Gospel according to John and the Epistles of John. According to tradition, John wrote Revelation after Domitian had banished him to the island of Patmos (cf. 1:9).

Recipient

Revelation was written as an epistle to the seven churches in Asia Minor, or present-day Turkey (1:4). Its message is also intended for anyone else who might read the epistle (2:7,11,17,23,29; 3:6,13,22).

Date

The date of writing is unknown, although two periods have been proposed: 1) shortly after the reign of Nero (A.D. 54-68) and 2) at the end of Domitian's reign (A.D. 81-96).

Place

Patmos (1:9), an island 37 miles southwest of Miletus.

Purpose/Occasion

When John wrote Revelation, the church was facing severe persecution and threats to her faith. Unlike Judaism, which was an established religion in the Roman empire and thus enjoyed some religious freedom, Christianity was liable to persecution for its refusal to acknowledge the gods of the Romans. Terrible persecution had once broken out under Nero, who tortured, crucified, and burned Christians to death. The mention of martyrdom in 2:13 and 6:9 shows the persistent persecution that Christians underwent.

The widespread imperial cult which demanded veneration and worship of the emperors also placed Christians in a vulnerable

position. True believers, who pledged allegiance to Jesus Christ the King rather than to the emperor, were therefore singled out as targets of persecution.

To make matters worse, the Jews were hostile to the Christians and often accused them before the authorities. Thus we read in Revelation (2:9,10; 3:9) of the persecutions from “those who say they are Jews and are not.”

Besides the external persecutions, the church also struggled against infiltration of secularization and false teachings. The church in Laodicea, for example, indulged in riches and was ignorant of her spiritual poverty and lukewarmness (3:14-22). The letters to the seven churches also warned believers of false teachers and people of immoral deeds, including the Nicolaitans (2:6,15) and followers of Balaam (2:14) and Jezebel (2:20-23). Therefore, God commanded the people to come out of Babylon (18:4), which is an image of the sinful world depicted as an arrogant woman of material splendor who had become drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs (17:6).

The purpose of Revelation is stated in 1:1. God intends to show His servants the things which must shortly take place. In view of the intense conflicts between Christians and the forces of evil, the book of Revelation serves to strengthen believers of all generations to remain faithful to Christ unto death. Since Christ will be the ultimate victor and Satan is doomed to destruction, followers of Christ will enjoy eternal glory after suffering for a little while. Revelation is also a book of warning and a call to repentance in an adulterous generation. As believers look forward to the new heaven and new earth, they must not take part in the evil of this world. The church must stand firm in the fight against sin and adorn herself as a bride without blemish in order to join the Lord at the last and greatest wedding banquet.

Unique Characteristics

1. It differs from other NT writings in its form and subject matter. According to John, it is a book of prophecy (1:3; 22:7,10,18-19). The book therefore belongs to a literary genre called apocalyptic writings (The word *apocalyptic* comes from the Greek *apokalypsis*, “an uncovering”) and its content is eschatological in nature (i.e. containing teachings about the end of things).
2. It is rich with symbols and imagery.

3. It has numerous OT quotations and allusions, more so than any other NT writings.
4. The numbers 7 and 12 are predominant in the book.
The number 7: seven beatitudes (1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7,14); seven churches (1:4,11); seven spirits (1:4; 4:5; 5:6); seven golden lampstands (1:12); seven stars (1:16); seven lamps (4:5); seven seals (5:1); seven horns and seven eyes (5:6); seven angels and trumpets (8:2); seven diadems (12:3); seven plagues (15:1); seven bowls (17:1); seven mountains (17:9); and seven kings (17:10).
The number 12: 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes (7:4-8); a garland of twelve stars (12:1); twelve gates (21:12); twelve angels (21:12); twelve foundations (21:14); twelve apostles (21:14); 12,000 furlongs (21:16).
5. It contains many songs of praise and worship.
6. The scenes in the book alternate between those in heaven and those on earth. See chart below.

Introduction 1:1-20	
On Earth	In Heaven
People on the Earth (Ch 2-3)	
	4:1-5:14
6:1-7:8	7:9-8:6
8:7-11:14	11:15-19a
11:19b	12:1-12
12:13-13:18	14:1-5
14:6-20	15:1-8
16:1-18:24	19:1-16
19:17-20:15	
People on the New Earth (21:1-22:5)	
Conclusion (22:6-21)	


Chart B ^{8/1883}


Central Verse

“Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this” (1:19).

Survey of Revelation

To get a broad picture of the Revelation, read the entire book and record a heading for each of the section divisions in chart C.

1. Observe and record the progression of the seals, the trumpets, and the bowls and how they are related. Note also the interlude between the seals and trumpets and between the trumpets and bowls. How many chapters does each interlude take up? 

2. What is the main theme of the songs recorded in Revelation? Where do the songs usually appear? 

The following are a few of the various possible outlines for the book.

1. 1:19: Things which you have seen (ch 1), and the things which are (2-3), and the things which will take place after this (4-22).
2. Four key visions: the vision of the Son of man among the seven churches (ch. 1-3); the vision of the seven-sealed scroll, the seven trumpets, the seven signs, and the seven bowls (4:1-19:10); the vision of the return of Christ and the consummation of this age (19:11-20:15); and the vision of the new heaven and new earth (21-22).^{9/411}
3. Seven acts in a drama:^{10/64-65}
 The title of the apocalypse (1:1-3)
 Salutation to the seven churches (1:4-6)
 Prologue: two voices (herald and Lord God) (1:7-8)
 Act I: The church on earth (1:9-3:22)
 - A. Setting: The seven golden lampstands (1:9-20)
 - B. The letters to the seven churches (ch. 2-3)
 - Scene 1: The passionless church (Ephesus; 2:1-7)
 - Scene 2: The persecuted church (Smyrna; 2:8-11)
 - Scene 3: The tolerant church (Pergamum; 2:12-17)
 - Scene 4: The compromising church (Thyatira; 2:18-29)
 - Scene 5: The dead church (Sardis; 3:1-6)
 - Scene 6: The missionary church (Philadelphia; 3:7-13)

Scene 7: The arrogant church (Laodicea; 3:14-22)

Act II: God's purpose in history (4:1-8:1)

- A. Setting: The throne of God (4:1-8a); odes of creatures and elders (4:8b-11); the sealed book and the Lamb (5:1-7); hymns (5:8-14)

- B. The opening of the seven seals (6:1-8:1)

Scene 1: The rider on the white horse (6:1-2)

Scene 2: The rider on the red horse (6:3-4)

Scene 3: The rider on the black horse (6:5-6)

Scene 4: The rider on the pale horse (6:7-8)

Scene 5: Prayer of the martyrs (6:9-11)

Scene 6: The eschatological events (6:12-7:17; cosmic catastrophes, 6:12-17; sealing of the martyrs, 7:1-8; the martyrs in heaven, 7:9-17)

Scene 7: Silence in heaven (8:1)

Act III: The church in tribulation (8:2-11:18)

- A. Setting: The altars, prayers of the saints (8:2-6)

- B. The sounding of the seven trumpets (8:7-11:18)

Scene 1: Hail and fire fall (8:7)

Scene 2: A mountain cast into the sea (8:8-9)

Scene 3: A star falls on rivers and springs (8:10-11)

Scene 4: Heavenly bodies darkened (8:12); an eagle announces three woes (8:13)

Scene 5: (woe 1): Pit of the abyss; locusts (9:1-12)

Scene 6: (woe 2): Four angels released (9:13-15); two hundred million horsemen (9:16-21); angel with the little book (ch 10); times of the Gentiles, two prophets, the evil city (11:1-14)

Scene 7: (woe 3): Worship in heaven (11:15-18)

Act IV: The salvation of the church (11:19-15:4)

- A. Setting: The ark of the covenant (11:19)

- B. The showing of the seven pageants (12:1-15:4)

Scene 1: The woman and the dragon, (ch 12)

Scene 2: The beast arising from the sea (13:1-10)

Scene 3: The beast arising from the land (13:11-18)

Scene 4: The Lamb with the 144,000 martyrs (14:1-5)

Scene 5: Announcement of doom to Babylon (14:6-13)

Scene 6: The son of man on a white cloud and the winepress of God's wrath (14:14-20)

Scene 7: Hymn of the Lamb chanted by the saved (15:1-4)

Act V: The world in agony (15:5-16:21)

- A. The tent of witness (15:5-16:1)

- B. The pouring out of the seven bowls (16:2-21)
 - Scene 1: Plague to the earth (boils on men; 16:2)
 - Scene 2: Plague to the sea (blood; 16:3)
 - Scene 3: Plague to rivers and springs (blood; 16:4-7)
 - Scene 4: Plague to the sun (burning heat; 16:8-9)
 - Scene 5: Plague to the beast's throne (darkness; 16:10-11)
 - Scene 6: Plague to the Euphrates (armageddon; 16:12-16)
 - Scene 7: Plague to the air (devastation; 16:17-21)
- Act VI: The judgment of the world (17:1-20:3)
 - A. Setting: An angel issuing from the sanctuary (17:1-2)
 - B. The unfolding of the seven plagues (17:3-20:3)
 - Scene 1: The woman on the scarlet beast (17:3-5)
 - Scene 2: The beast at war with the woman (17:6-18)
 - Scene 3: The final cosmic oratorio (18:1-19:10)
 - Scene 4: The Word of God on the white horse (19:11-16)
 - Scene 5: The angel standing in the sun (19:17-18)
 - Scene 6: The Battle of Armageddon (19:19-21)
 - Scene 7: Satan cast into the abyss (20:1-3)
- Act VII: The church in the Millennium (20:4-22:5)
 - A. Setting: The church enthroned with Christ (20:4-6); Satan's limited authority and defeat (20:7-10)
 - B. The fulfilling of God's sevenfold plan (20:11-22:5)
 - Scene 1: The old heaven and old earth (20:11)
 - Scene 2: The Last Judgment (20:12-15)
 - Scene 3: The new heaven and new earth (21:1)
 - Scene 4: The new Jerusalem (21:2-8)
 - Scene 5: Measuring of the city (21:9-21)
 - Scene 6: The city's illumination (21:22-27)
 - Scene 7: The city's source of life (22:1-5)
- Epilogue: Imprimaturs on the book (22:6-20)
- Closing benediction (22:21)

Themes

God on His Throne

An emphasis in Revelation is that God is the Lord who has sovereign control over history and over all forces in heaven and on earth. He is described as He "who is and who was and who is to come" (1:4); He is "The Alpha and Omega" and the "Almighty" (1:8). He is holy (4:8). As the creator of all things, He is worthy of all the glory, honor, and thanks (4:9-11). He is the Judge who will judge the living and the dead

according to their works (20:11-15). He will also prepare a new heaven and new earth as a dwelling for His people, where there will be no more death, sorrow, and pain (21:1-5).

Christ the Conquering Lamb

A major motif in the book is the cosmic battle between Christ the Lamb and the hosts of evil, including the dragon (12:7-9), the beasts (ch. 13; 17:1-14), the false prophet (19:20), and the nations of the earth (20:7-10). Christ, the Lamb which has been slain, is worthy to open the sealed scroll because He has prevailed (5:5,6). By the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony, the saints have overcome Satan the accuser (12:10,11). Christ is the Lord of lords and King of kings; He will overcome the forces that unite to make war against Him (17:14). He is portrayed as a warrior sitting on a white horse, leading the heavenly army into battle. He strikes the nations of the earth with the sharp sword and destroys all the enemies who make war with Him (19:11-21). With His ultimate victory in view, the Lord Jesus Christ challenges believers to overcome and promises reward for those who overcome (2:7,11,17,26; 3:5,12,21).

Coming of Christ

The imminent return of Christ echoes throughout the book. In his opening statements addressing the seven churches, John speaks of how the whole earth will witness the coming of Christ and mourn because of Him (1:7). In the letters to the churches, the coming of Christ also serves as warning to the unrepentant and encouragement to those who persevere (2:5,16,25; 3:3,11). Twice, the coming of the Lord is likened to that of a thief, calling for spiritual awakening and watchfulness (3:3; 16:15). The words "I am coming soon" is repeated again and again with the promise of blessing, reward, and judgment (3:11; 22:7,12,20). Finally, the book closes with John's hearty response to the Lord's imminent return, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" (22:20).

God's Kingdom and Salvation

Amidst tribulation and calamity, God's kingdom and salvation are firmly established. Songs of praise to God for His power and salvation ring throughout the book (4:8-11; 5:9-13; 7:10-12; 11:17; 12:10; 19:1-6). The people of God are identified as those washed and redeemed by the blood of the Lamb (1:5; 5:9; 7:14; 14:3,4). They have the privilege of entering into the holy city and the right to the tree of life (21:24; 22:14). Jesus Christ is the ruler over the kings of the earth (1:5; 15:3;

17:14; 19:16), to whom belongs the kingdoms of this world (11:15). He has made us kings and priests to God the Father, and those who overcome shall reign with Him forever and ever (1:6; 5:10; 20:4,6; 22:5).

Interpreting Revelation

The various approaches to interpreting the book generally fall under these four views: ^{13/1923}

1. *Preterists* understand the book exclusively in terms of its first-century setting, claiming that most of its events have already take place.
2. *Historicists* take it as describing the long chain of events from Patmos to the end of history.
3. *Futurists* place the book primarily in the end times.
4. *Idealists* view it as symbolic pictures of such timeless truths as the victory of good over evil.

Symbolisms abound in Revelation. Some are more difficult to interpret than others. Always let the Bible speak for itself and look for clues in the immediate as well as broader context. Most importantly, since Revelation is not just a book of predictions but also a book of teaching, correction, and warning, we should never lose sight of the message that God has intended for us and seek to put His words into practice.

Modern Relevance

At the end of the apostolic age, the Lord Jesus revealed to His church God's impending judgment and Christ's imminent return. As the signs of the end time are being fulfilled, we can not afford to fall into spiritual slumber and poverty. Our Lord is standing at the door. We have to be prepared now. If the churches of John's era needed to repent and be ready for the speedy coming of the Lord, how much more must we do the same!

In addition to warning the believers as well as all who live on earth, Revelation is also full of promises to those who read, hear, and do the words of the prophecy. The messages and visions constantly remind us of the reward that awaits those who remain faithful to God's commandments. The picture of the glorious city and new heaven and new earth is presented vividly before us. Our hearts yearn for this eternal dwelling with God. Although we now live in a perilous time when we often seem powerless over the pressures and temptations of

evil, we have a bright future to look forward to. Although Satan seems to be in control, we know that the dawn is drawing near and that we are to reign with Christ. By the power of our Lord Jesus, who has overcome sin and death, we shall also overcome.

1:1-20	Things which are	Introduction	Christ in midst	First vision
2:1-3:22			God on throne	Second vision
4:1-11			Things which will take place after this	
5:1-14				
6:1-17				
7:1-17				
8:1-9:21				
10:1-11				
11:1-19				
12:1-17				
13:1-18				
14:1-5				
14:6-20				
15:1-16:21				
17:1-18				
18:1-24				
19:1-21				
20:1-15	Christ and God on throne	Third vision		
21:1-22:5	Glory	Fourth vision		
22:6-21				

Chart C: Survey of Revelation

14 Christ in the Midst of Lampstands

The Basics

Setting

At the opening of the book, John clearly identifies the source of revelation as Jesus Christ. The author did not write the book at his own will but simply acted as a penman who was commanded by God to write down what he saw. Before all other visions was the vision of Christ. The chapter portrays His appearance in detail and records what the Lord had to say about Himself. So while we study what has been revealed, we must first get to know the one who reveals.

Key Verse

“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,’ says the Lord, ‘who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.’” (1:8).

Did You Know...?

1. **Alpha and Omega** (1:8): The first and last letters in the Greek alphabet.
2. **Patmos** (1:9): “One of the Sporades Islands, Patmos lies about thirty-seven miles west-southwest of Miletus, in the Icarian Sea. Consisting mainly of volcanic hills and rocky ground, Patmos is about ten miles long and six miles wide at the north end. It was an island used for Roman penal purposes. Tacitus refers to the use of such small islands for political banishment (*Annals* 3.68; 4.30; 15.71). Eusebius mentions that John was banished to the island by the emperor Domitian in A.D. 95 and released eighteen months later by Nerva (*Ecclesiastical History* 3.20. 8-9).” ^{9/424}
3. **Lampstands** (1:12): “For the OT tabernacle, Moses constructed a seven-branched lampstand (Exod 25:31 ff.). Subsequently this lampstand symbolized Israel.” ^{9/426}
4. **Band/sash** (1:13): “The long robe and golden sash were worn by priests in the OT (Exod 28:4)....” ^{9/427}

- 5. **Wool** (1:14): “was an article of the highest value among the Jews, as the staple material for the manufacture of clothing.” ^{6/749}
“Wool is sometimes used as an illustration of purity (Isa 1:18).” ^{11 / 1337}
- 5. **Keys** (1:18): “Keys grant the holder access to interiors and their contents, and in ancient times the wearing of large keys was a mark of status in the community (cf. 3:7; 9:1; 20:1; 21:25).” ^{9/428}
- 6. **Hades** (1:18): “In the NT the word has a twofold usage: in some cases it denotes the place of all the departed dead (Acts 2:27, 31); in others, it refers to the place of the departed wicked (Luke 16:23; Rev 20:13-14).” ^{9/428}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (1:1-3)
- _____ (1:4-7)
- _____ (1:8)
- _____ (1:9-11)
- _____ (1:12-16)
- _____ (1:17-20)

Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

1-3

1. What does verse 1 tell us about 



1a. The source of revelation?

1b. The method and nature of revelation?

1c. The messengers and recipients of revelation?

2. What was John’s mission? 

3a. Are “the words of the prophecy” only predictions of future events? Explain. 

3b. According to verse 3, what are we to do with the words of the prophecy?  

4a. What does it mean that the time is near? 

4b. Why is it important that the time is near?  

4-7

5. What could the seven spirits be referring to? See 4:5, 5:6 and Zech 4:1-7. 

6a. What does this paragraph tell us about Christ? 

6b. How was he the faithful witness? 🔑

7. How are we kings and priests to God? 🔑

8a. What impact does the declaration in verse 7 have on you, the reader?

8b. Why will all the tribes of the earth mourn? 🔑

Verse 8

9a. What does the Lord tell us about Himself here? 👁

9b. How many times do similar declarations about God and Jesus Christ appear in this chapter? In the context of Revelation, why is it important for us to know this about God and Jesus Christ?



9-11

10. How does John identify himself in relation to the believers? In relation to Jesus Christ? 👁

11a. What does it mean that John was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day? 🔑



11b. Contrast "on the island that is called Patmos" and "in the Spirit." What can we learn from John's experience about overcoming suffering in our lives? 👁 🔑 ✋

12. There were other churches in Asia at the time besides the seven listed here. Considering the significance of the number seven, why do you think the Lord spoke to seven churches? 🔑

12-16

13. What are your impressions when you read these descriptions of Christ? Compare this vision with that recorded in Dan 10:5-6.



14. What does it mean that Christ is in the midst of the seven lampstands? See also verse 20. 🔑

15. What can we learn about Christ from the symbols in the vision?



15a. His garment and band (cf. Ex 28:4; Isa 6:1).

Revelation 1:1-20

15b. His head and hair

15c. His eyes (cf. 2:23; 19:12; Prov 15:3; 20:8; Jer 17:10)

15d. His feet (cf. 2:26-27; Heb 1:13; Ezek 1:7,13,27; 8:2; Dan 10:6)

15e. His voice (cf. Ps 29:3-5; 93:4; Ezek 1:24; 43:2)




15f. His right hand holding seven stars (cf. Ex 15:6-7; Dan 12:3)

15g. His mouth, from which came a sharp double-edged sword (2:16; 19:15,21; Isa 11:4; Jn 12:48; Heb 4:12).

15h. His countenance (Mt 17:2; 2Pet 1:16-17)

17-20

16. Why did John react the way he did? 

17. What reasons did the Lord give to encourage John not to be afraid? Explain these reasons and why we as believers don't need to be afraid.   

18. Why do you think golden lampstands are used as a symbol for the church? 

15

Revelation 2:1-3:22

To the Seven Churches

The Basics

Setting

The Lord Jesus Christ, who is in the midst of the lampstands and holds the seven stars in His right hand, commands John to write to each of the seven churches. Christ's messages to the churches consist of commendation for their spiritual progress, warnings against their shortcomings and sins, and promises for those who persevere. The words to each church are also for the collective body of believer. So "he who has an ear" should heed what the Spirit has to say to the churches.

Key Verse

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22)

Did You Know...?

1. **Nicolaitans** (2:6): "A heretical sect within the church that had worked out a compromise with the pagan society. They apparently taught that spiritual liberty gave them sufficient leeway to practice idolatry and immorality." ^{13/1926}
2. **Satan's throne** (2:13): "The center of Pergamos was a large hill covered with pagan temples, some of which were used in worship of the Roman emperor." ^{1/1912}
3. **Balaam** (2:14): "Since the name 'Balaam' can mean to 'conquer the people' (Heb. *ba'al 'am*), which means the same as 'Nicolaitans,' and since they are mentioned together in this letter, both groups may be closely related...." ^{9/441}
4. **White stone** (2:17): "A widely used symbol for victory or special privilege...." ^{1/1913}
5. **Book of life** (3:5): "In ancient cities the names of citizens were recorded in a register till their death; then their names were

erased or marked out of the book of the living. This same idea appears in the OT (Exod 32:32-33; Ps 69:28; Isa 4:3).” ^{9/449}

- 6. **Gold, white garments, eye salve** (3:18): “Refers to three items in which Laodicea took great pride: financial wealth, an extensive textile industry and a famous eye salve.” ^{13/1929}
- 7. **Dine with him** (3:20): “The ‘eating’ (*deipneō*) refers to the main meal of the day, which in Oriental fashion was a significant occasion for having intimate fellowship with the closest of friends.” ^{9/459}

Observation

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

- 1. Read through both chapters and fill out chart D at the end of this lesson. Spend some time to compare the messages to the various churches. 👁
- 2. Why do you think that the words of Christ to the churches are placed at the beginning of the book? 🔑

- 3. What are the prominent themes in the letters? 👁

Segment Analysis

2:1-7 (Ephesus)

- 1. Christ walks in the midst of the lampstands. What personal lesson can you learn from this? 🗝️

- 2. How are we to test and expose the “false apostles”? 🔑 🗝️

- 3a. What is meant by “you have left your first love”? 🔑

- 3b. What is the consequence if we fail to repent? 👁

- 3c. How should we restore and maintain our first love? 🔑 🗝️

- 4. Why did the Lord commend the believers for hating the deeds of the Nicolaitans? 🔑

- 5. What does eating from the tree of life represent (cf 22:2,14)? 🔑

2:8-11 (Smyrna)

- 6a. What difficulties were the believers in Smyrna facing? 👁


6b. How do the words of the Lord provide great consolation? 

7. Why does affliction and material poverty often result in spiritual wealth? 


2:12-17 (Pergamos)

Read Num ch. 22-25; 31:16; 2Pet 2:15; Jude 11 for background information on Balaam and the worship of Baal-peor.

8a. At what point were the believers in Pergamos strong? Where were they tempted? 

8b. Contrast the church in Pergamos and the church in Ephesus. What is it that the Ephesian believers had that the believers in Pergamos lacked? What sin must the believers in Pergamos repent of? 

8c. How are false teachings sometimes more destructive than physical persecution? 

9. Why is the sword of Christ an effective and appropriate symbol in this context? 

10a. What could the hidden manna refer to? 

10b. What could the white stone with a new name refer to? 

2:18-29 (Thyatira)

11a. What reminder can the commendation in 19 and command in 25 give us?  

11b. What can we learn from the word “nevertheless” in 20?  

12a. What was Jezebel like and what were her works? 

12b. Why would the killing of Jezebel’s children let all churches know that Christ searches the minds and hearts? 

13. What are “the depths of Satan”? (cf. Col 2:8; 1Cor 2:6) 

14. What does it mean to be given the morning star? (cf 22:16) 

3:1-6 (Sardis)

15. What would someone who “has a name that he is alive and is dead” be like? Why is this so dangerous? 🔑

16a. According to the Lord, what must the believers in Sardis do? 👁

16b. From the words, “Be watchful” and “I will come upon you as a thief,” what do you think causes death in a Christian’s life? 🔑 👁

17. Explain the threefold promise to those who overcome. 🔑

3:7-13 (Philadelphia)

18. What is the key of David and the open door that Christ sets before the believers? (cf. Isa 22:20-23) 🔑

19a. Under what circumstance had the believers in Philadelphia persevered? 👁

19b. How does their reward fit their faithfulness? 🔑

20. What is the trial that shall come upon the whole world? How can we be kept from the hour of trial? 🔑 👁

3:14-22 (Laodicea)

21. What does it mean that Christ is “the Amen” (cf. Isa 65:16)? 🔑


22a. Describe the condition of being lukewarm. 🔑


22b. Why is being lukewarm so offensive to the Lord (15,16)? 🔑

23a. What did the Laodicean believers think of themselves? 👁

23b. Why is their view of themselves so different from what the Lord thinks of them? 🔑

24. What three things did the Laodiceans need? Explain what they represent. 👁 🔑

24b. Do you have these things in your life? 

25. What can we learn from 19 and 20 about God's love?  

Final Thoughts

26a In the letters to the churches, what kinds of people will have to suffer the second death? Compare your list with Rev 21:8.



26b. Go through the commendations and the rebukes the Lord gives to the churches and list the things that you are short of or weaknesses that you find in yourself. Then go through the exhortations and write down what you must do to overcome.



Church	Description of Christ	Commendation	Rebuke	Warning/Exhortation	Promise to him who overcomes
Ephesus (2:1-7)					
Smyrna (2:8-11)					
Pergamos (2:12-17)					
Thyatira (2:18-29)					
Sardis (3:1-6)					
Philadelphia (3:7-13)					
Laodicea (3:14-22)					

Chart D: The Seven Churches

The Basics

Setting

After John has recorded the words of Christ to the seven churches, the scene now shifts to the heavenly throne room of God. Chapter 4 describes God as one who sits on the throne, surrounded by twenty-four elders and four living creatures. Chapter 5 introduces the scroll and the Lamb who is the only one worthy to open the scroll. This vision is an important introduction to the subsequent chapters. As we get a glimpse of God and the Lamb in heaven, we know that God, as the sovereign Judge and Redeemer, will surely prevail.

Key Verse

“And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: ‘Blessing and honor and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!’” (5:13).

Did You Know...?

- Writing inside and on the back** (5:1): “Like the stone tablets of the OT covenant law (Ex 32:15; see Eze 2:9-10).” ^{13/1931}
- Seals** (5:1): “The importance attached to seals in the East is so great that without one no document is regarded as authentic... In many cases the seal consisted of a lump of clay, impressed with the seal and attached to the document, whether of papyrus or other material, by strings. In other cases wax was used.” ^{6/601}
- Seven horns** (5:6): “The horn is an ancient Jewish symbol for power or strength (cf. Dt 33:17).” ^{13/1931}
- Harp** (5:8): “An ancient stringed instrument (not the large modern harp) used especially to accompany songs (Ps. 33:2).” ^{13/1931}

- New Song** (5:9): “Cf. 14:3; Ps 33:3; 96:1; 144:9; Isa 42:10. In the OT a new song celebrated a new act of divine deliverance or blessing”. ^{13/1931}

Observation


Outline

- _____ (4:1-8a)
- _____ (4:8b-11)
- _____ (5:1-5)
- _____ (5:6-7)
- _____ (5:8-14)

Key Words/Phrases

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

General Analysis

- Fill out chart E at the end of this lesson and compare the five hymns. Record your observations on the progression and organization of the hymns. 

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

- What common subjects link the two chapters together? 

- _____
- _____

Segment Analysis

4:1-8a

- 1a. What was the appearance of the One sitting on the throne like? (cf. Eze 1:4,26-28)

- 1b. What proceeded from the throne? What do these represent? Read also 8:5; 11:19; and 16:18.

- 1c. See Lesson 2, question 5 for the meaning of the seven lamps and seven Spirits of God.
- 2. Why is it necessary for John and for us to know that God sits on the throne?

- 3a. What was the appearance of the twenty-four elders?

- 3b. Who might the twenty-four elders represent?

- 4. Who might the four living creatures represent?

- 5. What spiritual qualities does the appearance of the four living creatures suggest?
- 5a. Lion (cf 5:5; Mic 5:8)

- 5b. Ox (cf. Prov 14:4; 1Tim 5:17-18)

- 5c. Man (cf. Mt 8:17; 9:35-36; 12:17-21; Heb 2:18; 4:15-16)

- 5d. Flying eagle (cf. Ex 19:4; Isa 40:31)

- 5e. Six wings (cf. Ps 18:10; Isa 6:2; Ezek 11:22)

- 5f. Full of eyes around and within (cf. Mt 6:22-23; 1Cor 2:10-15; Eph 1:17-18)

4:8b-11

- 6a. What do the twenty-four elders do as the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to God?



- 6b. What could this action represent?



- 7. According to the hymn of the twenty-four elders in verse 11, why is God worthy of all glory, honor, and power?



- 8a. From your study of God on His throne, what impresses you the most?

- 8b. How should you worship and live your life in view of what you have learned about God?



5:1-5

9. What does the opening of the scroll represent? Read Jer 36:1-6; Zech 5:1-4; Ezek 2:9-10; Rev 10:7.  

10. Why did John weep much when he realized that no one can open the scroll?  

11. What titles are given to Christ, and what do these titles mean? (cf. Gen 49:9-10; Isa 11:1,10; 55:3,4; Jer 23:5; Lk 1:32,33; Rom 15:12; Rev 22:16)  

5:6-7

12. Where was the Lamb in the vision? What does this mean?  

13a. Compare the image of the Lamb and the Lion of Judah.  

13b. Why was Christ portrayed as a Lamb that has been slain? 

14. What does it mean that the Lamb has redeemed us by His blood? 

15. What makes the Lamb worthy to open the scroll? 



5:8-14

16. What happened when the Lamb had taken the scroll? 

17. What is special about the 3rd hymn? 

18. Who sang the 5th hymn? Compare this with Phil 2:8-11. 

Final Thoughts

19. Why must believers always praise and worship God? Do you sing praises day and night without stop (see 4:8)?  

Church	Who Sang	How Many Sang	About Whom	About What	Suggested Titles
4:8					"Ter (three) Sanctus (holy)"
4:10-11					
5:8-10					
5:11-12					Seventfold Doxology
5:13					Fourfold Doxology

17

Opening of the Seals

The Basics

Setting

The Lamb, who was found worthy to open the scroll of judgment and vindication, came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. God is ready to judge the world, and His judgment proceeds directly from His throne (4:5), meaning that the events that shall occur until the end of history all proceed from God's sovereign will. The Lamb now opens the seals one by one, revealing God's wrath on the earth. After the opening of the sixth seal, there is an interlude in which an angel seals the servants of God on their foreheads.

Key Verse

"For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?" (6:17).

"Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads." (7:3).

Did You Know...?

- Denarius** (6:6): "A denarius was a Roman silver coin, worth about 16 cents; it represented a laborer's daily wages." ^{16/63}
- Wheat...barley** (6:6): "One quart of wheat would be enough for only one person. Three quarts of the less nutritious barley would be barely enough for a small family. Famine had inflated prices to at least ten times their normal level." ^{13/1932}
- Palm branches** (7:9): "'Palm branches' are referred to only one other time in the NT (John 12:13), where they are connected to the Passover celebration. Moses provided that palms should be used at the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev 23:40). Later they were used on other festal occasions (1 Macc 13:51; 2 Macc 10:7). Jewish coins of the period 140 B.C. to A.D. 70 frequently contain palms and some have the inscription 'the redemption of Zion' (IDB, 3:646). Palms were emblems of victory." ^{9/486}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (6:1-17)
- _____ (7:1-8)
- _____ (7:9-12)
- _____ (7:13-17)

Key Words/Phrases

- _____
- _____
- _____

General Analysis

1. Record the content of each seal in Chart F and give each seal a short descriptive title.
 2. Read Mt 24:1-35; Mk 13:1-37; Lk 21:5-33 and record signs mentioned by the Lord that also appear in the seals.
- _____
 - _____
 - _____

Segment Analysis



6:1-17

1. In contrast to chapters 4 and 5, what is the setting of chapter 6?
 - 2a. How are the first four seals similar? How do they differ from the fifth and sixth seals?
- _____
 - _____
 - _____

- 2b. What do horses symbolize? (cf. Prov 21:31).
 - 2c. How do the fifth and sixth seal imply the coming of more severe judgments?
 - 3a. Compare the white horse with that recorded in 19:11-16.
 - 3b. If the white horse represents the true church and its rider the Holy Spirit, how would you explain verse 2?
 4. What kind of world events comes to your mind when you read the description of the red horse and its rider's power?
 - 5a. What is the pair of scales in the rider of the black horse for?
 - 5b. What is the meaning of "a quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine"? (cf. Mt 20:2 for the value of a denarius).
- _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____


6a. What is the extent of the destruction in the fourth seal? 



6b. How is the fourth seal similar to but different from the second and third seals? 

7a. Who are the martyrs and why were they killed? (cf 13:15; 18:24; 20:4)  

7b. Could the symbol of the altar have something to do with the crying out of the saints? 

7c. What does God's reply to the martyrs teach us about the injustice we see in the world today?   


8a. As you read about the sixth seal, read also Isa 2:10,19,21; 13:10; 34:4; Ezek 32:7-8; Joel 2:31; 3:15; Zeph 1:14-18; Mt 24:29; Lk 21:25,26 about the day of the Lord. What catastrophes are recorded here? 


8b. What will the unbelievers realize when the Lamb pours out His wrath on the earth? What does this tell us about the reason for their unbelief now?  

7:1-17



9a. In what ways is the content of chapter 7 a direct contrast to chapter 6? 


9b. How is chapter 7 an interlude between chapters 6 and 8? 


9c. How does the question in 6:17 lead directly into chapter 7? 


10a. How are the 144,000 identified? 


10b. Why are they sealed? (cf. Ezek 9:4-6)  


10c. Who sealed the 144,000 and where was he from? With what did he seal them? Why are these facts significant?  


11. If Dan and Ephraim were excluded because of their association with idolatry (Judg 18:18-19; 1Kgs 12:28-30; Hos 4:17), what warning can we the believers learn from the exclusion? 

12. Who sang the song of verse 10? Of verse 12? 

13a. Compare the 144,000 in 3-8 and the multitude in 9-17 and record your observations. How are these two groups different? 

13b. If we interpret the 144,000 as the tribes of the children of Israel in a spiritual sense, who would these people be? (cf. Rom 2:28-29; 9:6,7; Gal 3:26-29) 


13c. Is it possible that the differences between 144,000 and the multitude are just two different descriptions of the same group (i.e. all the believers, sealed from God's wrath but suffered during the great tribulation)? Explain your answer. 

14a. What is the great tribulation that the multitude came out of? 



14b. What was the multitude wearing? What does it mean? (cf 3:4; 7:14)  


14c. What do the palm branches suggest?(cf. Lev 23:40; Jn 12:12,13) 

15a. What are the similarities between 7:9-17 and 21:1-4; 22:1-5? 

15b. What does this resemblance suggest about the chronological placement of 7:9-17? 

Final Thoughts

16. From your study of this lesson, what characterizes the saved ones? What blessings will they receive?  

17. How do the visions in these chapters offer encouragement in times of difficulties and suffering? 

	Descriptive Title	Content of Seal
1st Seal: White Horse		
2nd Seal: Red Horse		
3rd Seal: Black Horse		
4th Seal: Pale Horse		
5th Seal: Saints under Altar		
6th Seal: Earthquake		

Chart F: The Six Seals

Sounding of the Trumpets

The Basics

Setting

After the opening of the sixth seal, John saw the sealing of the 144,000 and the presence of the great multitude before the throne and the Lamb. This interlude has ended, and the seventh seal is to be opened. Within the seventh seal are the seven trumpets of judgment. As you study and interpret John’s vision of the calamities, focus on the overall progression of events, the unfolding of God’s plan and purpose, as well as the intended message for us without necessarily figuring out what each of the elements symbolizes.

Key Verse

“When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets” (8:1,2).

Did You Know...?

1. **Trumpet** (8:2): “In OT times the trumpet served to announce important events and give signals in time of war.” ^{13/1934}
2. **Altar** (8:3): “The Altar of incense, called also the golden altar to distinguish it from the altar of burnt offering, which was called the brazen altar. Ex. 38:30... That in the tabernacle was made of acacia wood, overlaid with pure gold. In shape it was square, being a cubit in length and breadth and two cubits in height. Like the altar of burnt offering it had horns at the four corners, which were of one piece with the rest of the altar. This altar stood in the holy place.” ^{6/33}
3. **Censer** (8:3): “A fire pan used to hold live charcoal for the burning of incense (cf. Ex 27:3; 1Kgs 7:50).” ^{6/110} “A small portable vessel of metal fitted to receive burning coals from the altar, and on which the incense for burning was sprinkled.” ^{13/1934}

4. **Wormwood** (8:11): “This plant is distinguished for its bitter juice (Lam 3:15)...The Bible refers for wormwood—along with gall and hemlock—to signify bitterness....” ^{5/254}
5. **Bottomless pit/Abyss** (9:1): “Conceived of as the subterranean abode of demonic hordes (see 20:1; Lk 8:31). The Greek word means “very deep” or “bottomless,” and is used in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the OT) to translate the Hebrew word for the primeval deep (see Gen 1:2; 7:11; Pr 8:28).” ^{13/1934}
6. **Locusts** (9:3): “Locust plagues are one of the severest plagues of mankind. The imagery of locusts, appearing like armies, advancing like a cloud, darkening the heavens, and sounding like the rattle of chariots, goes back to Joel’s vision of the locust army that came on Israel as a judgment from God (Joel 1:4; 2:4-10).” ^{9/493}
7. **Scorpions** (9:3): “Large spider-like organisms that injure or kill by means of a poisonous barb in the tail.” ^{13/1935}
8. **Abaddon/Apollyon** (9:11): “The Hebrew term *ʾabaddōn* means ‘destruction’ or ‘ruin’ (Job 26:6 mg.; Prov 27:20 mg.), and more often ‘the place of ruin’ in Sheol (Job 26:6m g.; Prov 15:11 mg.; 27:20 mg.), or ‘death’ (Job 28:22 mg.), or ‘the grave’ (Ps 88:11 mg.). In late Jewish apocalyptic texts and Qumran literature, it refers to the personification of death (IQH 3.16, 19, 32; IQ ap Gen 12:17 [TDOT, 1:23]). The Greek term *apollyōn* means ‘exterminator’ or ‘destroyer’....” ^{9/493}
9. **Euphrates** (9:14): “The longest river in western Asia (about 1,700 miles). It marked the boundary between Israel and her historic enemies (Assyria and Babylon) to the east (cf. Isa 8:5-8).” ^{13/1935}

Observation

Outline

_____ (8:1-6)

_____ (8:7-9:21)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. What key words suggest that John is attempting to describe things he has not seen before?

2. Which events in the trumpet judgments resemble the plagues in Exodus ch. 7-10?

Segment Analysis

8:1-6

1. Compare 8:1 with 7:9-12. Why do you think there was silence in heaven? (cf. Hab 2:20; Zeph 1:7; Zech 2:13)

2. What were the functions of the censer and the altar in the OT?

- 3a. What could the offering of the incense in 3-4 represent?

- 3b. What does the angel’s action in verse 5 symbolize?

4. What does the offering of the incense have to do with the trumpet judgments? 🔑

5. Where is the golden altar placed? What does this teach us about our prayers to God? 👁 🔑 🗨️

6. What effect does 6 give to the scene? 👁

8:7-8:13

7. Record below your observations on the events of the first four trumpets. 👁

	Object	Target	Resulting Destruction
1st Trumpet:			
2nd Trumpet:			
3rd Trumpet:			
4th Trumpet:			

Chart G: The First Four Trumpets

8a. Read these references on the sounding of trumpets: Lev 25:8-12; Num 10:2,3,9; Josh 6:12-21; Isa 27:13; Ezek 33:1-5; Joel 2:1, 15-16; Amos 3:6; Zeph 1:16; Mt 24:31; 1Cor 14:8; 15:52; 1Thess 4:16. On what occasions were trumpets used? 👁

8b. Using the above references, what do you think is the significance of the seven trumpets? 🔑

9. Revelation records of three “woes” (8:13; 11:14). What do these woes refer to? 👁 🔑


9:1-21



10. Record on chart H your observations on the events of the fifth and sixth trumpets. 👁

11. How are the events of the fifth and sixth trumpets more severe than those of the first four trumpets? Is there any indication in the text of such an increase in severity? 👁 🔑 🗨️


12a. How is the judgment of the sixth trumpet more destructive than that of the fifth? 👁



12b. What means of punishment do the locusts and horses use? 👁

13a. What indication is there that the star in verse 1 is referring to a spiritual being rather than a physical object? 

13b. From the authority that was given to the angel of the pit, what can we learn about the nature of evil in today's world?  

14. Are the locusts literally insects? Explain your answer. 

15. Who are those who have the seal of God according to another passage in Revelation? 

16a. What does 9:20-21 suggest as to God's purpose for sending the calamities of the trumpets?  

16b. How are we sometimes like these people? 

16c. What must we do in response to the prophecies recorded here? 

Final Thoughts

17. What modern-day events or realities do the trumpet judgments bring to mind? 

Their Appearance		
Their Works		
Their Source		
Their Permission	To him was given the key to the bottomless pit.	"Release the four angels..."
	5th Trumpet: Locusts	6th Trumpet: Horses & Horsemen

Chart H: The Fifth and Sixth Trumpets

19

The Little Book, the Reed, and the Two Witnesses

The Basics

Setting

The sixth trumpet had sounded. Now we come to another interlude in which John saw a mighty angel who held a little book. John was commanded to receive the book from the angel and eat it, and he was to prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings. In the next scene, John was given a reed for measurement and revealed about the two powerful witnesses. This interlude sets the stage for the final woe (11:14) in which God's mystery will be finished.

Key Verse

"But in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets" (10:7).

Did You Know...?

1. **Reed** (11:1): "A bamboo-like cane that often reached a height of 20 feet and grew in abundance in the waters along the banks of the Jordan. Straight and light, the reed was a convenient measuring rod (see Ezek 40:3; Zec 2:1-2)." ^{13/1936}
2. **Court** (11:2): "The court of the gentiles, approximately 26 acres." ^{13/1936}
3. **Two olive trees and two lampstands** (11:4): "...an allusion to Joshua and Zerubbabel in Zechariah's vision, who were also said "to serve the Lord of all the earth" (Zech 4:1-6a, 10b-14)." ^{9/505}
4. **Their dead bodies will lie in the street** (11:8): "In the Near East the denial of burial was a flagrant violation of decency." ^{13/1937}

Observation


Outline

- _____ (10:1-2)
- _____ (10:3-4)
- _____ (10:5-7)
- _____ (10:8-11)
- _____ (11:1-2)
- _____ (11:3-6)
- _____ (11:7-10)
- _____ (11:11-14)

Key Words/Phrases



- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

General Analysis

- 1. What is unique about this vision in terms of John's role? 
- _____
- _____

Segment Analysis

10:1-7

- 1. Does the appearance of the angel resemble anything we have seen before in Revelation? 
- _____
- _____
- 2. What does the sealing of the words of the seven thunders tell us about our knowledge of divine plan? (cf. 2Cor 12:3-4) 
- _____
- _____

- 3. Record the proclamation of the angel. 
- _____
- _____

- 4. Why does he swear by the everlasting God? 
- _____
- _____

- 5. Read the following references and write down the types of mysteries recorded in the Bible  

- 5a. Eph 1:9-10; 3:4-6; Col 2:2,3; 1Tim 3:16
- _____
- _____

- 5b. Mt 13:11; Lk 17:20-21
- _____
- _____

- 5c. Eph 5:28-32; Rev 1:20; 19:7-8
- _____
- _____

- 5d. Rom 11:25-36
- _____
- _____




- 5e. 1Cor 15:51-53; 1Thess 4:16-17
- _____
- _____



- 5f. Rev 17:5,7
- _____
- _____


- 6. What does it mean that the mystery of God would be finished? 
- _____
- _____


10:8-11

- 7. In view of verse 11, what does the little book represent? 
- _____
- _____



8a. Ezekiel had also been commanded to eat a scroll. Read his experience in Ezek 3:1-3. Considering the situation and mission of both John and Ezekiel, what does the experience of sweetness and bitterness symbolize?   

8b. What does it mean to eat God's word? Why must we eat God's word before we can preach it to others?  


8c. How has God's word been sweet in your mouth but bitter in your stomach? 




8d. Have you ever been entrusted with a task that you would rather avoid? How did you overcome your reluctance and end your complaints? 

11:1-2

9a. What can we infer from verse 11:2 as to the purpose of measuring the temple, the altar, and those who worship there?  

9b. Compare the holy city with the great city of verse 8. 



9c. What possible meanings are there to the trampling of the holy city by the Gentiles? 

9d. If the act of measuring symbolizes divine separation of true and false worshippers, on what basis will the separation be made? In other words, who does God consider as true worshippers? Are you a true worshipper?   

9e. If the forty-two months parallel half of the period of tribulation in Dan 9:27 (half a week), which half would it be equivalent to? 

10. Why must the measuring take place here, in view of the progression of events in Revelation? 

11:3-14

11. Compare the measuring with the work of the two witnesses. Could these represent the two commissions of the church today? What are these commissions?  

12. How long will the witnesses prophesy? 

13a. Why do you think the witnesses are clothed in sackcloth? 🔑

13b. What does this teach us about our attitude when we preach to the world? 🗣️

14. Read Zech 4:1-14 about the two olive trees and lampstands (gold pipes). If the two witnesses represent the believers, what would be the significance of using the olive trees and lampstands to describe the church? 👁️ 🔑 🗣️

15a. Which two OT prophets performed miracles similar to those in 6?

15b. Why do you think the witnesses were given such great power? 🔑

16a. Why does the beast make war with and kill the witnesses? 🔑

16b. When will the two witnesses be killed? What teaching can we learn from this? 👁️ 🗣️

16c. What do “Sodom,” “Egypt,” and “where our Lord was crucified” collectively represent? 🔑

17a. What can we know about the inhabitants of the earth from 9 and 10? 👁️

17b. Have you ever resented someone who pointed out your mistake? What should you have done instead? 🗣️

18a. How long were the two witnesses dead? 👁️

18b. Compare the resurrection of the witnesses with 1Thess 4:16-17.

👁️

19. Compare 11:14 with 10:6. What does it tell us about the timing of the final judgments? 👁️ 🔑

20

Revelation 11:15-12:17

The Seventh Trumpet, The Woman and the Dragon

The Basics

Setting

John has eaten the little scroll and measured the temple. The two witnesses have completed their mission and ascended to heaven. As stated in 11:14, the second woe (sixth trumpet) is past, and the third and final woe (seventh trumpet) is coming quickly. At the sounding of the seventh trumpet and in preparation for the pouring out of the seven bowls and final judgment in chapters 16-18, John sees a series of visions and signs that center on Satan’s persecution of God’s people. The first vision is that of worship in heaven and the appearance of the heavenly temple. Following this vision are the signs of the woman and the dragon.

Key Verse

“Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!’” (11:15).

“Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, ‘Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.’” (12:10).

Did You Know...?

1. **Ark of His covenant** (11:19): “The OT ark was a chest of acacia wood (Dt 10:1-2). It symbolized the throne or presence of God among his people.” ^{13/1938}
2. **Dragon** (12:3): “In the OT they are normally used metaphorically to depict the enemies of God and of Israel (see Ps 74:14; Isa 27:1; Eze 29:3).” ^{13/1938}

Observation

Outline



- _____ (11:15-19)
 - _____ (15)
 - _____ (16-18)
 - _____ (19)
- _____ (12:1-17)
 - _____ (1-6)
 - _____ (7-9)
 - _____ (10-12)
 - _____ (13-17)



Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

11:15-19

1. What is the theme of the declaration in verse 15?
- 2a. Compare verse 18 with Psalm 2. Why were the nations angry?
- 2b. What actions will God take as He reigns?
- 3a. Where is the temple in verse 19 located?



3b. What follow the appearance of the temple and the ark? What do they represent?  


3c. What is the significance of the temple and the ark of the covenant? Compare this passage with 8:3-5.  

4a. How does this paragraph relate to the subsequent chapters?  

4b. What lessons can we gather from this paragraph about God's sovereign control and kingdom?   

Chapter 12

5. What clues suggest that we should interpret this chapter as symbolic of spiritual things?  

6. What is God's role in this cosmic struggle? 



7a. In what ways did the dragon fail in his endeavors? 


7b. What do the dragon's works and failure teach us?  

12:1-6


8a. Who does the woman represent? (cf. 2Cor 11:2; Gal 4:26) 


8b. Describe the appearance of the woman and explain its significance.  

9. In view of verse 5, who is the child that was born through the pains of labor? (cf. 2:26-27; 19:15; 20:6; 22:5; Ps 2:9; Dan 7:27)  


10a. Who is the dragon, according to verse 9? 


10b. What is the dragon's appearance and nature? 

10c. What are the dragon's works? 


10d. What does it mean that the dragon's tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth? (cf. Isa 9:15; Dan 8:10,24; Gen 15:5; Mt 24:11,24) 



10e. Why is the dragon so hostile to the woman? 

11a. What period is the 1,260 days of refuge? (cf. 11:2-3; 12:14; Dan 9:27) 

11b. What does the wilderness symbolize? What impression does the wilderness give you? 

12:7-12



12a. Why is the hurling down of the dragon inserted at this place in the passage? Relate it to 11:17. 

12b. Where did the war take place? Is there any significance to this?  

13. How can we overcome the dragon? Explain your answer.   

12:13-17

14. What does the hurling down of the dragon mean for believers and for the world? 

15. Is verse 14 a repeat of a previous verse in the chapter? What does this parallel tell us about the meaning of "a time and times and half a time"?  

16a. What does the dragon's relentless attack of God's offspring tell us?  

16b. How real is Satan to you? Do you see his works? In what ways does he vehemently oppose believers today? 🐾

The Two Beasts

The Basics

Setting

The dragon has lost its place in heaven. With great wrath, he goes down to the earth and the sea to persecute the woman and her offspring. In chapter 13, John sees two beasts which have great power over the inhabitants of the earth and ruthlessly persecute God’s people. Together, the beasts challenge the authority of God. But, as we will see in later chapters, their destiny is the final destruction.

Key Verse

“If anyone has an ear, let him hear. He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints” (13:9,10).

Did You Know...?

1. **Sea** (13:1): “The beast... has already been described in 11:7 as rising from the ‘Abyss’ (cf. 17:8). Thus the sea may symbolize the Abyss, the source of demonic powers that are opposed to God (cf 9:1; 20:1-3)... This view agrees with the OT images of the sea as the origin of the satanic sea monsters—the dragon (Tannin), Leviathan (“Coiled One”), and Rahab (“Rager”) (Job 26:12-13; Pss 74:13-14; 87:4; 89:10; Isa 27:1; 51:9; cf. also Ezek 32:6-8).” ^{9/523-524}

Observation

Outline

(13:1-10)

(1-2)

(3-4)

(5-6)

(7-8)

_____ (9-10)

_____ (13:11-18)


_____ (11)

_____ (12-15)

_____ (16-18)

Key Words/Phrases


General Analysis

1. How were the two beasts related to the dragon of chapter 12? How were they related to each other? 


2. How did the beasts persecute and overcome the saints? 

Segment Analysis

13:1-10


1. Record an earlier reference to this beast in Revelation. What was the origin of this beast? 

2. Describe the sea beast. 


3a. Compare this beast with the four beasts in Daniel 7. 


3b. What do the beasts in Daniel 7 represent? What do you think the sea beast in Revelation might represent?  



4. What do the beast's appearance suggest about the nature of the beast? 


5. Who worshiped the beast? Why did they worship him? 

6. What were the activities of this beast? 

7. How long will his blasphemy last? Does this coincide with any time reference we have seen before? 

8a. According to the description of the beast and its activities, what does the word "blasphemy" mean? 


8b. Looking at the world today, in what ways do you think the beast blasphemes God and makes all nations worship itself and the dragon?  

9. What is the significance of “names written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world”? 



10. How are verses 9 and 10 different from the previous verses and why are they inserted here?  



11. How do you prepare yourself to withstand the works of the beast? 

13:11-18


12. What clues suggest that this beast from the sea represents a false prophet? (cf 16:13; 19:20; 20:10) 



13a. What are the works of this beast? 

14. Do you see such religious power at work today? Why does Satan use religion as an instrument in the last days?  

15a. Read 15:2 about the number and the name of the beast. Also compare the name of the beast with the name of the Father in 14:1. The number 666 is the number of the name of the beast. What do these tell us about the nature of the number 666? Is this number more than a numeric value?  

15b. What does it mean that the number is also the number of a man? 

15c. If we interpret the number symbolically, and if 7 is a number representing completeness, what would the number 6 suggest? Why 666? 

15d. What does it mean to receive the mark or number of the beast? How can we keep ourselves from receiving the mark or the number?  

22

Revelation 14:1-20

The Lamb and the 144,000 Proclamations and Harvests

The Basics

Setting

The dragon and his beasts have exercised their power and authority on earth. They have oppressed and even killed the saints. In this chapter, John first sees the serene vision of the Lamb and the 144,000 who are pure and blameless. Then three angels cry out with messages of the gospel and of the impending judgment. Following the proclamations comes the great harvest, in which God pours out His wrath in full on the earth.

Key Verse

“Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, ‘Write: ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’ ‘Yes,’ says the Spirit, ‘that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.’” (14:13).

Did You Know...?

- Mount Zion** (14:1): “Mount Zion may refer to the hilly area in southeast Jerusalem, the temple mount, the whole city of Jerusalem, or, as in postexilic days, the whole land of Judah and the whole Israelite nation... In the prophetic tradition, Zion came to symbolize the place where the Messiah would gather to himself a great company of the redeemed (Ps 48:1 ff.; Isa 24:23; Joel 2:32; Obad 17, 21; Mic 4:1, 7; Zech 14:10).” ^{9/537}
- Babylon** (14:8): “Ancient Babylon in Mesopotamia was the political, commercial and religious center of a world empire. It was noted for its luxury and moral decadence.” ^{13/1940}
- Cup of His indignation** (14:10): “In the OT God’s wrath is commonly pictured as a cup of wine to be drunk (Ps 75:8; Isa 51:17; Jer 25:15).” ^{13/1940}
- Winepress** (14:19): “A rock-hewn trough about eight feet square with a channel leading to a lower and smaller trough. Grapes were thrown into the upper vat and tramped with bare feet. The

juice was collected in the lower vat. At times mechanical pressure was added. The treading of grapes was a common OT figure for the execution of divine wrath (see Isa 63:3; La 1:15; Joel 3:13).” ^{13/1941}

- 1,600 furlongs/stadia** (14:20): “about 180 miles (about 300 kilometers). It is approximately the length of Palestine from north to south.” ^{13/1941}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (1-5)
- _____ (6-7)
- _____ (8)
- _____ (9-11)
- _____ (12-13)
- _____ (14-16)
- _____ (17-20)

Key Words/Phrases

- _____
- _____
- _____


General Analysis


- How is this chapter an appropriate conclusion to chapters 12-14?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Segment Analysis

14:1-5



1. In what ways is this passage a sharp contrast from the previous scene? 



2. Compare this vision with 7:1-8 and record the differences. 


3. How is this scene an encouragement to believers?  



4. What is Mount Zion symbolic of? (cf. Heb 12:22,23; Ps 48:2,3; 132:13) 

5. What characterizes the 144,000? 

6. What is the significance of the name of the Father? Compare this with 13:16.  



7. What is the relationship between the 144,000 and the Lamb? What is your relationship with the Lamb?  


8. What is the significance of the new song? Why is it that only the 144,000 could learn the new song? 

9. What does the context tell us about the meaning of “not defiled with women”? (cf. 2Cor 11:2,3)  


10. How should we “follow the Lamb wherever He goes”? 


11. How can we be “first fruits” to God and to the Lamb? (cf. Jas 1:18)  


12. Explain the meaning of “in their mouth was found no deceit,” by comparing this verse with 13:5,6,14.  

13. How does this passage relate to the subsequent verses and chapters? Have you seen this pattern before in Revelation? 

14:6-13

14. The first angel proclaims the gospel message as judgment is about to begin. What is God's purpose for doing so? 

14b. Is this consistent with your earlier observations about God's acts in Revelation? 


15. Do you feel that it is your commission to preach the everlasting gospel to every nation, tribe, language, and tongue? What are you doing now to fulfill this commission? 

16. Explain the meaning of the second proclamation (8). 

17. Why are the beast worshippers as guilty as the beast himself? 


18a. Why are verses 12 and 13 placed here in the passage?  


18b. What does it mean to die in the Lord? 

18a. How do you feel when you think of death in the Lord? What deeds will follow you when you rest from your labor? 

14:14-20

19. Who might the "One like the Son of Man" be? (cf. Dan 7:13; Rev 1:13) 

20. What do the harvest and gathering of grapes symbolize? (cf. Joel 3:13; Jer 51:33; Hos 6:11; Mt 13:30,39-42; Isa 63:1-6; Lam 1:15) 

21. Why did the two angels in 17 and 18 come out of the heavenly temple and altar? Could there be some significance to this? 

22. How are you preparing yourself for this final harvest? 

23 Revelation 15:1-16:21 Pouring Out of the Seven Bowls

The Basics

Setting

After the interlude of chapters 12-14, the book now picks up the temple scene of 11:19. The dragon’s futile endeavor on earth and the Lamb’s triumph on Mount Zion have prepared the way for the fulfillment of the final judgment already declared in 11:14-18. The cries of the angels and the vision of the harvests in chapter 14 lead us to the seven bowls that contain the seven last plagues. The time has now come for God to pour out His full wrath on the earth. It is in the bowl judgments that God will complete His vengeful wrath.

Key Verse

“Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete” (15:1).

“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” (16:15).

Did You Know...?

1. **Song of Moses** (15:3): “See Ex 15; Dt 32. Ex 15:1-18 was sung on Sabbath evenings in the synagogue to celebrate Israel’s great deliverance from Egypt.” ^{13/1941}
2. **Tabernacle of the testimony** (15:5): “The dwelling place of God during the desert wandering of the Israelites (see Ex 40:34-35). It was so named because the ancient tent contained the two tablets of the Testimony brought down from Mount Sinai (Ex 32:15; 38:21; Dt 10:5).” ^{13/1941}
3. **Armageddon** (16:16): “Probably stands for the Har Mageddon, ‘the mountain of Megiddo.’” ^{13/1942} “Megiddo and Taanach dominated the main pass that runs northeast through the hill country from the plain of Sharon to the Valley of Jezreel. Because

of its strategic location, the ‘plain of Megiddo’ (2Ch 35:22) has been a frequent battleground from the earliest times.” ^{13/334}

4. **Weight of a talent** (16:21): about 100 pounds.

Observation

Outline




- _____ (15:1-8)
- _____ (1)
- _____ (2-4)
- _____ (5-8)
- _____ (16:1-21)

Key Words/Phrases

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Segment Analysis

15:1-8

1. How does John describe the sign? 
- _____
2. What feelings does the scene in verse 2 give you? 
- _____
- 3a. Compare the song in verse 3 with Exodus 15:1-8. What is the theme of the song of Moses and the Lamb? What does the song teach about God and His deeds? 
- _____
- _____
- _____

3b. Why is this song also called the song of the Lamb? 🔑

3c. Who are the singers? Why? 👁️ 🔑

3d. Describe a time in your life when you also praised and thank God for His greatness and deliverance. 👣

4. Why do you think God showed this vision to John before showing him the angels with the last plagues? 🔑

5. Read 11:1,19; 14:15,17 for previous references to the temple. Then read 15:5-16:1. Explain the role of the temple in God's acts of judgment, especially in the context of the last plagues.

👁️ 🔑

16:1-21

6. Record your observations of the seven bowls on chart I. 👁️

7a. Compare the bowl judgments with the trumpet judgments in 8:1-9:21. What are the similarities? 👁️

7b. How are the bowl judgments more severe than the trumpet judgments? 👁️


8. What type of people have to suffer these judgments? 👁️


9a. What is the theme of the declarations in 5-7? 👁️

9b. Why are these declarations necessary? 🔑

10. What do men's blasphemy and unrepentance tell us about God's justice in His judgments? 🔑

11. Considering that Euphrates marked the north-eastern boundary of Israel (Gen 15:18) and served as a natural barrier against enemies of the east such as Assyria and Babylon, what does the drying up of Euphrates represent in the sixth bowl? 🔑

12a. What are the sources of the unclean spirits? 

12b. What are their works? 

12c. What does this tell us about the nature of the battle in 14? 

13. Explain the parenthetical statements in 15. Why are they inserted here? 

14. List the three parts to the seventh bowl. How is this judgment the most severe of all? 

15. What is the meaning of “It is done!” (17)? 

	Men's Response						
	Resulting Destruction						
	Target						
	Type of Plague						
	1st Bowl:	2nd Bowl:	3rd Bowl:	4th Bowl:	5th Bowl:	6th Bowl:	7th Bowl:

Chart I: The Seven Bowls

24

Revelation 17:1-18:24

The Fall of Babylon

The Basics

Setting

In 14:8 and 16:19, we saw the pronouncement of the fall of Babylon in connection to God’s acts of judgment and vindication. Now in chapters 17 and 18, the vision focuses on the iniquities and destruction of Babylon, the mother of harlots. God’s final judgments on the world is also a judgment on the great city Babylon. Just as she was drunk with the blood of saints and martyrs, now God will make her drink the wine of His fierce wrath.

Key Verse

“These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful” (17:14).

“And I heard another voice from heaven saying, ‘Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues’” (18:4).

“Therefore her plagues will come in one day—death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her” (18:8).

Did You Know...?

- Seven mountains** (17:9): “It is perhaps significant that Rome began as a network of seven hill settlements on the left bank of the Tiber. Her designation as the city on seven hills is commonplace among Roman writers (e.g., Virgil, Martial, Cicero).” ^{13/1943}
- Purple** (18:12): “An expensive dye since it must be extracted a drop at a time from the murex shellfish.” ^{13/1944}
- Citron wood** (18:12): “An expensive dark wood from north Africa—used for inlay work in costly furniture.” ^{13/1944}

- Cinnamon** (18:13): “The tree grows about 9 m. (30 ft.) high with clusters of yellow and white flowers. Its very fragrant bark yields a golden yellow oil, which was used as one ingredient of the anointing oil (Ex. 30:23) and as perfume (Prov. 7:17).” ^{5/242}
- Incense** (18:13): “from the latin ‘to burn,’ ‘a mixture of gums or spices and the like, used for the purpose of producing a perfume when burned;’ or the perfume itself of the spices, etc., burned in worship.” ^{6/265}
- Frankincense** (18:13): “...a large, pink-flowering tree, producing a white gum that hardens quickly and is very aromatic when burned. This was used in ceremonial offerings (Ex. 30:34; Lev. 2:1), as an article of luxury (Song 3:6), and as a gift for the Christ child (Matt. 2:11).” ^{5/243}
- Bodies and souls of men** (18:13): “Slavery as well as any other exploitation of persons.” ^{1/1932}
- Throw dust on their heads** (18:19): “An act of sorrow and dismay (see Eze 27:30).” ^{13/1945}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (17:1-18)
- _____ (1-6)
- _____ (7-18)
- _____ (18:1-24)
- _____ (1-3)
- _____ (4-8)
- _____ (9-10)
- _____ (11-16)
- _____ (17-20)
- _____ (21-24)

Key Words/Phrases


- _____
- _____

General Analysis

1. Which verses in chapter 17 indicate that the woman who sits on the beast is the great city Babylon of chapter 18? 

Segment Analysis

17:1-6

1. Describe the woman in terms of the following: 

1a. Her adornment

1b. Her influence

1c. Her wickedness

2. What does it mean that the woman sits on many waters (1)?



17:7-18

3. How is the woman related to the beast? 



4a. What are the origin, history, and future of the beast? 


4b. Is the scarlet beast the same as the sea beast of chapter 13?




4c. Who will marvel at the beast? Why? 

4d. What type of entity is the beast, according to the angel's explanation? 

4e. Explain the phrase "that was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit" (8) by comparing it with 12:7-12 and Jn 12:31,32.  

5. What traits characterize the followers of the Lamb? Do these traits describe your relationship to the Lamb?  

6a. How will God bring about the woman's end? 

7. From your study so far, what do you think the woman might represent in history and in today’s world? How will she be destroyed? 🔑

18:1-8

8. Describe the great city of Babylon in terms of the following: 👁

8a. Her wealth

8b. Her power

8c. Her arrogance

9. Why will God judge her? 👁

10a. Which verses suggest that the Babylon here is most likely not referring to a particular city or nation? 👁

10b. From your study of the chapter so far, what do you think is the meaning of Babylon? Compare this chapter with OT prophecies about the fall of Babylon in Isa ch. 13, 47 and Jer ch. 51. How

does the historical Babylon help us understand the spiritual Babylon in Revelation? 👁 🔑

10c. What is the “fornication” that she commits with the kings of the earth? 🔑

10d. Looking at the world today, do you see the sinfulness that resembles the iniquity of Babylon? 🔑 🦶




11. What does it mean that Babylon “has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird”? (cf. Isa 13:19-22; 34:11; Jer 50:39). 🔑



12. How should we “come out of” Babylon (4)? 🦶

18:9-24



13. What expressions are used to depict the swiftness of Babylon’s destruction? 👁

14a. Who are the three groups of people that will mourn for Babylon? 👁

14b. Why does Babylon’s fall cause such bitter weeping and lament? What will be the consequence for those today who have become rich because of Babylon?   

14c. In what ways do the people of today “purchase merchandise” from Babylon? Are you also part of this merchant trading?  

15. What is the repeated phrase in 21-23 that indicates the tragic end of Babylon? 

16a. How does the phrase, “by your sorcery all the nations were deceived” tell us about the dreams that the people of the world pursue?  

16b. Have you ever lost something in your life that you valued highly? What lessons did you learn from the loss? 

17. What do verses 20 and 24 tell us about what Babylon has done to God’s people?  

Heavenly Praise and Christ’s Victory

The Basics

Setting

God had sent a sudden destruction on Babylon, which was full of fornications, blasphemy, luxuries, and boasting. At the fall of the great city of Babylon, the kings and merchants of the earth were left desolate. Then John heard voices of a great multitude in heaven praising God for His judgment and rejoicing over the marriage of the Lamb. Heaven also opened, and Christ with His armies went out to conquer the beast, the false prophet, and all their followers.

Key Verse

“And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, ‘Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready’” (19:6,7).

Did You Know...?

1. **Marriage supper** (19:9): “The wedding supper began toward evening on the wedding day, lasted for many days, and was a time of great jubilation.” ^{9/572} “The imagery of a wedding to express the intimate relationship between God and his people has its roots in the prophetic literature of the OT (e.g., Isa 54:5-7; Hos 2:19). cf. The NT usage (Mt 22:2-14; Eph 5:32).” ^{13/1945}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (19:1-10)
- _____ (1-4)
- _____ (5-10)

_____ (19:11-21)
 _____ (11-16)
 _____ (17-21)

Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

19:1-10

1. Contrast the scene on earth in chapter 18 and the scene in heaven in chapter 19.

2a. What is the most frequent refrain in the hymns of praise? What does it mean?

2b. What are the themes of the hymn?

3a. According to the passage, who should praise God? Why should these people praise the Lord?

3b. Is your life filled with praise and thanksgiving?

4a. What does the marriage of the Lamb represent? Who is the wife of the Lamb?

4b. How has the wife of the Lamb made herself ready?

4c. Why is this marriage an occasion for gladness and rejoicing?

4d. Who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb?

5. Who is the "he" in verse 9?

6. Compare the harlot of chapters 17 and 18 with the wife of the Lamb.

7. What does it mean that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy?

19:11-21

8. Observe and record the descriptions of the rider on the white horse.

9. How do we know that this rider is the Lord Jesus Christ?



10. Explain this description of Christ: "He had a name written that no one knew except Himself" (12).



11. How will the Lord subdue the nations?



12. What is the treading of winepress symbolic of? (cf 14:19-20).



13. Compare the supper in 17-18 with the marriage supper of the Lamb (cf. Jer 25:32,33; Ezek 39:17-20; Zeph 1:15-18; Ps 110:5,6).



14a. Record the earlier references in Revelation to the war described here in verse 19.



14b. What happened to the beast, the false prophets, and the kings of the earth and their armies?



14c. Is there any description of intense struggle in this battle? What might this mean?



15. How can your study of Christ's victory here help you be a victor in your life of faith?



26

Revelation 20:1-15

Reign with Christ and Final Judgment

The Basics

Setting

In the previous chapter, we saw the war between Christ and the beast. The beast and the false prophet were captured and cast into the lake of fire, and the beasts' followers were killed with the sword. In this chapter, we read of the binding and release of Satan as well as the reign of believers with Christ. Like the beast and false prophet, Satan will also be cast into the lake of fire after a futile attempt to make war with God's people. Then the dead are judged, and anyone not found written in the Book of Life is also cast into the lake of fire. This final judgment marks the end of world history and the beginning of a new heaven and new earth.

Key Verse

"Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (20:6).

Did You Know...?

- Common interpretations of the millennium: 1) Premillennialists believe that Christ will come before the millennium begins to reign in the world with His saints. 2) Postmillennialists believe that we are now in the millennium, and that Christ will come at the end of the millennium. 3) Amillennialists believe that there is no literal reign for a thousand years, and that the millennium is a spiritual reign at the present time.
- Gog and Magog** (20:8): "Names of a ruler, Gog, and his land, Magog, in the Bible. Gog is the leader, in Ezekiel 38 and 39, of an invading army from 'the uttermost parts of the north' who will attack Israel 'in the latter years.'" ^{7/1056}

Observation







Outline

- _____ (20:1-3)
- _____ (20:4-6)
- _____ (20:7-10)
- _____ (20:11-15)

Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

20:1-6

- 1a. Who bound the dragon and why was he bound? 
- _____
- _____
- 1b. What does the binding of the dragon symbolize? 
- _____
- _____
- 1c. What does this passage tell us about the nature and extent of Satan's power? 
- _____
- _____
- 2a. What is the function of the thrones in 4?  
- _____
- _____
- 2b. Who will reign with Christ? 
- _____
- _____

3. How is the binding of Satan connected to believers' reign with Christ? 🔑

4. What is the first resurrection? Is it a physical or spiritual resurrection? Support your answer. 🔑

5. What is the second death? What does it mean that the second death has no power over those who have part in the first resurrection? 🔑

6. How will the believers reign with Christ during the thousand years? 🔑

7. When will the binding of Satan and the thousand-year reign begin? 🔑

7a. During Jesus' earthly ministry? The establishment of the true church in the last days? After Christ's victorious battle in 19:11-21?

7b. Before or after the tribulation period?

20:7-10

8a. Why do you think God released Satan? 🔑

8b. What will the nations of the earth do? 👁

9. What is the camp of the saints and the beloved city? 🔑

10. What will happen to the devil and his armies? 👁

11. What kinds of spiritual battles are you going through today? 👣

20:11-15

12. What does it mean that the earth and the heaven fled away from God's face? 🔑

13a. Who will be judged at the final judgment? 👁

13b. On what basis will Christ judge the dead? 👁 🔑

13c. If we are saved by grace through faith, why is the judgment also based on a person's works? 🔑

14. What does the casting of Death and Hades into the lake of fire represent? 🔑

15. On what basis will believers be spared at the judgment and escape from the lake of fire? 👁️ 🔑

16. How does your study of the reign with Christ and final judgment affect your own life? 🧑🏻👉

The Basics

Setting

God's has poured out His wrath and Christ has conquered Satan. At the final judgment, the first earth have passed away. Revelation closes with the view of the new heaven and new earth. Believers get a glimpse of their eternal home prepared by God. In the splendid holy city, God dwells with His people, and there is no more death, sorrow, crying, or pain. The saved will enjoy the heavenly bliss forever. This vision of the beautiful city inspires our hope and urges us to prepare for Christ's imminent return.

Key Verse

"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away" (21:4).

"Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book" (22:7).

Did You Know...?

- Cubits** (21:17): "an important and constant measure among the Hebrews (Ex. 25:10, 17, 23; etc.; 1 Kings 7:24, 27, 31; etc.; Ezek. 40:5; etc.), and other ancient nations. It was commonly reckoned as the length of the arm from the point of the elbow to the end of the middle finger, about eighteen inches." ^{15/841}
- 12,000 furlongs** (21:16) "equal 1,500 miles; 144 cubits equal 216 feet; and the shape given in v. 16b could be either a cube or a pyramid." ^{3/144}
- Dogs** (22:15): "A term applied to all types of ceremonially impure persons. In Dt 23:18 it designates a male prostitute." ^{13/1949} "...the dog was a scavenger and did in larger towns what hyenas helped do in the villages and outside the walls; though classified as a carnivore it lived on refuse of all kinds and thus was a potential

carrier of many diseases, either mechanically or as a vector...
dead bodies were sometimes thrown to the dogs.”^{14/153}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (21:1-8)
- _____ (21:9-14)
- _____ (21:15-17)
- _____ (21:18-21)
- _____ (21:22-27)
- _____ (22:1-5)
- _____ (22:6-20)
- _____ (22:21)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. Record briefly your observations on the following about the New Jerusalem. 


1a. Its Appearance.


1b. Its Inhabitants.

1c. The role of God and the Lamb in the city.

1d. Scenes and features in the city.

1e. Who or what are excluded from it.


2. Compare the descriptions of the new heaven and new earth with those recorded in Isa 60; 65:17-25; Ezek 40-48; 2Pet 3:13. 


- 3. Record the descriptions or identities of Christ in these two chapters. 

Segment Analysis



21:1-8



- 1. Why is the holy city also a bride? What does the city symbolize? 


- 2. What is the origin of the holy city? What does this mean?  

- 3. Why is having God’s dwelling among men a great blessing? What is the meaning of “they shall be His people” and “God will be their God”? (Jer 24:7; Ezek 37:27-28; 2Cor 6:16) 

- 4. How do the words of verse 4 touch you? 

- 5. Observe the frequent mention of the word “new.” What are the the new things? What are the “former things” (4)?  

- 6. How do the words, “Behold, I make all things new” also characterize a Christian’s conversion?  

- 7. What does it mean that there is no more sea? (1) 

- 8. Explain the following sins deserving the second death: 

- 8a. The cowardly

- 8b. The abominable

- 8c. Liars

21:9-21

- 9. From the descriptions of the holy city, what is your impression of the New Jerusalem? 

10. What possible spiritual truths can be found from these? 🔑

10a. Great and high wall

10b. Twelve gates, three gates on each side, with the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel

10c. Gates of pearl

10d. Twelve foundations with the names of the twelve apostles

10e. Measuring the gates and wall (12,000 furlongs)

10f. Adornment with twelve kinds of precious stones

21:22-27

11. What does it mean that the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of the city? 🔑

12a. What is the source of illumination in the city? 👁

12b. What does walking in the light of the city mean? 🔑

13. What will the nations of the saved and the kings of the earth bring into the city? What could this mean? 👁 🔑

22:1-5

14. What is the central element or figure in this paragraph? 👁

15a. What does the river of water of life symbolize? 🔑


15b. Explain the effect of the river of water of life in the life of a believer. 🔑

22:6-21


16a. What sentence stands out most in this section? How many times does it appear? 👁


16b. Why does the Lord emphasize it so frequently? 🔑

16c. How does this epilogue echo the opening chapters of Revelation? 👁 🔑

17a. How does the invitation of 17 illustrate the nature of salvation? In other words, who are qualified to enter the holy city? 


17b. How does this fact relate to the qualification for entry in 14? 


18a. Record the repeated emphasis on the importance of the words of the prophecy. 

18b. According to this chapter, why must we take the words of the prophecy of Revelation seriously? 



19. How do the words of the prophecy reflect God's mercy and love? 

20. What is the message of verse 11? 

21a. How do the words "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" reflect the longing of the collective body of believer through all ages? 



21b. Do these words reflect your attitude towards the Lord's coming? 

Final Thoughts

22. List the seven beatitudes of Revelation (i.e. "Blessed are..."). How do these apply to your life?  

23. How will your study of Revelation affect your daily Christian living? 

Revelation 21:1-22:21

24. Compare these last two chapters of the Bible with the first two chapters (Gen 1-2). How does the vision of the new heaven and new earth bring a beautiful ending to the entire Bible?  

Thoughts on Questions

Lesson 1

1. 1:4; 2:1; 2:26; 5:13
2. They denied that Jesus was the Christ (2:22; 5:1,5). They denied that Jesus Christ had come in the flesh (4:3; 2Jn 7). They claimed to know God but did not do what God commanded (1:6; 2:4; 3:7,10).

Lesson 2

Observation

Key Words/Phrases

Beginning, heard, seen, handled, life, manifested, bear witness, fellowship, Father, Son Jesus Christ.

Segment Analysis

1. Jesus is referred to as the Word (1:1; Jn 1:1), the life, and the light (1:2,5; Jn 1:4,9). He is from the beginning (1:1; Jn 1:1). He was with the Father and has now appeared to us (1:2; Jn 1:18). He came in the flesh, and we have seen Him with our eyes (1:1,3; Jn 1:14).
From these similar teachings, we learn that Jesus is the eternal God who came into the world in flesh to bring us everlasting life. He lived among men and many had personally witnessed Him. He came to bring us eternal life and delivered us out of the darkness of sin into His kingdom of light.
- 2a. John was declaring about Jesus Christ, who was the Word that became flesh, and the grace and truth that Christ brought to us (Jn 1:14).
- 2b. It was from the beginning, which we have heard, seen, looked upon, and handled. He was with the Father and was manifested to us.
- 2c. So that the believers may have fellowship with one another and with God.
3. Jesus Christ came into the flesh and was truly among the people. The disciples had personally heard, seen, and touched Him. They also became firsthand witnesses to His ministry, death, and resurrection.
4. The author places emphasis on the message of Jesus Christ. It is Jesus Christ, not the author, who is of prime importance to the reader. The phrase “that which was from the beginning” is also a powerful way to start the introduction of Jesus Christ (See Jn 1:1).

5. The word has been translated into various English words, such as “communion,” “participation,” “share a common life,” and “partnership”; its root meaning is “common” or “shared” as opposed to “one’s own.”
5/307
6. Jesus did not just appear to men as a spiritual being. The author assured the readers that he and the other disciples had been with Jesus and had actually heard Him, seen Him, and touched Him (cf. Lk 24:39).
7. The testimony of firsthand witnesses is very powerful. Without these witnesses, we may question whether Jesus was a real historical figure or simply a mythical character that people had fashioned. From the transformed lives of witnesses and their courage to risk their lives in order to proclaim the message of resurrection, we know that Jesus was truly among them and had truly been resurrected from the dead.
- 8a. John declared the message out of sincere concern for his readers’ well-being. He wanted them to come into fellowship with God and remain in His eternal life. As witnesses, we need to share the message of life, not to prove that we are right, but solely to benefit our listeners and bring them to God.
9. It delivers us from spiritual death into God’s eternal life. Having been raised with Christ through baptism, we can live a new life that carries the image of God (Rom 6:4). Christ gives us abundant life so we may bear fruits for the glory of God (Jn 10:10; 15:5).
- 10a. By sharing the message of Jesus Christ, the author shares God’s life and all the spiritual blessings with his readers.
- 10b. True fellowship is not possible without God since He is the source of life and blessings. What we share with fellow believers, we receive from God first. For example, God has first loved us so that we can love one another (4:10,11). Only when we have experienced God’s love can we truly love others with His divine love.
11. Walk in the light (1:7). Obey God’s commands (5:2). Love one another in deed and in truth (3:18). More specifically, we can have fellowship with one another when we share our personal experience and testimony with others. We can also encourage one another’s faith through discussion of God’s word. When we show our love by providing for the needs of our brothers, we also have fellowship with one another. Serving the Lord with fellow workers is another way to have fellowship. All of the above are possible in the church. So church gatherings are important because they allow us to stay in fellowship with one another and with God.

Lesson 3

Observation

Outline

- Walk in the Light (1:5-7)
- Confess our Sins (1:8-10)
- Advocate and Propitiation (2:1-2)

Key Words/Phrases

Light/darkness, walk, truth/lie, cleanse, confess, forgive, sin, advocate, propitiation.

General Analysis

- 1a. When our actions do not conform to God’s requirements, our claim of godliness becomes a lie. Not only are we lying to others, we could also be deceiving ourselves.
- 1b. When we claim that we are without any sin, we are fooling ourselves. This false claim is to our own loss because we would not be able to receive forgiveness if we do not acknowledge our sin.
- 1c. Denial of our sins is denial of the need for Christ. God became flesh in order to save us from our sins. If we claim that we have never sinned, we make God, who tells us of our sins and calls us to repentance, a liar.
2. Christ’s blood cleanses us from all sin if we walk in the light. He is our advocate and the propitiation for our sins and the sins of the world.
3. We need to walk in the light. We need to confess our sins. We need God’s faithfulness and justice. We need the atonement of Jesus Christ.

Segment Analysis

1:5-7

- 1a. Sin.
- 1b. He is perfect and without sin. He is the absolute moral standard. The light refers to God’s grace and truth (Jn 1:14,16) which bring us blessings such as hope, peace, joy, reconciliation, spiritual wisdom, and a godly life. So God’s salvation is like the light that shines in darkness (Mt 4:16; Acts 26:18; Ps 27:1) and enables us to receive the light of life (Jn 8:12).
- 3a. We need to confess our sins (1:9), obey God’s commands (2:3), and love one another (2:10).

- 3b. When we walk in the light, we have fellowship with God because we are forgiven and we are taking part in God's goodness and love. Walking in the light also enables us to have fellowship with one another because we are doing what is beneficial to others (e.g. loving others) and sharing God's character with them.
4. Lip service is not good enough. Our walk is more important than our talk. Claiming to have fellowship with God without living godly lives makes us liars. Although we may win the praise of men, we are actually far from God and still remain in darkness.
5. He reconciled us to God through His sacrifice so we may receive His grace (Rom 5:1). He also brought peace among us so that we can become members of one body (Eph 2:13-18)
6. He is faithful and just. God's faithfulness makes Him trustworthy. Because He is true to His promises, and He has promised to forgive His people (e.g. Jer 31:34), we can always come to Him with a repentant heart to receive forgiveness. He will not turn us away. God's justice assures us that we may be cleansed of our sins because of the cross. Since Christ, who is sinless, has died for sinners, God's just requirement has been met. So God, who judges justly, will pardon our sins because of the sacrifice of Christ.
- 7a. To avoid a sense of guilt; to cover up shame; to boast of his own righteousness.
- 7b. Confession is an expression of repentance. God does not forgive the unrepentant because they will continue to live in sin. Confession is also an acknowledgment that we need God's forgiveness. If we justify ourselves rather than seek forgiveness, we are rejecting God's righteousness and the salvation of Jesus Christ (Rom 9:31,32; Lk 18:9-14).
8. In the previous paragraph, we are taught that we can be forgiven if we confess our sins. But the author reminds us here that God's grace is not an opportunity to continue in sin. We must leave our sins and live a new life (Rom 6:1-4).
- 9a. He speaks in defense of the accused.
- 9b. He intercedes on our behalf based on His sacrifice for our sins so that we are protected from accusation and condemnation (Heb 7:25; Rom 8:33-34). The Greek word for "advocate" is the same word for "comforter," which our Lord spoke of concerning the Holy Spirit (Jn 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7). Since the Holy Spirit is also the spirit of Jesus Christ (Gal 4:6; Acts 16:7; Jn 14:18), the Lord Jesus intercedes for us through the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:26,27). When we pray in the Holy Spirit and confess our sins, the Lord Jesus speaks on our behalf and His blood washes our sins away.

- 9c. No. We need to first confess our sins before God (1:9).
- 10a. It is also translated as "atoning sacrifice." It is the sacrifice of the sinless on behalf of sinners to remove their guilt.
- 10b. The saving grace of God is available for the whole world because God loves the world and sent His Son to save the world through Him (Jn 3:16-17). Everyone may be saved through faith in Jesus Christ, regardless of race, gender, or social status (Gal 3:27,28).

Lesson 4

Observation

Outline

Walk as He Walked (2:3-6)

Abide in the Light (2:7-11)

Know God and Overcome the Evil One (2:12-14)

Love God and Do His Will (2:15-17)

Key Words/Phrases

Know, keep commandments, truth, abide, walk, darkness/light, world.

General Analysis

- Verses 4,6,9.
- Keep God's word (5), walk in His likeness (6), and love our brothers (10). Knowing God is not simply come from intellectual exercise or discussion. Most importantly, it comes from living out God's image in our lives.
- We must walk in the light by obeying God's commands and loving our brothers (5,10,17). We need to be strong and let God's word abide in us (14).

Segment Analysis

- The word "perfected" can also be translated as "made complete" or "fulfilled." The perfecting of God's love does not mean that God's love is somehow imperfect. It means allowing God's love to live in us fully. Because the spirit of God's commandments is love, if we keep God's word, we allow God's love to fill our hearts and overflow to others.
- 3a. The command to love one another (Jn 13:34).
- 3b. The commandment is old because it is not something that John invented. It is new because it is the command of Christ to those who

have received a new life. In Christ, the old is gone, and the new has come (v. 8; 2Cor 5:17). We need to continue to practice it.

4. God is light, and He is love. Love is the concrete expression of God's nature. If anyone has no love, he is far from God and has no part with the light. He is blinded and without direction (v. 11). He may even stumble because he walks in darkness (v. 10). Life without love is meaningless and under the control of the wicked one (cf. Jn 8:40-44).
- 5a. It is rhythmical, with a definite pattern and repetition. The forms of address "little children," "fathers," and "young men." is also unique. We can see a change of tone here from one of warning to one of warmth and confidence.
- 5b. Their sins are forgiven. They know God. They have overcome the wicked one.
- 5c. In this section, he addresses the true believers and assures them of their spiritual status and blessings. After exposing the false claims of those who live in darkness, he gives encouragement to those who are truly in fellowship with God.
6. The devil. Believers are able to overcome because Christ has overcome (Rev 17:14). They overcome by the blood of Christ and the word of their testimony (v. 12; Rev 12:11). In other words, those who believe in Christ, confess their sins, and obey God's commandments are able to overcome the evil one. They do so not by their own power, but by God's protection (5:18).
7. We need to store God's word richly in our hearts through sharing God's word with one another (Col 3:16). We must constantly meditate on God's word and put it into practice (Jos 1:8).
- 8a. The word "world" in the Bible often refers to the wisdom or control of the wicked one (5:19). Loving the world means submitting to desires or knowledge that is contrary to God's will (2:16,17; 1Cor 2:6)
- 8b. Since the world and the things in it are contrary to the will of God, we cannot love both the world and the Father (Jas 4:4,5; Rom 8:7,8; Mt 6:24). Choosing to love the world means choosing to be God's enemy.
- 9a. Self-centered desires; Loving pleasure rather than loving God (2Tim 3:4); Obeying the demands of our sinful nature rather than obeying God.
- 9b. Desire for what is pleasing to the eye. Letting the eye go uncontrolled is most often the cause of greed and sexual immorality. E.g. Eve, Achan, David.
- 9c. Boasting of one's possessions or status. E.g. Paul (Phil 3:4-7).
- 10a. The satisfaction that the world gives is only temporary because life is fleeting and the world will one day be destroyed. The old world is

coming to an end and will be replaced by the new heaven and new earth. Those who love the world will likewise perish (2Pet 3:7,12,13).

Lesson 5

Observation

Outline

- Rise of the Antichrists and Their Separation from Church (2:18-19)
- Anointing and Knowledge of the Truth (2:20-21)
- Antichrist's Denial of Christ (2:22-23)
- Abiding of the Truth and the Teaching of the Anointing (2:24-27)
- Abiding in God and Practicing Righteousness (2:28-29)

Key Words/Phrases

Last hour, Antichrist, know, anointing, truth.

Segment Analysis

1. They separated themselves from the believers (19). They lied by denying that Jesus is the Christ (22). They tried to deceive true believers (26).
2. The term "last hour" should be understood in the context of verse 17, "the world is passing away, and the lust of it." The author does not seem to imply that the apostolic age was the end of world history. He is teaching that the order of the evil one, including the antichrist, is temporal and coming to an end. The rise of the antichrist, according to the prophecies, is an indication that this world is indeed passing away. (To see how the word "hour" is used to indicate the arrival or fulfillment of a destined time, refer to John 2:4, 4:21; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23).
- 3a. The word "us" refers to the church. The antichrist's departure from the body of Christ shows that they were never part of the body in the first place. True believers will always remain in Christ's body.
- 3b. They might come from the community of believers (cf. Mt 13:24-26), although they were never part of the community.
- 4a. Just as anointing served as a sign of being chosen for the priests and kings of the past, anointing in the believer also refers to the status of being chosen. The anointing of God is by the Holy Spirit (3:24; Lk 4:18; Acts 10:38; 2Cor 1:21,22). So the anointing of God means the abiding of the Holy Spirit in believers.
- 4b. The Holy Spirit teaches us so we may know the truth (21, Jn 16:13). He gives us spiritual wisdom to reveal to us the things of God and help us

remember the teachings of our Lord (1Cor 2:10; Eph 1:17; Jn 16:13; 14:26).

- 5a. "All things" refer to the truth (21,27; cf. Jn 14:26), which is also known as the things of the Spirit (1Cor 2:10-15). The Holy Spirit teaches us to know the things of God. More specifically, the things of God have to do with the gospel of grace and salvation through Jesus Christ (1Cor 2:9).
6. The Antichrist's denial of Jesus as Christ shows that they are liars who are opposed to the saving work of God. Since Jesus Christ is the only way to God, denial of Him is denial of the Father (22,23). Satan, the father of lies, stops people from receiving salvation by spreading lies, and he does so through the Antichrist.
7. We acknowledge our Lord through our confession and through our obedience to Christ's commands (3,4; Jn 13:34,35).
8. Teaching is among the gifts that the Spirit distributes to some in the church (1Cor 12:28; Eph 4:11). The apostles themselves taught the believers in the church. Believers also need to teach each other with God's word (Col 3:16). So this verse is not asking us to ignore the teachings of other believers. It is exhorting us to rely on the Holy Spirit rather than listen to deceptive teachings (26).
- 9b. We need to remain faithful to the Lord Jesus, who has promised us eternal life (25). We also need to live according to His teachings and examples (6,29).
10. Hold on to our confession of Jesus as Lord (23). Hold on to the promise of eternal life (25). Hold on to the truth which the Holy Spirit has taught us (27).

Lesson 6

Observation

Outline

Purifying Ourselves for His Coming (2:28-3:3)

Living a Sinless Life in Christ (3:4-6)

Children of God vs. Children of the devil (3:7-10)

Key Words/Phrases

Righteousness, children of God/born of God, know, sin, abide.

General Analysis

1. They hope for the appearing of the Lord and therefore purify themselves (2,3). They do not sin (6,9). They practice righteousness (2:29; 3:7). They love their brothers (10).

Segment Analysis

- 1a. It is one of marvel and excitement.
- 1b. The wonderful love that God has bestowed on us by making us His children.
- 1c. Since God loves us so much that He has made us His children, we ought to live a life to please Him. If we are always amazed by God's great love, we will actively do His will. Furthermore, if we are truly born of God, we would live according to His likeness, having purity and love.
- 2a. The world does not acknowledge Jesus Christ nor accept Him (Jn 1:10-13; 7:7). Instead of living according to God's image, the world indulges in lusts and pride.
- 2b. The world cannot understand or accept the ways and life of believers (1Pet 4:3,4).
- 3a. At the coming of our Lord Jesus, we will be transformed to be like Him, having a spiritual body that is immortal and full of glory (1Cor 15:42-53).
4. Since we hope to be like God when He appears, we need to be like God now by purifying ourselves.
5. If we confess our sins and walk in the light, the blood of Christ cleanses us from our sins (1:7,9). Practicing righteousness is the active way of purifying ourselves in order to imitate God's purity (7).
- 6a. Lawlessness (4). This means transgression or rejection of God's law.
- 6b. The devil (8).
- 6c. We need to be born of God through faith in Jesus Christ because He has come to destroy the works of the devil (8,9).
- 6d. Not loving our brother (10)
7. The verse does not say that practicing righteousness makes us righteous. In fact, we all need to confess that we have sin (1:8-10). What this verse teaches is that if we claim to be God's children but walk in sin, we are lying. True children of God who abide in Him would surely practice righteousness. By this they demonstrate that they have been born of God.
8. Jesus Christ took the form of sinful man. But because He was sinless, He condemned sin while He was in the flesh (Rom 8:3). By His atoning death, He destroyed the works of the devil and freed us from the fear of death (Heb 2:14,15). Today, those who are in Christ are no longer under the control of the devil because they are free from condemnation.
9. They have not seen God or known God. They live in sin (8a). They do not practice righteousness nor love their brothers (10).

10. If the verse teaches that believers are without sin and never commit sin, then it would contradict 1:8-10. Some versions of the Bible translate “commit” as “practice.” Compare also “abide in Him” with “sin” in verse 6. The context of the epistle shows that those who are born of God will abide in God rather than remain in sin. A person who has received a new life cannot continue to sin, unless he has fallen away from the truth.
11. Generally speaking, the seed refers to our rebirth. More specifically, it may refer to the word of truth. We are born of God through the word of truth (Jas 1:18; Mt 13:23). If we are children of God, His word remains in us so that we do not sin (Psalm 119:11).

Lesson 7

Observation

Outline

- Love and Hatred (3:11-15)
- Loving in Deed and in Truth (3:16-18)
- Confidence that Comes from Obedience (3:19-24)

Key Words/Phrases

Love one another, wicked one, murder, hate, death/life, lay down life, condemn, assure, confidence, keep commandment, abide, know.

General Analysis

1. It is God’s command from the beginning (11,23). We are born of God, not of the wicked one (12,13). We have eternal life (14,15). Christ laid down His life for us (16). God’s love abides in us (17). We will have confidence in prayer (22).

Segment Analysis

2. The world refers to those who are of the wicked one, such as Cain (see 12). They are those who do not obey God’s commands and have no love or eternal life.
3. Eternal life and death (see 15). The eternal life we have received manifests itself in a new lifestyle today (Rom 6:1-4). Therefore, our actions of love show that we have eternal life.
4. Murder is a result of hatred. The Jewish leaders who put Jesus to death committed murder out of their hatred. The Lord attributed their murderous thoughts to the devil (Jn 8:40-44). A person who hates is controlled by the devil and is fully capable of murder.

- 5a. We need to be selfless instead of self-centered (Phil 2:4,17). This sacrificial love includes giving to the needy (1Jn 3:17) bearing others’ burdens (Gal 6:2) and forgiving others (Eph 4:32).
- 5b. The greatest expression of selfless love is loving those who hate us or persecute us (Mt 5:43-48). The Lord Jesus laid down His life while we were still enemies of God (Rom 5:10,11). Those who now live according to the ways of the world may one day come to repentance. So although we should not love the world (wicked desires and earthly wisdom), we should still show our love to all people.
- 6b. We must love with concrete actions, and our love must be sincere (Rom 12:9). Actions of love done for the sake of gaining praise without sincere spirit of love has little value (1Cor 13:1-3; Mt 6:2-4).
- 6c. While it is easy to “love” in words and tongue, it takes self-sacrifice to love in deed and in truth. We need to give up our own interests, desires, and possessions in order to truly love. In the same way, God does not just say He loves us. His love is demonstrated in His actions of sacrifice.
- 8a. Whether our hearts condemn us determines whether we can have confidence before God.
- 8b. If we obey God, we can be confident that God will give us whatever we ask.
- 8c. We abide in God if we keep His commands. God shows that He abides in us through His Holy Spirit.
9. **Interpretation 1:** If we love our brethren, we know we are of the truth and we can assure our hearts. But if our heart condemns us because we fail to practice love, how much more will God judge us? On the contrary, if we have a clear conscience because we practice love, we can be confident toward God.
Interpretation 2: If we love our brethren in deed and in truth, we can assure our hearts. Even if our hearts may not feel confident, we should be assured because our deed of love shows that we are of the truth. We should trust God rather than our hearts. If we have a clear conscience because we practice love, we can be all the more confident toward God. In either interpretation, the emphasis is on confidence that comes from keeping God’s commandments (see 22).
10. Believing in Jesus and obeying His teachings shows that we believe and love God (Jn 12:44; 14:24). Loving one another is exactly what the Lord taught us to do when He said, “you shall love your neighbor as yourself.”
- 11a. Keeping God’s commandment and receiving the Holy Spirit.
- 11b. When the Holy Spirit comes upon us, it is an experience that we can see and hear (Acts 2:33). Speaking in tongues, which is evidence of receiving

the Holy Spirit, is a miraculous sign from God and it allows us to communicate to God in the Spirit (1Cor 14:2; Rom 8:26). Not only so, the Holy Spirit works in our lives to teach us the truth (1Cor 2:10; Eph 1:17; Jn 16:13; 14:26), give us power and courage (Acts 1:8; 4:31), comfort us (Acts 9:31), and transform us into God's likeness (2Cor 3:17,18, Eph 3:16). When we often pray in the Holy Spirit (Jude 20) and experience the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives, we know that God abides in us.

Lesson 8

Observation

Outline

Spirit of Truth and Spirit of Error (4:1-6)

Loving One Another (4:7-21)

God abiding in us through love (7-12)

God's love for us (13-16)

Perfect love without fear (17-18)

Loving God and loving our brothers (19-21)

Key Words/Phrases

Test the spirits, of God, Antichrist, overcome, world, hear, love, know, abide, perfected, confess, no fear.

Segment Analysis

- 1a. 1) Whether they confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. 2) Whether their teachings and actions conform to the apostle's teachings.
- 1b. Whoever listens to the apostles listens to Christ (Mt 10:40). If anyone refuses to accept Jesus Christ as Lord who has come in the flesh, they will also refuse to listen to the apostles. Likewise, those who deny Christ will also not abide by the teachings of the apostles because they belong to the wicked one.
- 1c. We must guard against those teachers who do not believe that Jesus is Lord. There are also those who claim to believe in the Lord Jesus but do not walk as Jesus did. Their immoral behavior indicates that they are false teachers. There are, yet, other teachers who claim to preach Christ but have changed the one gospel of salvation that the apostles had taught. Such spirits are also from the wicked one.
2. The Antichrist and the false teachers are the agents of the evil spirit (1,3). The evil spirit is also at work in those who are disobedient (5; Eph 2:1,2).
3. God's salvation was accomplished by His coming in the flesh (Rom 8:3-4). Christ had to share the humanity of God's children and go through death to become our atonement (Heb 2:14; 10:5-10). Only by coming in the flesh could our Lord Jesus Christ fulfill God's redemptive plan.
- 4a. The spirits of the Antichrist and false prophets.
- 4b. They have overcome by holding on to their confession of Jesus Christ. Such confession is also expressed in their keeping of God's commands.
- 4c. He who is in you is God. He who is in the world is the devil. We are able to overcome the devil by the power of God.
- 5a. God manifested His love toward us by sending His Son into the world (9-11). God first loved us (19).
- 5b. Our love for God is possible because He first loved us (19). Our love for God is manifested in our love for our brethren (20-21).
- 5c. If we love, we are born of God and know God (7). God's love is perfected in us if we love (12,17). Our love for one another shows that we are like God (17). Our love for one another shows that we love God (20-21).
- 5d. He is love (8,16). He is the source of love (7).
- 5e. If we love God, we are born of God and know Him (7). God abides in us if we love one another (12).
6. Those who are of the world do not practice love (3:14-15), but whoever hears the apostles will obey the command to love.
7. Our knowledge of God comes about not through intellectual reasoning but through actually walking as Christ did. Our eyes can only be open to know God if we love (cf. 2:10-11). By, practicing love, we can know what it is to love and know God, who is love.
8. Although we do not see God, we may know God by loving our brethren (7,8, cf. 20).
- 9a. The pouring out of God's Spirit on us (13); confession that Jesus is the Son of God (15); abiding in love (16).
- 9b. "Abide," which is also translated as "remain," carries a sense of steadfastness. Abiding in God therefore entails remaining faithful to God's commandments and our belief in Jesus Christ. It is like a branch that remains in the vine, bearing much fruit (Jn 15:1-7).
10. All have sinned (Rom 3:23). No one is fit to make atonement on our behalf. But God, who is the only righteous one, came in the flesh to become our sacrifice, which is without any blemish (1Pet 1:18,19). Since Jesus Christ is the only sacrifice that God has prepared for us, we cannot be saved through any other means except through faith in the Lord Jesus (Jn 14:6; Acts 4:12).

- 11a. Perfected love is love that is being carried out by God's children. See also Lesson 4, Segment Analysis question 1.
- 11b. Love for God and for others fulfills God's commandments (Mt 22:37-40; 7:12; Rom 13:10). Perfect love makes us perfect, just as our heavenly Father is perfect (Mt 5:43-48).
12. Fear is the opposite of confidence. It is a fear of judgment (18) and fear of being ashamed when the Lord appears (2:28). Since our actions of love show that we abide in God and He in us, we have nothing to fear (3:19-22).
13. Loving God requires obeying His commandment, and His commandment is for us to love one another (5:3; Jn 15:10,12). Furthermore, if we love God, we will also love His children.

Lesson 9

Observation

Outline

- Belief in the Lord Jesus Christ (5:1-5)
 - Our love for God (1-3)
 - Victory through faith (4-5)
- God's Witness (5:6-12)
- Assurance of Eternal Life (5:13-21)
 - Eternal life through Jesus Christ (13)
 - Confidence in prayer (14-16)
 - Keeping ourselves from the evil one (17-21)

Key Words/Phrases

Believe, love, keep commandments, born, overcome, faith, water, blood, spirit, witness/testimony, eternal life, true, keep.

General Analysis

1. We love God by keeping His commandments and we love His children (1-3). We overcome the world (4,5). We have God's witness in us (10). We have eternal life (11-13). We have confidence in prayer (14,15). We have an understanding to know the true God (20).

Segment Analysis

1. The anointed one.
2. God gives us the commandments out of His love for us (3). It is for our own good that we keep the commandments (Deut 10:12-13). When we

see the purpose and value of these commandments, as well as God's loving intention behind them, we will gladly obey them.

3. The "world" literally means "an ordered system." It refers to the desires and wisdom of the wicked one, who is the adversary of God and His children. Overcoming the world means being kept safe from the evil one (5:18) and living a life free from sin (3:8,9). True belief in the Lord is not just mental consent. It involves abiding in Christ, walking as He did, and obeying His commandments. With such belief, God purifies our sins and abides in us through His Spirit. Since He who is in us is greater than he who is in the world (4:4), we can overcome the evil one.
4. Although John does not state it specifically, the believers must have understood that "water" referred to baptism (Mt 3:11; cf. Acts 1:5; 1Pet 3:20,21). The baptism that we receive is more than immersion in water or a formality. It is effective for the remission of sins because of Christ's blood (Jn 19:34,35; Acts 2:38, 22:16).
5. According to the Bible, the witness of the Spirit is twofold, and both may be implied in this passage. First, the Holy Spirit is given to those sent by God and the Holy Spirit imparts authority to forgive sins (Jn 20:21-23). Therefore, the baptist, as an agent sent by God, must have received the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit then becomes a witness from God of the cleansing power in baptism. Second, the Holy Spirit is a seal promised to everyone who believes and is baptized (Acts 2:38,39; 2Cor 1:21,22; 5:5; Eph 1:13,14; cf. Mt 3:16,17). The Holy Spirit acts as a witness in every believer by testifying with our spirit that we are God's children (Rom 8:15,16; 1Jn 3:24; 4:13).
6. These three all bear witness to the same truth: God has given us eternal life through the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 7a. God's testimony serves as confirmation that Jesus Christ was indeed sent by God. This is why Jesus drew on the Father's testimony as a witness to His words and ministry (Jn 5:31,32,36-39; 8:17,18). God's testimony strengthens our faith in the salvation of Christ. Since God testified to Christ's salvation, we must take the gospel message seriously (cf. Heb 2:1-4).
- 7b. Sometimes people's commendation that we are good Christians seem more important to us than an inward conviction that comes from our intimate relationship with God.
- 8a. The gift of eternal life is not just something of the future but is also manifested in our daily lives. A transformed life as a result of our faith in Christ is a testimony that Jesus Christ is indeed the Savior.
- 8b. Having received the cleansing of God through baptism (water and blood), we ought to live a new life in accordance with the Spirit (Rom

6:22; 8:9-13). Our newness of life then testifies that we have received eternal life and that this life is in the Son of God (11).

9. The term “the name of Jesus Christ” or the like often has to do with the authority of Christ (Phil 2:9-11; cf. Mk 9:39). So believing in the name of the Son of God involves confession of and submission to the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 10a. 2, 13, 14, 15, 18-20.
- 10b. Faith in Jesus Christ the Son.
- 10c. Many have the misconception that the moment we confess and believe Christ as Lord, we have eternal life and whatever we do after that moment can never take away the eternal life. We learn in 1 John that confession and belief is more than lip service or a one-time feeling that occurred some time in the past. The fact that the false teachers turned out to be false believers even though they also at one time had confessed Christ shows that their confidence was false. Only if we continue to believe (13) and abide in Christ by keeping His commandments and walking in the likeness of God can we have true confidence in God.
- 11a. John does not spell out specific transgressions as sin that leads to death. But we know for sure that the sin of apostasy (rejecting Christ) will certainly lead to death. If a believer rejects Christ by turning away from the truth and returning to a life of sin, he will have to face the dreadful judgment (Heb 6:4-6; 10:26-31). The teaching here is that we can have assurance that God will restore life to the brother who has sinned if he is willing to repent. It is not the intention of this passage to tolerate certain kinds of transgressions that do not lead to death. The author makes clear that “all unrighteousness is sin” (17). Those who live in sin cannot inherit God’s kingdom and will surely die (1Cor 6:9; Rom 8:6,13).
- 11b. It is our duty to restore our brothers and we do so through prayer because it is God who can restore them (Gal 6:1; Lk 22:31,32; Jas 5:15).
12. God’s children do not live in sin. They are kept from the harm of the wicked one. They know the true God. The children of the wicked one are under his sway. They live in sin and serve idols.
- 13a. Against the prevalence of false teachings and the works of the liar, the devil, we must know the only true God and walk in His commands, which is the truth. Only if we remain in the true God can we guard against what is false.
- 13b. Whereas God is true, all idols are false.
- 13c. Idols in general include anything that the wicked one has set up to lead people away from God. The sharp contrasts in 1John, including sin and purity, love and hate, God’s will and lust, light and darkness, are actually a contrast between the true God and false gods. So the exhortation to

keep ourselves from idols sums up all the teachings to guard against the wicked one and the workings of his evil spirit.

Lesson 10

Observation

Outline

- Love Based on Truth (1-3)
- Walking in Truth (4-6)
- Abiding in Truth (7-11)
- Greetings (12-13)

Key Words/Phrases

Truth, love, rejoice, commandment, walk, doctrine of Christ.

General Analysis

1. Many deceivers who do not acknowledge that Jesus Christ has come into the flesh have gone out into the world (7). The author warns the believers to watch out and reject these deceivers (10,11).
2. The truth abides in the believers and will be with them forever (2). God’s grace, mercy, and peace will be with us in truth and love (3). When believers walk in truth, it is an occasion for joy (4).

Segment Analysis

1. The church (cf. Eph 1:4).
- 2a. Truth and love go hand in hand. Our love for one another must be done in the truth and based on the truth (1,6). On the other hand, the truth is expressed in love, so that anyone who confesses the Lord Jesus must also love his brothers (5).
3. Some claimed to know the Father but denied the Son (7; cf. Jn 12:44). The benediction emphasizes the divinity of Christ and His relationship to the Father (“the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father”).
4. Love is a commandment which we have had from the beginning (5). To love is to walk according to God’s commandments (6).
5. Love is the spirit and underlying principle of all of God’s commandments (Mt 22:35-40; 7:12; Rom 13:10).
6. “We” may include the believers (some translations read, “you do not lose the things you worked for”) as well as God’s workers, who have worked hard to build up the believers’ faith in Christ (1Cor 3:10). If believers

forsake the truth, their works of faith would be in vain (1Cor 9:27), and the work that was done by God's workers will also be in vain (Gal 4:11).

7. The doctrine of Christ includes both the teachings of Christ and the teachings about Christ (that He has come in the flesh). In either meaning, we are to acknowledge Jesus as Lord by always walking according to His commands.
8. Acknowledging and receiving false teachers is to share in their evil deeds (11). Love must be practiced in the truth (cf. 1). Receiving false teachers is an action that denies Christ. It would allow false teachings to penetrate the church, causing harm to believers. Anyone who denies Christ or disobeys God does not have true love because his actions can only lead others away from God to destruction.
9. John reminds the believers that true love involves keeping Christ's commandments and helping others to do so. Anyone who sins, shares in the evil of deceivers, or leads others astray does not have love.
- 10a. Unlike the false preachers who could only bring harm, John will come to meet with the believers and have fellowship with them so that their joy may be full. Fellowship and love in the truth result in joy.
- 10b. Speaking face to face allows more intimate interaction (cf. Rom 1:11,12).

Lesson 11

Observation

Outline

- Love in Truth (1)
- Prayer and Rejoicing (2-4)
- Commendation and Exhortation (5-8)
- Denunciation against Diotrefes (9-10)
- Commendation of Demetrius (11-12)
- Farewell Greetings (13-14)

Key Words/Phrases

Beloved, love, joy, truth, testimony/bear witness, fellow workers, receive, evil/good.

General Analysis

- 1a. Love in truth. I rejoiced greatly. Walk in the truth. Many things to write. I do not wish to write to you with pen and ink. Speak face to face.
- 1b. The tone carries personal affection and joy, despite the strict warnings.

- 1c. In 2 John, the author warned against receiving the false preachers. In 3 John the problem that the church faced was the wicked deeds of an individual who forbade receiving the preachers of the truth.
- 2a. He is dearly loved by the author. His soul prospers. He is faithful in his work of hospitality. He received the workers of God, even though he did not know them personally.
- 2b. He loves to have the preeminence among the workers. He does not receive the workers of God and speaks malicious words against them. He forbids believers who wish to receive the preachers and puts them out of the church.
- 2d. He has good reputation. Everyone in the church, including the workers of God, and the truth itself testify to his good character.

Segment Analysis

1. From the way it is juxtaposed against good health, the prosperity of the soul refers to spiritual health. This broad term may include many aspects of spiritual well-being, such as spiritual strength and maturity, richness in good deeds, etc. (cf. Eph 3:14-19; Col 1:9-10).
2. It is the goal of all workers of God to guide the believers in the truth. When believers walk in the truth, their work has come to fruition (cf. Phil 2:14-18; 1Thess 2:19,20; Heb 13:17).
- 3a. It should be done faithfully. We must show hospitality to both the brethren and "strangers" (see next question). We should do it in a manner worthy of God.
- 3b. Showing hospitality in a manner worthy of God could mean either doing so in a manner that would please God or doing so as if the messenger is from God (cf. Gal 4:14). At any rate, the phrase emphasizes the importance and necessity of showing sincere hospitality to God's workers.
- 4a. We tend to love those whom we are acquainted with or those who are close to us. But Gaius put the ministry above his own interests and preferences.
5. By receiving these workers of God, we receive Christ, and we will certainly receive God's reward (Mt 10:40-42). We also participate in the ministry through our hospitality.
6. The workers of God at that time often depended on believers' provisions and opening their homes up for lodging (7; cf. 2Cor 11:8,9; Phil 4:18). At a time when there were also travelling false teachers (2Jn 10), it became even more important to receive the preachers of the truth in order to support God's ministry.

- 8b. Perhaps Diotrephes' intention to establish his authority in the church led him to think that missionaries sent by the elder would be a threat to his position (cf. Gal 4:17).
9. When we walk in the truth by living according to God's commands, our conduct becomes our testimony (1Jn 2:3-6; Mt 7:15-23).
- 10a. They are afraid to be oppressed by evil (cf. 10). Evildoers often prosper for the time being, while the righteous often suffer.
- 10b. Goodness comes from God and pleases God.
11. Discouragement is often a sign of defeat, showing that we have succumbed to evil. While evil may sometimes exist in the community of believers, we should look at the good examples and imitate them (11,12). In doing so, we help strengthen truth and godly love.
- 12a. Greeting by name implies personal knowledge and intimate affection. This is the tone and attitude of the author himself.

Lesson 12

Purpose/Occasion

1. Ungodly men have crept into the fellowship of believers, and they were probably influencing some of the believers. Jude at first intended to write about the gospel of salvation. But sensing the urgency and seriousness of the issue, he decided to exhort the believers to stand firm against the wickedness of the ungodly.

Observation

Outline

Address and greeting (1-2)

Purpose and occasion (3-4)

Warning (5-19)

Past judgment (5-7)

Description of ungodly men and future judgment (8-19)

Appeal (20-23)

Doxology (24,25)

Key Words/Phrases

Preserved/keep, beloved, contend earnestly for the faith, ungodly, remind, judgment/condemnation.

General Analysis

2. 4, 8, 10, 11, 16, 18, 19.

3. The prophecy of Enoch (14,15) and the prophecies of the apostles (17,18).
4. It is God who has called, sanctified, and preserved us (1). He gives us mercy, peace, and love (2). He is able to keep us from stumbling and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy (24). He is our Savior (25). We need to contend earnestly for the faith (3). We need to remember the words spoken by the apostles of our Lord (17). We must keep ourselves in the love of God, building ourselves up on our most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, and looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life (21).

Segment Analysis

- 1a. It is the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ through the apostles concerning the gospel of salvation and our Christian walk (Mt 28:20; Acts 2:42; Rom 6:17; Gal 1:23; 2Tim 1:13; Heb 2:1-4; 2Jn 5,6,9,10).
- 1b. The word "contend" can be translated "struggle." 20-23 elaborates on the meaning of contending earnestly for the faith. It means abiding in God's love and mercy and growing in the faith; It also carries a sense of engaging in a spiritual battle to save the lost and strayed. In order to prevail in our struggle against sin and preserve the faith, we need to rely on God to live a godly life that conforms to the message of the gospel (Phil 1:27; 1Tim 6:11,12)
2. The ungodly men misused God's grace as a license to indulge in sexual immorality. They deny God by disobeying his commands and living in sin (Tit 1:16).
3. Just as God executed judgment on the sinners and the rebellious angels in the past, He will surely execute judgment on the ungodly (15).
4. We cannot afford to be over-confident. We must be careful not to repeat their sin of idolatry, sexual immorality, and complaining (1Cor 10:5-12). We must hold firmly to the faith we had at first, lest we turn away from God (Heb 3:7-19).
- 5a. If even the archangel, who has great authority, dared not accuse the devil, who was obviously in the wrong, how can we slander authority and even things we don't know about?
- 5b. Sometimes our lusts make us defiant and arrogant, not heeding to instructions and warnings. Sometimes we like to criticize or ridicule leaders, including those in the church. We should be careful not to become a slanderer and bring judgment on ourselves (Eph 4:31; Col 3:8; Tit 3:2; Jas 4:11; 1Pet 2:1).
- 7a. They carouse in their own deceptions (2Pet 2:13). They do not belong to the fellowship of love because their wickedness marks them out for judgment (Psalm 1:5).

- 7b. These false teachers cannot bring any edification to the believers. Their boasting is empty.
- 7c. They are without the life of God.
- 7d. They are restless, and cannot receive God's peace.
- 7e. Wandering stars (planets or shooting stars) cannot serve as guide for navigation. Likewise, the ungodly cannot lead anyone to God but is doomed to destruction.
8. Ungodly deeds (walking according to their lusts) and ungodly words (grumbling, complaints, boasting, flattery).
- 9a. 1. By building ourselves up in the most holy faith. We need to be strong in the faith and press on to spiritual maturity (1Cor 16:13; Phil 3:12-15; 2Pet 1:3-11).
 2. By praying in the Holy Spirit (Eph 6:18). God pours out His love in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Rom 5:5). We need to devote ourselves to watchful prayer (Col 4:2; Mt 26:41) and pray without ceasing (1Thess 5:17). The Holy Spirit will fill us, intercede for us, and strengthen us (Eph 3:16; 5:18; Rom 8:26-27).
 3. By looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus. We need to confess our sins and humbly pray for God's faithful guidance while we eagerly wait for the day of His appearance (Tit 2:13). We also need to trust the mercy of our Lord while we endure sufferings (Jas 5:11).
- 9b. For those who waver in the truth, we need to show our compassion and bring them back (Job 6:14). For those who are drifting into sin, we must rescue them as if snatching them from the fire (cf. Zech 3:2; Prov 24:11), while being watchful ourselves so we are not tempted (Gal 6:1)
10. True believers cannot be idle when ungodly men are at work. We need to make progress in our faith while saving the lost. Since the faith has been "delivered" to us, it is our duty to contend for the faith and not let evil affect or prevail over us.
11. The Bible assures us that it is God who works in the believer and keeps him unto salvation (1Thess 5:23,24; 1Pet 5:10; Phil 1:6). Despite the presence of ungodliness, believers can find assurance in God's mercy and faithfulness.

Lesson 13

1. The 7 trumpets are within the 7th seal, and the 7 bowls are within the 7th trumpet. Chapter 7 records the interlude between the seals and the 7 trumpets. 10:1-15:4 records the interlude between the trumpets and the 7 bowls.

2. The songs are mostly praises that ascribe to God all glory, thanks, honor, and power, and the songs usually precede judgments.

Lesson 14

Observation

Outline

- Revelation of Jesus Christ through John (1:1-3)
- Grace and peace from Christ our savior (1:4-7)
- The Lord's proclamation of His eternity and omnipotence (1:8)
- Hearing the command to write down the visions (1:9-11)
- The appearance of Christ (1:12-16)
- Christ's consolation and command (1:17-20)

Key Words/Phrases

Revelation, signify, word of God, testimony of Jesus Christ, read, hear, keep, kings and priests, Alpha and Omega, Beginning and End, seven churches, seven golden lampstands, seven stars.

Segment Analysis

- 1a. God and Jesus Christ.
- 1b. The revelation was "signified." The word signify means 1) to give a sign, to signify, indicate, or 2) to make known. The visions John saw were mostly signs or symbols, many of which were not explained. While he recorded everything he saw, he did not necessarily understand the meaning behind the visions. The meaning of the signs will become clearer as events of the end time continue to unfold.
- 1c. The revelation was sent by Christ's angel to His servant John. God intended to show the revelation to "His servants"—a term for God's people.
2. To bear witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw (cf. Acts 4:20; 1Jn 1:1-3).
- 3a. Like OT prophecies, the words of prophecy in Revelation contain not only predictions but also exhortations and warnings. Readers are to heed and respond to the message within the prophecy.
- 4a. The coming of the Lord is near (1:7; 3:11; 22:7,12,20).
- 4b. Because the time is near, the message of Revelation is urgent. Christ's coming will be like that of a thief for those who do not heed His warnings (3:3; 16:15; Lk 12:40; 1Thess 5:1-3). Blessed are those who

- read, hear, and keep the words of the prophecy because they are ready for Christ's coming and will receive their reward soon (22:12).
5. The seven spirits are the spirits of God (4:5), the Holy Spirit, who is intimately related to the lampstands in both Revelation and Zechariah. The number 7, a complete number, indicates that God is all-powerful and all-wise (4:5; 5:6).
 - 6b. In His earthly ministry, the Lord was a witness to God's truth and salvation (Jn 7:7; 18:37; 1Tim 6:13). He faithfully carried out His mission and obeyed the Heavenly Father even unto death.
 7. We are kings because through Christ's salvation, we have power over sin and overcome the sufferings in life (Rom 8:1,2,31-37). We will even judge the world and angels (1Cor 6:2,3). We are priests because we are to offer sacrifices of praise as well as our bodies as living sacrifices (Heb 13:15; 1Pet 2:5,9; Rom 12:1-2). We also offer supplications, prayers, and intercessions for everyone (1Tim 2:1).
 - 8a. The whole earth will witness Christ's coming in power and glory. It will be a dreadful day for sinners. The verse begins with "behold," telling us to be watchful. We must obey and honor Christ today and be always ready for His coming.
 - 8b. The mourning will probably be the result of great fear of the dreadful judgment (cf. 6:15-17; Lk 21:25-27).
 - 9a. Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. "Almighty" literally means "the one who has his hand on everything." The Lord is the everlasting God to whom belongs all power and authority forever and ever.
 - 9b. Four times (4,8,11,17). The emphasis on the eternity and power of God reminds us that He is above and in control of all things. He directs the course of history and brings about judgment according to His sovereign will.
 10. He was the believers' brother and companion. He participated in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.
 - 11a. R.F. Weymouth translates this verse as, "In the spirit I found myself present on the day of the Lord." Like Paul, who was caught up to the third heaven (2Cor 12:1-4), or Peter, who fell into a trance (Acts 10:10), or Ezekiel, who was brought out in the Spirit of the Lord (Ezek 37:1), John entered the spiritual realm and saw everything as if he was in the day of the Lord. The day of the Lord is the day of Jesus Christ (Phil 1:6; 2:16; 1Thess 5:2; 2Thess 2:2; 2Pet 3:10; Acts 17:31). The OT also contains numerous references to this day (Isa 13:6-10; Joel 1:15; 2:1-3,11,31; Zeph 1:14-18; Mal 4:1,5; Ezek 30:1-3).
 - 11b. John seemed to be in bondage, but he had freedom in the Spirit (cf. 2Cor 3:17). The external environment did not defeat John because the Lord was with him. Likewise, if we live by the Holy Spirit and walk according to God's will, we will claim victory over even the most difficult circumstances in life.
 12. The number 7 is symbolic of completeness. God chose 7 churches in Revelation to represent the entire body of believers of the true church. So the messages to the 7 churches were also meant for all believers (2:7,11,17,23,29; 3:6,13,22; 22:16).
 14. Christ is ever present in the church, examining and strengthening the lives of the believers. Through signs and miracles and the various gifts of the Holy Spirit, Christ accomplishes His work and manifests His power in the church.
 - 15a. The long robe and golden sash were the attire of the priests (Ex 28:4). Christ is the everlasting High Priest who has saved us and acted as the Mediator between God and us (Heb 7:24-25). The long robe could also refer to God's kingly majesty (Isa 6:1). Christ is both King and High Priest (Zech 6:12-13). The two offices represent God's justice and mercy.
 - 15b. White hair is the honor of the elderly (Prov 20:29). That the head and hair were white like wool may signify Christ's glory and purity.
 - 15c. The Lord's omniscience and just judgment.
 - 15d. Christ's power to trample down His enemies. In Ezekiel's and Daniel's visions, fire and glowing metal were also associated with God's glory.
 - 15e. Christ's awesome power and majesty.
 - 15f. Christ's power and authority, which He gives to His messengers (Mt 10:1; 28:18-20; Mk 16:19-20).
 - 15g. Christ's judgment against those who did not obey His word. His words also penetrate and judge our thoughts and the intent of our hearts.
 - 15h. Christ's majestic glory.
 16. He was terrified at the awesome appearance of the Lord (17; cf. Dan 8:17).
 17. Christ is the eternal God who had been raised from the dead through the power of God. Death could not prevail against Him. He has control over the powers of Hades and death. Since we have this Conqueror among us and with us, we have nothing to fear (Rom 8:37; Phil 4:13).
 18. Gold is a symbol of preciousness, purity, and holiness. Lampstands with oil in them give forth light. The lamps must be lit continually before the Lord (Lev 24:4). Likewise, the church and all believers must always manifest the holiness of God to the world through the power of the Holy Spirit (Mt 5:14-16; 1Pet 2:9-12; Zech 4:6).

Lesson 15

Observation

Key Words/Phrases

I know, against you, remember, hold fast, repent, let him hear, overcome.

General Analysis

2. Judgment begins at the house of God (1Pet 4:17-18). Before God pours out His wrath on the world, He corrects, warns, and strengthens the church so that she will become holy, stand firm in trials, and be ready for the coming of the Lord.
3. Christ's authority, Christ's complete knowledge ("I know"), exhortation and warning, repentance, the Lord's coming, reward for those who overcome.

Segment Analysis

2. We need to test their words to see if they proclaim the true gospel of Jesus Christ (Gal 1:8-9; 1Jn 4:2-6; Acts 17:11).
- 3a. The forsaking of the first love means the gradual loss of love they had at first—love for all the saints (Eph 1:15). The church must be rooted and grounded in love (Eph 3:17-19). Love is the bond of perfection and the sum of the law (Col 3:14; Mt 22:37-40; Rom 13:8-10). Without love, even charitable deeds become meaningless (1Cor 13:1-3). The forsaking of the first love could also refer to the loss of love for Christ. Sometimes we may lose our initial love for the Lord even though we may have increased in our Biblical knowledge or have been diligent in sacred work. God looks beyond the superficial acts of service to see whether it is our love for Him that motivates all that we do (Jn 21:15-18).
- 3b. We will be removed from our position to shine light for God. In other words, we will not be worthy to be His disciple and member of His church. Love is the mark of discipleship and bond in the body of Christ (cf. Jn 13:34-35; Eph 4:15,16).
- 3c. We need to remember from where we have fallen and do the first works (5). We need to recall our fervent love for Christ and for others in the past, examine the reasons for our decline in love, and constantly remind ourselves to do everything out of love.
4. God is a jealous God who detests all evil (Ex 20:5). It pleases Him to see that we also detest evil with the same jealousy (cf. Num 25:7-11).

5. Having eternal life (Gen 3:22).
- 6a. Tribulation, poverty, imprisonment, threat of death. Their sufferings probably came from those who claim to be Jews.
- 6b. Christ identifies Himself as the one who was dead, and came to life. He experienced death, but overcame it. With such encouragement, He tells us not to be afraid but to remain faithful unto death. We know that since Christ has overcome, Satan has no power over us. The Lord also says, "I know..." It is great comfort to know that the Lord is well aware of our sufferings for Him. He is not ignorant of what we are going through. He wants us to pass the trial in order that we may receive the crown of life.
7. Riches are deceptive (Mt 13:22). Our hearts can easily be entangled and our spiritual eyes blinded by material comfort, and we slack off in our service to God (Deut 8:11-14; Mt 6:21,24). On the other hand, suffering strengthens our spirit and helps us overcome our desires (1Pet 4:1-2). Trials, either in the form of persecution or poverty, enable us to develop perseverance and character (Rom 5:3-4). If we die to sin and even suffer physical death for Christ, we will inherit eternal life (10; Rom 8:13; Mt 16:24-25).
- 8a. They were faithful in the face of persecution. But they were tempted by false teachings of Balaam and of the Nicolaitans.
- 8b. While the Ephesians did not tolerate wickedness and hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans, the believers in Pergamos tolerated false teachings and wickedness in the church. For those who hold to the false teachings, they must repent of their doctrinal error as well as their sins of eating food offered to idols and of committing sexual immorality. For those who did not participate in these things, they must repent of their tolerance of evil in the church.
- 8c. While persecution is visible and obviously negative, false teachings are much more subtle and deceptive. Just as Satan may disguise as an angel of light, false teachers may disguise themselves as apostles and mislead those who are not watchful (2Cor 11:13-14).
9. In dealing with false teachings, it is the word of God that will expose the error and destroy the scheme of Satan (Eph 6:17; Heb 4:12). The word of God will also judge and condemn the unrepentant (Jn 12:48).
- 10a. The manna is our Lord Jesus, who is the bread from heaven (Jn 6:31-33,50-51). Eating the manna means having the everlasting life of Jesus (Jn 6:53-58). The manna is hidden because the world does not know Him or accept Him (cf. Lk 10:21-24; Jn 6:44; 8:19; 1Cor 2:7-9).
- 10b. In the ancient courts of justice, the accused were condemned by black pebbles and the acquitted by white. It is possible that the white stone with a new name refers to the commendation and seal of ownership

- which Christ bestows on those who overcome (3:12; 14:1; Isa 62:1-2; 2Tim 2:19-22; Mt 25:21,23).
- 11a. Our love, service, faith, and patience must grow more and more (Phil 1:9; 1Thess 4:1,10; 2Thess 1:3). We also must not become weary in doing good, even when we don't seem to reap any results (Gal 6:9). We must persist and hold fast to what we have until the Lord comes. If we are diligent in bearing abundant fruit, we will not stumble but receive a rich welcome into Christ's kingdom (2Pet 1:5-11).
- 11b. Despite their many good works, the believers in Thyatira were rebuked by the Lord for their tolerance of evil. God does not ignore or tolerate our sin, even if we have done much good work (Eccl 10:1).
- 12a. That she was a prophetess implies that she had unusual gifts and played a prominent role in the church. She taught and seduced the believers to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. Through her position as a teacher and her deceptive approach, she succeeded in luring some to commit adultery with her. In the church today, Jezebel could be symbolic of worldly values (lust, pride, dissension, etc) and false doctrines that disguise as teachings of Christ.
- 12b. Because the works of Jezebel were very subtle and deceptive, they often went unnoticed. But the punishment that would fall on her and her children will let everyone know that Christ examines everyone and their deeds, even if they are done in secret.
13. The "wisdom of this world," including philosophy, empty deceit, tradition of men, and basic principles of the world. The depths of Satan may also be false doctrines. These teachings seem wise and persuasive to the people of the world but are actually from Satan.
14. 22:16 tells us that the morning star is Christ Himself. To be given the morning star means to have the life of Christ in us.
15. He may claim to be a Christian or even participates in church activities, but he fails to live a new life in Christ. He still obeys his sinful desires rather than the guidance of the Spirit; he is spiritually dead (cf. Rom 6:11-14). Being alive in name but actually dead may also refer to hypocritical service without sincerity—honoring God with the lips but the heart being far from God (Mt 15:8). Such a condition is dangerous because the outward appearance of life conceals the inner spiritual death. When judgment comes, such people will not stand (Mt 3:12).
- 16a. They must wake up from their slumber ("be watchful"), rekindle their zeal ("strengthen the things which remain"), pay attention to the message they once received ("remember what you have received and heard"), persist in good works ("hold fast"), and live a new life ("repent").
- 16b. The spiritual death mentioned here is probably a result of complacency and indolence. When we fall asleep spiritually, we become dull to the message we hear and weary in bearing fruit. We feel secure in our present condition and have no desire to improve. We become like a tree which has signs of life but is fruitless and dead (cf. Mt 21:19).
17. Being clothed in white garments means receiving the righteous vindication and glory of Christ (cf. 3:18; 6:11; 7:9,13; 19:14). Having one's name in the book of life and being acknowledged by Christ means receiving citizenship in God's kingdom (Mt 10:32; Lk 12:8).
18. The key of David is a symbol of Christ's kingly power and authority since the term "David" refers to the Messiah. Through His death, Christ has conquered Hades and Death (cf. 1:18). The door that Christ opens is the privilege of entering God's kingdom (Mt 16:19).
- 19a. The believers were probably persecuted or accused by "those who say they are Jews and are not." These believers refused to deny the name of Christ despite the severe oppositions and threats from those of the synagogue of Satan (cf. 8).
- 19b. A faithful municipal servant or a distinguished priest was sometimes honored by having a special pillar added to one of the temples and inscribed with his name (Barclay, *Seven Churches*, p. 89). Thus, being a pillar in God's temple with God's name, the name of Jerusalem, and Christ's new name is a great honor. A pillar, a symbol of strength and permanence, well suits the believers' perseverance and faithfulness. Although they have little strength, they will become strong and honorable in God's kingdom.
20. This is the wrath that God will pour out on the unbelievers, which Revelation calls "inhabitants of the earth" (6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 12:12; 13:8,12,14). To be kept from this hour of trial, we need to keep the command to persevere (10). In other words, if we remain true to Christ now and suffer for Him, we will not be harmed by the calamities that are to come upon the unbelievers.
21. The word "amen" is an expression that means 1) surely, truly or 2) so it is, so be it, may it be fulfilled. It was a custom, passed on from the synagogues to the Christian assemblies, that when he who had read or discoursed, had offered up solemn prayer to God, the others responded Amen, and thus made the substance of what was uttered their own. That Christ is the Amen could mean either that He was true or that He humbly submitted to God's will and made it His own.
- 22a. Complacency, half-heartedness, lethargy, indifference, stagnancy (cf. Lk 9:62; 13:6-9; Mt 19:20-22).
- 22b. God wants us to love Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mk 12:30). Those with half-hearted commitment are not fit for God's

kingdom (Lk 9:62). Like lukewarm water, those who are ineffective will be spit out because they have become useless (Mt 5:13)

- 23a. They think that they are rich (either materially or spiritually) and lack nothing. They are satisfied with and even proud of their present condition.
- 23b. They have become blind spiritually. Instead of giving Christ the glory, they boast about what they have. Because of complacency, they neglect self-examination and humility.
24. 1) They must buy from Christ gold refined in the fire. Believers must seek their riches in Christ and consider knowing Jesus Christ as of far greater value than the possessions and pride of this world (Phil 3:7-10; Ps 19:9,10; 119:127). Such faith must go through trials in order to be proven genuine (1Pet 1:6-7; Phil 3:10). 2) They must put on white garments. The white garments represent the righteousness of Christ, manifested in our righteous deeds (Gal 3:27; Eph 4:20-24; Rev 19:7,8). In other words, we need to practice God's word through faith in Christ and the help of the Holy Spirit. 3) They must anoint their eyes with eye salve. We need to have the anointing and fullness of the Holy Spirit in order to know God and receive the spiritual wisdom to know what is the true treasure (1Jn 2:27; Eph 1:17,18; Jn 16:13; 1Cor 2:9,10).
25. Because He loves us and wants us to become blameless, He disciplines us when we stray (Heb 12:5-11; Prov 3:11-12; Job 5:17). He will not abandon us if we repent. He patiently knocks on the door of our hearts until we open the door and let Him in (cf. Song 5:2). Our Lord always gently calls us and patiently waits for us to turn back to Him (cf. 2Pet 3:9).
- 26a. The cowardly (2:10,13; 3:8, etc.), unbelieving (all those who do not repent or heed what the Spirit says), abominable (2:6,15; 3:16, etc.), murderers (2:13,14,20, etc), sexually immoral (2:14,20), sorcerers (2:24, as well as all sins of rebellion: 1Sam 15:23), idolaters (2:14,20), and all liars (2:2,9,20; 3:9).

Lesson 16

Observation

Outline

The Throne of God (4:1-8a)
 Hymns of Praise (4:8b-11)
 The Sealed Scroll (5:1-5)
 The Lamb (5:6-7)

Hymns of Praise (5:8-14)

Key Words/Phrases

Throne set in heaven, twenty-four elders, four living creatures, seven Spirits, holy, Almighty, lives forever and ever, glory, honor, thanks, power, worship, you are worthy, scroll, seven seals, Lion of the tribe of Judah, Root of David, Lamb, slain, seven horns, seven eyes, redeemed, kings and priests, reign.

General Analysis

- 1) The number of those singing increases with each song, and the four living creatures end the last hymn with "Amen!" 2) The first two hymns are to the One on the throne; the 3rd and 4th to the Lamb; the last to the One on the throne and the Lamb. 3) There is a symmetry in terms of the length of the hymns: The 1st and 5th are the shortest; the 2nd and 4th are longer; the 3rd hymn, which is about the redemption of God, is the longest of the hymns.
- The One on the throne, the twenty-four elders, the living creatures, the hymns of praise, the worship, the seven Spirits of God.

Segment Analysis

- Lightnings, thunderings, and voices. These elements represent God's awesome judgment for the vindication of His saints.
- The vision of God on His throne lets us know that God is about to exercise His judgment (Dan 7:9,10; Ps 9:7,8). God is the supreme ruler who is above all. He will pour out His wrath on the wicked and vindicate His people. For the believers and the repentant, the throne of God represents God's mercy and protection (Heb 4:16; Jer 17:12; Rainbow may symbolize mercy: Gen 9:13-15). Just as the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures surround the throne and constantly offer God praise and worship, we should let God be the first in our hearts and always draw close to Him to obtain mercy and grace.
- The number twenty-four may parallel the number of tribes in Israel in the OT plus the number of apostles in the NT. That these elders sit on thrones and have crowns of gold on their heads suggest that they have been given authority to judge or govern. Taken as a whole, the twenty-four elders may represent all the servants of God who have faithfully ministered in the house of God and will be given great honor and power.
- The four living creatures, which parallel the cherubim in Isa 6:2,3; Ezek 1:5-25; and 10:1-22, serve and worship God near His glorious throne. Their appearance can be symbolic of the qualities of God. Therefore, these creatures (or more accurately "beings") may represent believers who have attained the likeness of God (cf Eph 4:24). It is also possible that they are angelic beings of the highest order.

- 5a. Royal power.
- 5b. Strength and service.
- 5c. Compassion like that of the Son of man.
- 5d. Swift to save; powerful.
- 5e. The wings of the cherubim carry the throne of God (cf. Ps 18:10; Ezek 11:22). Four of the wings are also used to cover their faces and feet (Isa 6:2). Thus, the wings may represent swift, powerful, and humble service.
- 5f. Spiritual insight and wisdom.
- 6a. They fell down before God, worshiped Him, and cast their crowns before the throne.
- 6b. Their actions represent total humility in God's presence, giving Him all the glory, honor, and power. They said, "You are worthy..." God alone is worthy of all praise and worship. Although the twenty-four elders sat on thrones and had crowns on their heads, their honor was bestowed by God. We must give all glory to God, the creator and ruler of all things.
7. He created all things, and by His will they exist and were created.
9. The scroll contains judgement and woe on the inhabitants of the earth. 10:7 also tells us that the mystery of God would be finished as the scroll unfolds. This mystery refers to God's redemption of His people through Christ (Eph 3:3-12; Col 1:26,27; 2:2). As such, the opening of the scroll is the fulfillment of God's will in history, including exercising His justice and redeeming His people.
10. John knew the importance of the scroll. If the scroll was not opened, not only would he not know the things that are to come, it also means that evil had prevailed in this world and we have no hope of being redeemed into God's kingdom.
11. The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David. Both are Messianic titles in the OT. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Lion of the tribe of Judah because He was in the line of Judah (Heb 7:14); He is the Root of David because He was a descendent of King David (Rom 1:3-4). These titles are symbolic of Christ's kingly power and authority.
12. The Lamb stood in the midst of the throne, the elders, and the four living creatures. Christ is the object of praise and worship, and He is in the midst of the church (1:13; Eph 2:20; Isa 28:16; 1Pet 2:4-6)
- 13a. While the Lion is powerful and fierce, the lamb is meek and gentle.
- 13b. He is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world (Jn 1:29, 36; 1Pet 1:19). He was led to the slaughter and sacrificed for our sins (Isa 53:7; 1Cor 5:7).

14. We used to be under the bondage of sin and death. But by the sacrificial death of our Lord, we were freed from sin and have become God's children (1:5-6). We are purchased by Christ's blood to be His own (Acts 20:28; 1Pet 1:19; 1Cor 6:20).
15. Through His death and resurrection, Christ has overcome sin and death (Heb 2:14,15). He has been given all authority in heaven and on earth (Mt 28:18-20). Anyone who believes in Him is saved, but those who do not believe Him are condemned. As the Judge and Savior who has conquered evil, He is worthy to carry out God's plan of redemption and judgment. As God's will unfolds, as symbolized by the opening of the scroll, the unbelievers will be judged and the believers will ultimately inherit God's kingdom.
16. The four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp and golden bowls full of incense.
17. In the OT, a new song represents praise to God for His wonderful deeds (Ps 33:3; 40:3; 96:1; 98:1; 144:9; 149:1; Isa 42:10). Believers sing a new song praising God for His redemption (cf. 14:3). The song is new because it was never sung before, since God's redemption was revealed only after Christ accomplished the saving work on the cross.
19. Praise and worship brings us close to God and lets us focus our mind on God. Praise and worship comes from a heart-felt thanks for all that God has done for us (Ps 103:2; Col 3:16). Believers who truly appreciate God's abounding love will continually offer a sacrifice of praise (Heb 13:15). Our praise and worship to God also serve as a testimony to all people of God's greatness (Ps 57:9).

Lesson 17

Observation

Outline

- Opening of Six Seals (6:1-17)
- Sealing of God's Servants (7:1-8)
- Praise of the Great Multitude and Heavenly Beings (7:9-12)
- Identity of and Blessings to the Great Multitude (7:13-17)

Key Words/Phrases

Seal, bow, crown, conquer, take peace from the earth, kill, great sword, pair of scales, Death, Hades, altar, slain, word of God, testimony, how long, judge and avenge, white robe, wrath, four winds, east, 144,000, great tribulation, shepherd, wipe away every tear.

General Analysis

2. Wars and rumors of wars; nation against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; famines, pestilences, and earthquakes; persecution and killing of believers; many betraying and hating one another; sun darkened, and the moon not giving light; stars falling from heaven, and powers of the heavens shaken.

Segment Analysis

1. On earth.
- 2a. The first four seals are marked by horses and horsemen. There is no mention of specific groups of people. Each of the four seals opens with the words, “come and see.”
- 2b. Strife, power, victory.
- 2c. In the fifth seal, the martyrs cry out to God for judgment and vengeance. God’s response to their cry implies that He will carry out judgment, although there will be a delay. In the sixth seal, the question, “who can stand?” implies an expectation of a much more severe judgment under which no one will be able to stand.
- 3b. In both passages, the riders have crowns, although the first rider wears only one crown. Both riders are engaged in battle. Both claim total victory.
- 3b. The true church will spread the gospel to the whole world in the power of the Holy Spirit, and it will surely prevail over the forces of evil (Mt 24:14; cf. Acts 19:20).
- 5a. The scales, which were used to measure out food, suggests rationing and scarcity of food.
- 5b. This amount suggests food prices about twelve times higher than normal. ^{9/474} Barley, used by the poor to mix with the wheat, further suggests food shortage and poverty, perhaps as a result of inflation. “Do not harm the oil and the wine” may mean that the horseman is not to harm the vines and olive trees. In other words, the devastation caused by the famine would not be total.
- 6a. Over a fourth of the earth.
- 6b. The disasters in the fourth seal seems to be greater and more deadly than those in the second and third seals. In fact, the list of devastations shows a combination of those already occurring in the previous two seals (sword, hunger, death).
- 7a. They are servants of God (11) who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held (9).

- 7b. If the altar refers to the altar of incense within the temple, the prayers of the martyrs are like the smoke of the incense that rises from the altar before the throne of God (5:8; 8:3,4). Just as God was pleased with the burning of incense in the past, He will also hear the prayers of the saints and vindicate them (cf. Lk 18:7).
- 7c. Although evil seems to prevail and it is as if God is not doing anything about the evil and sufferings in this world, we must trust that God will surely judge the world and vindicate His people in due time.
- 8a. Great earthquake; sun becomes black; moon becomes like blood; stars fall to the earth; sky recedes; every mountain and island moves out of its place.
- 8b. When they see the catastrophes of nature, they will realize that no one can stand under the wrath of God. Such realization reflects the unbelievers’ present arrogance. In their pride, they have no fear of God and therefore refuse to repent of their ways nor believe in Jesus Christ.
- 9a. While the seals of chapter 6 are filled with disasters, bloodshed, and catastrophes, the scene in chapter 7 is peaceful, comforting, and even joyful. Whereas the Lamb pours out His wrath in chapter 6, He shepherds them in chapter 7.
- 9b. The fact that the scene in chapter 7, rather than the 7th seal, follows the opening of the 6th seal indicates that this chapter is an interlude. The angel from the east tells the four angels not to harm the earth, the sea, or the trees until the servants of God are sealed. The angel’s words suggest that a greater judgment is coming. Before that happens, John hears of and witnesses the protection and final salvation that God will give to His servants. Immediately after the interlude, judgment resumes in chapter 8 with the opening of the 7th seal.
- 9c. In their terror, the people of the earth said, “For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?” Although the question in chapter 6 was not meant to be answered, the content in chapter 7 in a way answers that very question: No one will be able to stand under God’s wrath except those who have been sealed.
- 10a. Servants of God (3), tribes of the children of Israel (4).
- 10b. To be spared from God’s wrath and judgment.
- 10c. The angel from the east with the seal of the living God probably refers to the Lord Jesus. He seals believers with the Holy Spirit as a mark of redemption (Eph 1:13-14; 2Cor 1:21,22). True believers who walk in righteousness are protected from God’s wrath because God’s seal is on them (cf. 2Tim 2:19). The angel coming from the east may represent the establishment of the true church in the end time in the east (cf. Ezek 43:2).

11. We must always put God first in our hearts and walk in His ways. We cannot afford to lust after the world and lose the right to enter God's kingdom. We must put to death the deeds of the sinful nature and live according to the Spirit (Rom 8:13,14), and we must keep our faith and fervor in the Lord to the end (Heb 3:14).
12. The great multitude; The angels, elders, and four living creatures.
- 13a. 1) The first group has a definite number and they are identified as the tribes of children of Israel, whereas the second group cannot be numbered, and they are from all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues. 2) While in 3-8, John did not see the 144,000 but only heard of their number, in 9-17, John saw the great multitude. 3) The setting of 1-8 seems to be on earth, as opposed to the heavenly setting in 9-17 ("before the throne and before the Lamb").
- 13b. Believers of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 13c. The 144,000 can be the same group as the great multitude if we interpret 3-8 and 9-17 as two different vantage points. If this view is adopted, the 144,000 would be a symbolic figure. To John, the group is beyond number, but to God, the elect is according to a specific number (cf. 6:11; Rom 11:25). See also question 15.
- 14a. The great tribulation may refer to the unprecedented persecution and distress the Lord spoke of in Mt 24 (see Mt 24:21-22; Dan 12:1). This would be "the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world" (3:10; Lk 21:34-35). The great tribulation will probably be a period of intense persecution, disasters, massive deaths, as well as a time when Satan will deceive the world with his false prophets and "the lawless one" (cf. Mt 24:7-13; 2Thess 2:1-12).
- 14b. White robes (9,14). Their white robes symbolize that they have overcome sin and have become blameless through the sanctifying work of Christ.
- 14c. Palm branches are used for celebration on joyful occasions. For the Jews, palm branches were also emblems of victory.^{9/486}
- 15a. They will serve God (7:15; 22:3); God will dwell among them (7:15; 21:3); there will be no more pain (7:16; 21:4); they will be led to living fountains of waters (7:17; 22:1); God will wipe away their tears (7:17; 21:4).
- 15b. The recording of 7:9-17 may be a vision of the future, as opposed to the sealing of the 144,000 that takes place in the present. In other words, 1-8 and 9-17 refer to two different times and settings.

Lesson 18

Observation

Outline

- Preparation for the Sounding of the Seven Trumpets (8:1-6)
- Sounding of the First Six Trumpets (8:7-9:21)

Key Words/Phrases

Silence, trumpets, golden censer, altar, incense, prayers of all the saints, fire, blood, woe, bottomless pit, locusts, Abaddon/Apollyon, Euphrates, horses, plagues, did not repent.

General Analysis

1. "Like" (8:10; 9:2,3,5,7,8,9,10,17,19); "something like" (8:8; 9:7).
2. The first trumpet (Ex 9:23-26); the second trumpet (Ex 7:20-21); the fourth trumpet (Ex 10:21-23); the fifth trumpet (Ex 10:13-15).

Segment Analysis

8:1-6

1. Whereas the multitudes praised God with a loud voice in chapter 7, chapter 8 begins with a total silence in heaven. The period of silence gives an effect of awe, suspense, and solemnity, indicating the dreadful judgements that God is about to bring upon the world. The silence may also be for the purpose of offering the incense so that the prayers of the saints may be heard by God.
2. The priest would take burning coals and incense from the altar, place them on the censer, and bring the censer before the Lord so that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat (Lev 16:12,13). The censer with the fire and incense from the altar also served as atonement (Num 16:46).
- 3a. The angel here performs the work of the High Priest, suggesting that the offering up of the incense represents the atoning work of Christ that gives us access to God (Heb 4:14-16). The incense is offered along with the prayers of the saints, symbolizing the intercessory role of Christ on behalf of the believers (Heb 7:25; Rom 8:27,34; 1Jn 2:1,2)
- 3b. Fire is often connected with God's wrath (Deut 4:24; 32:22; Isa 30:27,30; Heb 10:27). Noises, thunderings, lightnings, and earthquakes are manifestations of God's awesome judgment (cf. 4:5; 11:19; and 16:18). God's wrath, having reached its fullness, comes upon the earth with great force ("threw it to the earth").

4. At the opening of the fifth seal (6:9-11), the martyrs cried out to God to vindicate them and avenge their blood, but they were told to wait a little while longer. In chapter 8, it seems that the time has come for their prayers to be answered. Having offered the incense and the prayers of the saints, the angel filled the censer with fire and threw it to the earth. Then the trumpet judgments began. This sequence indicates that God is now responding to the prayer of the saints and vindicating them.
5. Before the throne. Since the smoke of the incense and the prayer of the saints ascend before God's throne, it is impossible for God not to take notice. God is attentive to the prayer of the righteous (1Pet 3:12). Even though He does not answer our prayer immediately, every prayer we offer rises before God's presence through the atoning work of Christ. Therefore, we should not be discouraged but be persistent in our prayers until God brings about justice (Lk 18:1-8)
6. The description here adds to the feeling of suspense. John not only saw the sounding of the trumpet, but the preparation leading up to that point.
- 8a. Proclamation of Jubilee; calling the assembly and directing the movement of the camps; alarm during war or before the day of the Lord; the coming of the Lord; the final resurrection.
- 8b. The events of the seven trumpets send alarm and warning to the world, declaring the coming of God's terrible judgment and calling the people to repent.
9. The three woes are the fifth, sixth, and seventh trumpets (8:13)
11. After the sounding of the fourth trumpet, the flying angel (or eagle) cried out "woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!" Such declaration shows the severity of the last three trumpets. The descriptions of the events under the fifth and sixth trumpets are also much more detailed. Furthermore, unlike the first four events, where the main target was nature, the target of the fifth and sixth trumpet judgments is human beings.
- 12a. In the fifth trumpet, the locusts were not allowed to kill. But in the sixth trumpet, the four angels were released to kill a third of mankind. The means of destruction is also more extensive.
- 12b. The locusts have stings in their tails. The horses send three plagues—fire, smoke, and brimstone—with their mouths and also harm people with tails that are like serpents with heads.
- 13a. It uses the pronoun "he" when referring to the star. This might be the same as the angel of the bottomless pit in verse 11. Thus, this star should be symbolic of the devil (12:7-9; Lk 10:18).
- 13b. Evil is a result of the works of the devil. It is present by the permission of God because of the sin in the world. But the devil's authority is limited and temporary. God will eventually destroy him and his works.
14. The descriptions of these locusts in 7-10 seem to suggest that they were not insects. Their use of the tail as weapons of harm is also quite unlike the harm brought about by locusts.
15. The servants of God, who have been sealed from harm (7:3).
- 16a. As has been mentioned in question 8b regarding the significance of trumpets, the events recorded here serve to warn the people and bring them to repentance. God did not simply destroy the sinners immediately. He sent calamities in increasing measure, hoping that the people might repent before the final destruction strikes.
- 16c. Even though the calamities we see today may not have reached the scale of the trumpet judgments yet, we must awake from our slumber and heed the warning of the trumpets as we read the words of the prophecy (16:15; 22:7). We must leave all sins, including those mentioned in these verses: idolatry, murder, sorceries, sexual immorality, and theft.

Lesson 19

Observation

Outline

- Descending of the Mighty Angel (10:1-2)
- Crying with Loud Voice and Voice of Seven Thunders (10:3-4)
- Swearing of the Angel (10:5-7)
- Eating the Little Book (10:8-11)
- Measuring with A Reed (11:1-2)
- Power of the Witnesses (11:3-6)
- Death of the Witnesses (11:7-10)
- Resurrection and Ascension of the Witnesses (11:11-14)

Key Words/Phrases

Mighty angel, little book, seven thunders, swore, delay no longer, mystery of God would be finished, eat, bitter/sweet, prophesy again, reed, measure, forty-two months, two witnesses, olive trees, sackcloth, lampstands, afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven.

General Analysis

1. In this vision, God gives John specific missions to accomplish. Thus John directly participates in the vision. As commanded, he takes the little book and eats it. He is also told to measure the temple, the altar, and the worshippers with a reed.

Segment Analysis

1. It resembles the appearance of Christ (1:15,16) and of the one who sat on the throne (4:3). The resemblance has led some to identify this angel as the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. We do not fully know God's plan, but only as much as He chooses to reveal according to His sovereign will (1Cor 13:12; Rom 11:34).
3. "...there should be delay no longer, but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets."
4. An oath in God's name confirms the statement being made and serves as a guarantee. (cf. Heb 6:16,17; 7:21,22). In this case, the angel's swearing shows that God will certainly not delay in fulfilling His mystery.
- 5a. Mystery of Christ: the salvation of Jesus Christ and that the Gentiles are fellow heirs with Israel through the gospel. This mystery was hidden for ages (Col 1:26-27; 1Cor 2:7; Rom 16:25-27).
- 5b. The mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.
- 5c. The mystery of Christ and the church.
- 5d. The mystery that all Israel will be saved when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.
- 5e. The mystery of resurrection and change.
- 5f. The mystery of Babylon the Great.
6. All of God's redemptive plan through the work of Jesus Christ will be accomplished (cf. 16:17).
7. The prophetic message about all peoples, nations, tongues, and kings. The little book is open (2,8), meaning that the message has been revealed and that John must proclaim it. The smallness of the book may suggest that there will not be much time left before the remaining portion of God's plan is fulfilled.
- 8a. For those who love God, it is always sweet to receive God's word (Ps 119:103). But if the messenger of God has to proclaim a message of woe, it becomes a very unpleasant experience (cf. Jer 9:1; 20:7-10). The scroll given to Ezekiel was full of lamentations, mourning, and woe. Likewise, the prophetic message John has to proclaim concerns God's judgment and wrath. All these things are bitter and difficult to proclaim, especially

when they have to be proclaimed to people who would be hostile to the message.

- 8b. Before we can proclaim God's message, we must first take God's word into our hearts and fully surrender ourselves to God's will and commission for us. Only with faith and conviction in God's word can we preach it to others and be persistent in doing so (cf. 2Tim 4:2-5).
- 9a. Since the portion that was not measured was given to be trampled, we may infer that the measuring was for the purpose of protection from harm.
- 9b. These two cities represent the two spiritual camps: God's and Satan's. We belong to either the holy city or the great city. We cannot be neutral about where we stand. If we choose to be a friend of the world, we become an enemy of God (Jas 4:4).
- 9c. The trampling may refer to persecution or corruption or both. The church will face external persecutions from the unbelievers, who are maneuvered by Satan to be enemies of believers. These unbelievers will cause harm to the people of God, but the extent of such persecution is limited (only the outer court). The church may also face the threat of false believers from within. These false believers may corrupt the faith of some with their false teachings and ungodly conducts (cf. 2Tim 2:18). The activities of these false believers, however, will also be limited in their extent.
- 9d. True worshippers are those who worship in spirit and truth rather than put up an outward form of godliness (Jn 4:21-24; 2Tim 3:5). By their sincere faith in God and obedient living, they show themselves to be true disciples of the Lord who have the life of God in them (cf. 1Jn 2:6).

Another view of the meaning of trampling suggests that only the false worshippers—those who are believers in name only (the outer court) will be hurt by the works of Satan and fall away (cf. Mt 24:10; 13:41). The true believers (in the sanctuary) are protected against the devil's harm. According to this interpretation, the measuring would be the separation of the true believers from the false.

The standard of measurement is based on whether they serve in the temple and by the altar (11:1). Spiritually speaking, serving in the temple means building our faith on the teachings of the apostles and prophets, with Christ as the chief cornerstone, and to become a holy temple of God (Eph 2:19-22; 1Cor 3:16; 6:19). In other words, we need to become a member of the true church, abide by the teachings of the scriptures, and live in holy conduct. Serving by the altar means offering our bodies as living sacrifices (1Pet 2:5; Rom 12:1,2). We must live for Christ by dedicating every moment of our lives to obeying and serving Him (2Cor 5:15; Gal 2:20).

- 9e. According to Daniel's prophecy (Dan 9:27), the ending of sacrifice and offering will occur in the middle of the week (one week is equivalent to 7 years, with one day being equal to one year). If this prophecy refers to the trampling of the holy city by the Gentiles in Rev 11:2, then the event will occur during the second half of the seven-year tribulation period.
10. The measuring takes place before the final and most intense part of the great tribulation. Just as God had sealed His servants before the four angels harmed the earth and the sea (7:1-3), He now also protects believers from harm before sending the final woe to earth and setting Satan loose to cause great havoc and deception.
11. While the measuring has to do with God's people, the work of the two witnesses is to testify to the world. Likewise, the church, through the preaching of the Word, helps believers measure their faith and witnesses to the world of God's coming judgment (cf. Mt 28:19,20).
12. 1,260 days, or three-and-a-half years.
- 13a. Wearing sackcloth is a gesture of repentance and humility (cf. 1Kgs 21:27; Jon 3:8). In this context, the sackcloth that the witnesses wear may represent their message of repentance being preached as well as their self-denial and patient endurance.
- 13b. As preachers who warn the world of God's judgment, we are not to be bystanders who show no sympathy or concern. We should carry out our mission with sobriety and great humility rather than being complacent. We also need to mourn over the sins of this wicked world (cf. 2Pet 2:7).
14. According to Zechariah, the two olive trees whose branches drip oil into the two gold pipes are the two anointed (Joshua and Zerubbabel) who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth. They are to accomplish God's great work by His spirit. Likewise, the believers in the church are anointed to carry out God's commission in the end time (cf. 1Pet 2:9). Like olive branches that drip oil and lampstands that give light, we also need to witness to the world in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- 15a. Moses and Elijah.
- 15b. In the Bible, God often empowered the prophets to perform miracles so as to convict the people and bring them to repentance. Here, the power given to the witnesses also serves as an instrument of punishment on the wicked.
- 16a. This beast, who comes from the bottomless pit (17:8), acts as an instrument of Satan. Satan constantly accuses and makes war with the saints and opposes God. As enemy of God, he now kills the witnesses who have trespassed his territory (the unbelieving world).
- 16b. When they finish their testimony. Satan cannot frustrate the plan of God. He is able to kill the witnesses only because God has permitted him. We

learn from the two witnesses how to be faithful to our mission even to the point of death. We do not need to fear the devil since God is in control. Even if we suffer death, we will soon receive glory (cf 12).

- 16c. Sodom was a city of immorality. Egypt was a nation that placed God's people under bondage. These places, as well as "where our Lord was crucified," represent the sinful world, which is filled with evil and enmity towards God and His servants.
- 17a. They must have resented the two witnesses because of the sufferings they inflicted on the world. Instead of repenting of their evil, they wished to do away with the preachers of righteousness.
- 18a. Three-and-a-half days.
- 18b. This event may point to the Lord's descent, when believers will resurrect, change, and be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord.
19. They will come swiftly without any further delay.

Lesson 20

Observation

Outline

- Sounding of the Seventh Trumpet (11:15-19)
 - Voices in heaven (15)
 - Worship of the twenty-four elders (16-18)
 - Opening of the heavenly temple (19)
- Sign of the Woman and the Dragon (12:1-17)
 - Birth of the male child and fleeing to the wilderness (1-6)
 - War in heaven and defeat of the dragon and his angels (7-9)
 - Praise of victory (10-12)
 - Dragon's persecution and protection of the woman (13-17)

Key Words/Phrases

Kingdoms, reign, judge, reward, temple, ark, woman, child, dragon, rule, fled to the wilderness, 1260 days, cast down, overcame, blood of the Lamb, word of their testimony, persecuted, make war.

Segment Analysis

1. God's ultimate and everlasting reign.
- 2a. The nations of the world, as instruments of Satan, are hostile to God. Instead of repenting, they are outraged at God for sending the calamities

- on the earth and at His children for remaining faithful to God (cf 16:8-11). Chapters 12 and 13 further depict this fierce hostility.
- 2b. Judgment of the dead, reward of God's servants, destruction of those who destroy the earth (the destruction should refer to moral corruption by evildoers).
 - 3a. In heaven.
 - 3b. Lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail. These images are precursors of great calamities (8:5; 16:18).
 - 3c. In the OT, the temple and the ark of the covenant represented God's presence and covenant with His people. The opening of the temple and the appearance of the ark of the covenant signifies that God has fulfilled His redemptive covenant with His people, and the believers now have full access into God's everlasting kingdom. Just as the offering up of incense on the golden altar preceded the judgments in 8:3-5, here, the appearance of the temple and ark of the covenant precedes the judgments. While the offering up of the saints' prayers resulted in the trumpet judgments to vindicate the saved ones, the completion of the salvation of God's people brings world history to an end with the final and most severe judgments (15:5-8).
 - 4a. This paragraph is a synopsis of the remaining chapters in which God will remove all evil and establish His everlasting kingdom. The nations' anger and God's wrath will be seen in the Satanic activities and bowl judgments (ch. 12, 13, 16). God will destroy those who destroy the earth, including Babylon, the beast, the false prophet, and the dragon (19:2,20; 20:10). The judgment of the dead will take place in 20:11-15. God will also reward His servants in the new heaven and new earth (21:1-4; 22:3-5).
 - 4b. All power and authority in this world must surrender to God's sovereign rule. Despite temporary oppositions of evil doers, God will bring about justice and order. Therefore we must remain faithful servants of God until the time of the final reward. We should also give thanks to God Almighty for the coming of His kingdom.
 5. For the first time in revelation, John calls the visions "signs" (1,3). Signs in the Bible are events or objects that serve to indicate greater spiritual truths. Likewise, the visions of the woman and the dragon teach us about the intense struggles of spiritual powers. The passage clearly states its symbolic nature. The dragon is the Devil and Satan. The context directs us to interpret the images as symbols of spiritual things.
 6. He receives the male child to heaven (5); He prepares a place for the woman (6); by His blood the believers have overcome (11); He gives wings to the woman and nourishes her in the wilderness (14).
 - 7a. He was not able to devour the woman's child (4,5); he was not able to hurt the woman (6,14); he lost the war in heaven and was hurled down (7-9); the earth swallowed up the water he spewed out (16).
 - 7b. Satan is determined to hurt us in anyway he can. But his destiny is doomed and he has only a short time (12). Knowing that he has been defeated in heaven, we as believers need to endure persecutions and sufferings to the end regardless of how fierce Satan's work seems to be.
 - 8a. Since the OT, the Bible has compared God's people to a woman (Ezek ch. 16; Hos 2:19-20). In the NT, God's people, which consists of believers in Christ, is the church, also known as a woman or a bride. So the woman here should represent God's people of all ages whom Christ has redeemed with His blood (cf. Rev 12:11). That she is the object of Satan's intense persecution also implies that the woman represents the believers, since Satan's persecution of believers has been the consistent pattern from the beginning of Revelation.
 - 8b. She was clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars (1). This picture represents the church's heavenly splendor and authority which God bestows on her (cf Eph 3:21; 5:27). Being clothed with the sun represents having the righteousness of Christ (Gal 3:27; Rom 13:14; Mal 4:2). Having the moon under her feet may signify her authority over the power of Hades (Mt 16:18). The garland of twelve stars refers to the complete number of chosen people who manifest God's glory in the church (1Thess 2:19; Rev 21:9-14).
 9. From the references pertaining to ruling with "a rod of iron," we see that it is the Lord Jesus Christ and the believers who overcome who will rule all nations. The child represents believers who have attained spiritual maturity and who will reign with Christ (20:6; cf. Gal 4:19); they are caught up to God and protected from Satan's harm (1Jn 5:18).
 - 10a. He is that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan.
 - 10b. Great and fiery red, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. His size and color is symbolic of his ruthless power and murderous acts. His heads, horns, and diadems represent his earthly authority, which he will work through the beast in 13:1. Note the difference between his earthly authority and the woman's heavenly authority.
 - 10c. His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth (4); he intended to devour the child (4); he and his angels fought with Michael and his angels (7); he deceives the whole world (9); he accused the brethren before God day and night (10); he persecuted the woman (13) and spewed water out of his mouth after the woman (15); and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring (17).

- 10d. According to Daniel 8:10,24, the casting down of the stars to earth represents the oppressor's destruction of the holy people. With this passage as a reference, the casting of the stars to the earth in Rev 12 probably refers to Satan's oppression of believers, possibly through the works of false prophets in the end time. But the extent of his persecution is limited, as indicated by the fraction "one-third".
- 10e. Since the dragon lost the battle in heaven, his last weapon is to hurt God's people on earth. Knowing that his time is short, he is desperate, and goes all out in his final struggle against those who belong to God.
- 11a. This is half of the tribulation period (3 1/2 years according to Dan 9:27). While God allows Satan to persecute the saints, He will also sustain them through the tribulation.
- 11b. Although the wilderness provides safety, it is by no means a place of luxury and comfort. On the contrary, it is a place of discipline and testing, where God's people learn to trust and obey God (Deut 8:2-6). The tribulation period will be a purification process for the believers so that they may devote themselves to God wholeheartedly and overcome the works of Satan.
- 12a. The scene of the heavenly battle puts the struggle in its proper perspective. Satan's tactics and attack, however fierce and menacing, are a losing battle. He has been hurled down and is soon to be destroyed. God's triumph over Satan shows that God has indeed exercised His great power and reigned.
- 12b. Heaven. The battle between good and evil is not just on earth but is decided in heaven. While believers on earth wrestle with the forces of evil (Eph 6:12), they know that the battle has already been won in heaven. Because we know that Christ has overcome and we are not alone, we can "be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might" (Eph 6:10).
13. 1) By the blood of the Lamb. It is only because of Christ's sacrifice that we stand free from Satan's accusation (Rom 8:31-33) and from the grip of Satan's hand (Heb 2:14,15). We must trust the Lord, confess our sins before Him, and ask Him to deliver us from all evil so that we may be kept pure and blameless. 2) By the word of our testimony. We need to keep God's commandment and our confession of Jesus Christ (17), and we must do so faithfully to the very end, even if it means giving up our lives (11). Persistent faith enables us to overcome and be saved (3:10; 1Tim 6:12-14; Mt 24:13).
14. Having lost his place in heaven, Satan now uses the world as his battle field. The world falls into great turmoil and becomes a place of darkness, and the believers come under great hostility and oppression.

15. The fleeing to the wilderness, the feeding by God, and the period of a time and times and half a time find their parallels in verse 6. (A time and times and half a time = $1 + 2 + 1/2 = 3 \frac{1}{2}$ years = 1,260 days).
- 16a. We need to be ready and watchful (1Pet 5:8-9). Unless we hold firmly to the Lord and be faithful to the end, we would be swept away by Satan's persistent deception and persecution.

Lesson 21

Observation

Outline

- The Sea Beast (13:1-10)
 - His appearance (1-2)
 - His miraculous healing and the people's worship (3-4)
 - His blasphemy against God (5-6)
 - His power over the saints and authority over the earth (7-8)
 - Call for patience and faith (9-10)
- The Earth Beast (13:11-18)
 - Its appearance and voice (11)
 - His authority and deception (12-15)
 - Mark and number of the beast (16-18)

Key Words/Phrases

Sea, beast, blasphemy, dragon, worship, authority, make war, Book of Life of the Lamb, patience and faith, earth, great signs, image, mark, 666.

General Analysis

1. Both beasts received their power and authority from the dragon and acted as the dragon's instruments (2,7,12,15). The earth beast did his work on behalf of the sea beast, so that the people of the earth would worship him and his image (12,14).
2. They caused those who would not worship the image of the beast to be killed (15). They also did not allow anyone who did not receive the mark of the beast to buy or sell (17). These beasts had been given authority to harm the livelihood and physical bodies of the saints (cf. Mt 10:28).

Segment Analysis

1. 11:7. The origin of the beast is the bottomless pit, meaning that the source of his power is Satanic.

2. He had seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. He was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion.
- 3a. 1) The four beasts also came up from the sea. 2) The beast in Revelation had the appearance of three of the beasts combined. 3) The fourth beast also had ten horns, and one of them spoke pompous words against the Most High. It made war with the saints and prevailed against them.
- 3b. The beasts are four kings which arise out of the earth (Dan 7:17). Likewise the sea beast in Revelation, having similar powers and appearance as the four beasts in Daniel, should also represent either an individual or all political powers that defy God and His authority (cf. 2Thess 2:3-12).
4. Like leopards, bears, and lions, the beast is powerful and brutal. It is possible that such power stands for military and political oppression with which Satan persecutes and kills believers.
5. All who dwell on the earth will worship him (3,8). They worship him because they marvel at the beast's power and miraculous healing (3,4).
6. He spoke great things and blasphemies, and he blasphemed against God (5,6). He made war with the saints and overcame them (7).
7. 42 months (5). This period coincides with the Gentiles' treading of the holy city underfoot (11:2). This 3 1/2 period should be the second half and most intense part of the tribulation (cf. Dan 9:27).
- 8a. On one level, the beast's blasphemy refers to words spoken against God. On a deeper level, his blasphemy is a direct challenge to God's authority. In the previous chapter, the dragon was cast down from heaven. He no longer had power in the heavenly places or over the spiritual lives of the saints. In great fury, he spoke against God's name, His tabernacle and those who dwell in heaven (6). In desperation, he claimed authority on earth and brutally attacked the believers. By causing the inhabitants of the earth to worship him and by persecuting the people of God, the beast seems to be making a statement that he is still in control.
- 8b. From world history, we see the emergence and dominance of great powers sustained by ideologies such as atheism, socialism, and communism. Even in the free countries, social and political powers reinforce and even uphold immoral and godless values.
9. God has predestined to save us through Christ before the foundation of the world (1Cor 2:7; Eph 1:4-11; Mt 25:34). Those whose names are written in the Book of Life of the Lamb are believers in Christ, who have the life of Christ and whose lives are hidden with Christ in God (Col 3:3,4). Through Christ's sacrifice, they are kept by God for eternal life, safe from the hand of the evil one (cf. 1Jn 5:11-12,18; 1Pet 1:4-5).
10. These two verses seem to be a comment on the vision of the beast. They serve to encourage the saints in suffering to endure and hope for God's final vindication. Those who persecute them will themselves "go into captivity" and be "killed with the sword." The sentence "here is the patience and the faith of the saints" implies that believers must wait with patience and faith for God's vindication rather than take vengeance for themselves. God will surely repay the evildoers in due time.
11. The works of the sea beast will be a severe trial on the saint's patience and faith. We must constantly examine our faith in the Lord (2Cor 13:5). We must also be determined to be faithful unto death (Mt 24:13; Rev 2:10). An unswerving faith in the Lord without fear of death will enable us to overcome the beast (cf. Rev 12:11).
12. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon (11). This may suggest that he had the appearance of Christ to cover up his Satanic teachings (cf. Mt 7:15). Unlike the sea beast, which used brute power, the earth beast used deception (13,14), and deception is what characterizes false christs and false prophets (Mt 24:24).
- 13a. He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence and caused the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast. He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. (12,13). He deceives those who dwell on the earth, telling them to make an image to the beast (14). He has power to give breath to the image of the beast (15). He causes all to receive the mark of the beast, without which no one can buy or sell (16,17).
14. While Satan uses secular or political powers to rule in the world and oppress God's people (sea beast), he also uses false religion and teachings as his other instrument (earth beast), which is much more subtle but just as deadly. Religion is a powerful motivator; that is why many commit serious crimes in the name of religion. False teachings are deceptive; they fool people into thinking that they are worshipping God, but lead people into idolatry and destruction in hell (14:11). Even today, we can see the prevalence of false teachings that alter the gospel of salvation or serve as a means of monetary gain or indulgence in sinful desires. The false prophets not only mislead the people of the world, they also collaborate with the sea beast to persecute and kill God's faithful children (13:15-17).
- 15a. The saved ones have victory over the beast, his image, his mark, and the number of his name. The number is associated with the name of the beast, and this name is given to beast worshippers rather than the followers of the lamb. This suggests that the number is not just a numeric value but a power of evil which we must overcome. It is more

likely that the number is symbolic of evil forces rather than referring to a specific individual.

- 15b. It may mean that the works of the beast take place in the sphere of humanity. In other words, men will be the instruments through which Satan works in the world.
- 15c. The number 6 may suggest imperfection and sin. The repetition of the number may signify that evil will reach its full measure in this world (cf. 18:5).
- 15d. Those who receive the mark or the number are those who worship the beast. In other words, if we succumb to the sinful values in this world, we receive the mark and number of the beast. Although the forces of this world are powerful, we must not conform to them. We must live as citizens of heaven, set our minds on things above, persist in our faith in Christ, and be faithful to God's commands (Phil 3:18-21; Eph 4:17-24; Col 3:1-17).

Lesson 22

Observation

Outline

- The Lamb and the 144,000 (14:1-5)
- Proclamation of the First Angel (14:6-7)
- Proclamation of the Second Angel (14:8)
- Proclamation of the Third Angel (14:9-11)
- Patience of the saints; Beatitude (14:12-13)
- Reaping of the Harvest on Earth (14:14-16)
- Gathering of Grapes, Winepress of God's Wrath (14:17-20)

Key Words/Phrases

Zion, name, new song, virgins, follow, redeemed, without fault before the throne of God, fear God, give glory to Him, worship Him, judgment, Babylon, wrath, wine, tormented, patience, commandments of God and faith of Jesus, die in the Lord, sickle, reap, winepress.

General Analysis

1. Chapter 14 reveals the true victor in the war between the dragon and the woman's offspring. The dragon's fierce attack and the beast's arrogant blasphemy against God proved to be futile. The Lamb and His followers

stand firmly on Mount Zion (1-5), but the followers of the beast now have to suffer judgment and torment (6-20).

Segment Analysis

1. The previous scene was full of brutality, deception, oppression, and bloodshed. The scene of Mount Zion is peaceful, joyful, and sinless.
2. In chapter 7, the 144,000 were sealed before the angels harmed the earth and the sea. John heard of their number but did not see them in a vision. In chapter 14, however, John sees the 144,000 with the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion.
3. This vision indicates that God's elect have a sure place in heaven despite the dragon's attempt to destroy God's children. By the redeeming work of the Lamb, we are kept from Satan's harm. If we follow Him wherever He goes, we can stand firm in God's kingdom.
4. Mount Zion, on which Jerusalem was built, was a symbol of God's dwelling place. In the NT, it has come to prefigure the church, the assembly of the redeemed. That the Lamb stands on Mount Zion represents that Christ is the savior of the church (Eph 5:23).
5. They have the Father's name written on their foreheads (1). Also verses 4-5.
6. Whereas the unsaved bear the mark of the name of the beast, the people of God have the name of the Father on their foreheads. Having the name of the Father means that God acknowledges them as His treasured possession (cf. Eph 1:13-14; Rev 3:12; 7:3).
7. They stand with the Lamb and follow Him wherever He goes. They have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb (5:9). Without the sacrifice of the Lamb, they would not have a place on Mount Zion.
8. For the meaning of the new song, see Lesson 4, question 17 (cf. Rev 5:9). Here, the heavenly voices and harpists sing the new song, which only the 144,000 can learn. This song, which is about the salvation of the Lamb, is something only the redeemed people can identify with and sing, for only they have experienced and accepted the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.
9. Twice the passage mentions that the 144,000 were redeemed from the earth (3,4). Verse 4 states that they follow the Lamb wherever He goes. From this context, we understand that their status as not being defiled with women is symbolic of their loyalty to the Lamb, their Lord and Redeemer, and that they had not conformed to the sinful lifestyles and false teachings of the world.
10. Following the Lamb means dedicating our entire lives to walking in Christ's footsteps, obeying Him, and serving Him. It means living a new

life in the likeness of the Lord and forsaking the paths of sin. Instead of following our own desires, we must deny ourselves, suffer with Him, and live according to His Spirit (Mt 10:37-38; 16:24; 1Pet 2:21; Rom 8:9-17).

11. In the OT, God's people were commanded to offer their firstfruits, which were the best part of the harvest, to God. Likewise, as God's beloved children purchased by the Lord with His blood, we belong to the Lord. We must dedicate our hearts and bodies to the Lord and obey Him and serve Him. Such offering is holy and pleasing to God (Rom 12:1,2; 1Cor 6:19,20).
12. Unlike the beasts, which defied God and deceived the people, the 144,000 did not speak words of deceit. They would not believe or profess the false teachings with which Satan misleads the world, but acknowledged the name of Jesus even in the face of persecution and death (21:27; 22:15; cf. Mt 10:32,33). On another dimension, such truthfulness is reflected in walking according to the truth in godly living (Jn 8:44,45; 1Jn 2:4,21,22,27). This aspect of truthfulness explains the phrase "they are without fault before the throne of God."
13. Here, John sees this wonderful heavenly vision and hears the new song before the pouring out of the final judgment. This pattern is consistent with previous chapters (Heavenly scene of 5:8-14 before the seals of 6:1-17; Heavenly scene of 7:1-17 before the trumpets). Such pattern seems to tell us that God's redeemed are kept spiritually. The woes and turmoil on earth cannot upset or destroy the citizens of heaven.
14. In His abundant mercy, God gives the world another chance to hear the gospel, repent of their sins, and turn to God.
- 14b. In the seal and trumpet judgments, we see that God's intended purpose for sending the calamities was also to bring the people of the earth to repentance. But the people still refused to turn from evil (9:20; 11:9,10,18). Nevertheless, God is patient with them and even now still provides another opportunity to the world by having the angel declare the eternal gospel.
16. The declaration here finds its fulfillment in chapters 17-18. God's wrath is ready to be poured out on Babylon, the great city that rules over the kings of the earth and the woman who causes all nations to drink of the wine of her fornication. This announcement serves as both a declaration of judgment and a reminder to the saints to flee from the idolatry and moral corruption of the world.
17. The act of worshipping the beast reflects a heart of sin and unbelief. Because the beast blasphemes against God, his followers must also be in rebellion against God in their hearts. Since they choose to worship and follow Satan, whose end is torment in hell, they will also suffer together with him in hell.

- 18a. This encouragement to the saints seems to suggest that the judgments announced by the angels were yet to be fulfilled. In fact, this may be the most difficult time in the tribulation period, when many will be killed for their faith. That is why the patient endurance of the saints is once again called for (cf. 13:10). The voice from heaven about dying in the Lord further implies that those who obey God's commandments and remain faithful to Jesus are likely to be killed in these last hours, before the time of the final harvest.
- 18b. It means to be faithful to the Lord, even to the point of death (cf. 2:10). As verse 12 suggests, those who die in the Lord are those who obey God's commandments and remain faithful to Jesus to the end. Unlike the beast worshippers, who have no rest day or night, the followers of the Lamb will receive final rest.
19. The Lord Jesus Christ.
20. The harvest and the gathering of grapes may refer to the same event, i.e. the final separation of the righteous and the wicked. The saved ones will be received into Christ's kingdom, whereas the wicked will suffer God's wrath and condemnation.
21. As we have seen in 11:19, the opening of the temple signifies the fulfillment of salvation and God's invitation of His redeemed ones into His presence. Here, the temple is where one of the angels of harvest comes from, suggesting that the harvest marks the completion of the divine redemptive plan. The altar here reminds us of 6:9-11, where the souls of the martyrs cried out to God for vindication, or 8:3-5, where symbols of judgment followed the offering of the incense (It is not clear whether the altar in 14:18 is the altar of sacrifice or the altar of incense). The time has finally come for God to avenge their blood and fulfill the promise in 13:10. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that the harvest results in a massive outflow of blood from the winepress (20).

Lesson 23

Observation

Outline

- Preparation for Pouring Out the Seven Bowls (15:1-8)
 - Seven angels having the seven last plagues (1)
 - The Song of Moses and the Lamb (2-4)
 - Seven angels coming out of the temple (5-8)
- Pouring Out of the Seven Bowls (16:1-21)

Key Words/Phrases

Last plagues, the wrath of God is complete, song of Moses, song of the Lamb, great and marvelous, just and true, temple, tabernacle of the testimony, seven golden bowls, righteous are Your judgments, blasphemed, did not repent, Euphrates, unclean spirits, battle, great day of God Almighty, I am coming as a thief, watches and keeps his garments, Armageddon, "It is done!", hail.

Segment Analysis**15:1-8**

1. Great and marvelous.
 2. Peaceful and triumphant.
 - 3a. Like the song of Moses in Exodus 15, the song here in Revelation is a celebration of and praise to God's powerful and marvelous deeds. The Lord has manifested His justice by meting out judgments on His enemies and delivering His saints. He is worthy of all glory and worship.
 - 3b. The Lamb, which has been slain, has prevailed over evil through His redemptive blood (5:5-10). The believers have likewise overcome Satan and his persecutions by the blood of the Lamb (12:11). It is because of the victory of the Lamb that we can sing the song of divine deliverance.
 - 3c. Those who have victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name. They are believers who have overcome Satan and his powerful evil forces. Since they have experienced firsthand God's salvation, they can sing praises and thanks to God for all that He has done for them.
 4. The appearance of a heavenly scene before judgments is typical of Revelation. As in previous heavenly scenes, the vision of the people of God on the sea of glass once again shows the victory of the Lamb and His followers in contrast to the punishment that falls on the beast-worshippers. God demonstrates His justice by delivering the believers from the divine wrath.
 5. The temple, which represents God's presence among His people, has played an important part in the unfolding of God's redemption and judgment in Revelation. In 11:19, the temple was opened and the ark appeared. Chapter 15 returns to the scene of the temple from which divine judgment proceeds. The sending of the last plagues from the temple indicates that the calamities are the acts of God for the vindication and deliverance of the believers. The identification of the temple as "the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony" further points to the fact that God is pouring out His wrath in fulfillment of His covenant with His people.
- 7a. As in the first four trumpets, the first four bowls are poured out on the earth, the sea, the rivers and springs, and the sun. Both the sixth trumpet and the sixth bowl have to do with the River Euphrates. The similarities suggest that the bowls are connected to the trumpets. The judgments that began with the trumpets are now completed in the bowls.
 - 7b. Whereas the harm inflicted by the trumpet judgments were partial in its extent, as indicated by the number 1/3, the effects of the bowl judgments are total. At the sending of the last plagues, not only does nature suffer, human beings also go through extreme ordeal, and they blaspheme God because of the severe punishment (9,11,21). Finally, the earthquake, hail, and cosmic cataclysm in the last bowl judgment bring total devastation upon men and nature.
 8. Men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image (2).
 - 9a. God's righteousness and justice in His judgments.
 - 9b. The declaration reminds us that there is a reason for the plagues of blood (second and third bowls). God demonstrates His justice in the plagues by giving those who shed the blood of the saints blood to drink. The voice from the altar in 7 recalls the cries of the martyrs in 6:9,10. The time for the vindication of God's people has come.
 10. Their obstinacy further justifies God's wrath. By their unrepentance and blasphemy, they declare themselves enemies of God, bringing destruction upon themselves.
 11. The drying up of Euphrates represents the lifting of the restraint on the enemies of God so as to prepare them for the final battle on the great day of God Almighty (cf. 2Thess 2:6-9; Rev 19:19; 20:7-9). The forces of evil will soon make advances against God and His people, leading to their own doom.
 - 12a. The mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. These spirits are the spirits of demons (14).
 - 12b. They perform signs and 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 (14).
 - 12c. The demonic source of the unclean spirits that gather the kings of the world for battle tells us that the battle will be Satan's final attempt to challenge God. The battle that will take place in Armageddon will be a spiritual one. The antichrist will go out and deceive the whole world so that the world will stand opposed to God (Mt 24:23,24 and 2Thess 2:9). It is also possible that the work of the unclean spirits will result in a world war in an attempt to destroy God's people.
 13. Since Satan has been given permission to go out and deceive the whole world, true believers must be spiritually alert and keep their garments by

holding on to the righteousness of Christ (cf. 19:8; 22:11). Because the Lord will come at an hour we do not expect Him, we must be spiritually ready at all times (Mt 24:44).

14. The great earthquake, the fleeing away of islands and mountains, and the great hail. This last plague is poured out in the air, resulting in the total devastation of nature and men alike. The passage also mentions the unprecedented nature of the earthquake as well as the magnitude of the hail (exceedingly great). Furthermore, the time has finally come for God to judge great Babylon with fierce wrath because of her fornication (14:8).
15. God's wrath has been completely poured out in these judgments (15:1).

Lesson 24

Observation

Outline

Judgment of the Great Harlot (17:1-18)

Vision of the woman on the beast (1-6)

Explanation of the mystery of the beast and the woman (7-18)

“Babylon is Fallen” (18:1-24)

The angel's pronouncement of Babylon's fall and sins (1-3)

Voice from heaven pronouncing her sins and plagues (4-8)

Weeping and lament of kings (9-10)

Weeping and wailing of merchants (11-16)

Weeping and wailing of all who are on the sea (17-20)

Babylon's violent end (21-24)

Key Words/Phrases

Judgment, great, harlot/woman, many waters, fornication, drunk with wine, blasphemy, mystery, abominations, drunk with the blood of saints and martyrs of Jesus, beast, kings, fallen, rich, luxury, come out of her, torment and sorrow, plagues, weep/lament /wail, no/shall not...anymore, avenged.

General Analysis

1. 1) Verses 1, 2 and 5 tell us that the woman is the mother of harlots with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication; likewise, 18:3,9 also speak of Babylon as a woman of fornication. 2) 17:5 spells out the name of the harlot as Babylon the Great, the central figure of chapter 18. 3) 17:6 tells us that the harlot was drunk with the blood of the saints and of

the martyrs of Jesus; Likewise, according to 18:20,24, Babylon was guilty of the blood of the apostles and prophets.

Segment Analysis

- 1a. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls (4).
- 1b. She sat on many waters (1); she committed fornication with the kings of the earth and made the earth's inhabitants drunk with the wine of her fornication (2). She also sat on the scarlet beast (3). In other words, with her charm she controlled the whole world.
- 1c. She filled the earth with her fornication and abomination (2,4,5); she sat on the scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy (3)—this means that she was defiant of God's authority; She was responsible for the killing of the saints and martyrs (6).
2. She exercised control over peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues (cf. 15). Her influence was worldwide.
3. She also controls the beast (3,7).
- 4a. It comes from the bottomless pit (8), meaning that it is an instrument of Satan. Its work is interrupted for a time (“was, and is not”), it will rise up again in the end time before its final destruction.
- 4b. Yes. It has seven heads and ten horns, and is marked by blasphemy (17:3; 13:1,5). It is an enemy of the Lamb (17:14; 13:8). It came from the bottomless pit (17:8; 11:7)
- 4c. Those whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world will marvel. The unsaved will follow the beast, since they are all under the control of the evil one (1Jn 5:19). According to 13:3 and 17:8, the reason for their marvel is the miraculous healing of the beast.
- 4d. The seven heads and ten horns of the beast, which represent seven and ten kings (10,12), suggest that the beast is a symbol of political entities or alliance of many nations. 13:10 further suggests that these political powers are cruel and possibly armed with great military force. Another interpretation is that the seven head and ten horns refer to the principalities, powers, the rulers of the darkness of this age, and spiritual hosts of the wickedness in the heavenly places (Eph 6:12). They are completely evil and defiant (symbolized by the numbers 7 and 10).
- 4e. While Satan ruled the world with power (was), he lost his place in heaven because of the victory of the Lamb (is not). But before his final destruction, he will make his last attempt to challenge God's rule by persecuting the believers and deceiving the whole world.

5. They are called, chosen, and faithful (17:14). True believers respond to their calling by remaining faithful to Christ and His words (cf. Eph 4:1).
- 6a. He will cause the beast to hate her, make her desolate and naked, and eat her flesh and burn her with fire. The forces that were once under the control of the woman will turn against her and destroy her.
7. The woman is symbolic of the sinful, materialistic, and godless world system, which will eventually come to ruin by its own doing. Her control of the world powers will be the cause of her destruction. Go on to chapter 18 for further understanding of what the woman, also called Babylon, represents.
- 8a. She lived in abundant luxury (3,7); she bought merchandise of every kind (11-13); she had all the things that were rich and splendid (14); she was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls (16).
- 8b. The nations were drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication (3); she was a great and mighty city (10,18,19); she killed and shed blood (24).
- 8c. She says in her heart, "I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow" (7).
9. She committed fornication with the kings of the earth (by leading them away from God into idolatry and indulgence); her sins have reached heaven; she glorified herself and lived luxuriously; she was guilty of the blood of the people of the earth as well as that of prophets and saints.
- 10a. The destruction of a city or nation would not result in the condition depicted in 11 ("no one buys their merchandise anymore"). A city or nation could not be guilty of the blood of all who were slain on the earth (cf. 24).
- 10b. Just as Jerusalem represents the community of believers, Babylon represents the community of sinners. Babylon here refers to the culture, ideology, and institutions of the world that promote godless values and sinful lifestyles.
- The language used in Revelation echoes God's judgments on the sinful cities in the OT such as Babylon (Isa 13:19-22; 47:7-9; Jer ch. 50-51) and Tyre (Ezek ch. 26-27). The spiritual Babylon encompasses all the sins of the world manifested in wicked cities and nations throughout history. The world is guilty of the bloodshed of all the saints and prophets because in its beliefs and institutions, it has constantly acted as God's enemy.
- 10c. In a spiritual sense, fornication may refer to 1) idolatry and 2) indulgent living, and the whole world has committed both offenses. Through their evil inclinations, people throughout history have established religions

and philosophies that lead to false beliefs or false worship. In their pursuit of luxury and material comfort, people have sought for excessive wealth and enjoyment, which result in arrogance, godless living, lust, bloodshed, and other sinful acts.

11. In a similar language as the curse pronounced on the ancient city of Babylon, this verse is a figure of speech that refers to the desolation of the sinful world. This image presents a sharp contrast to Babylon's former luxury and power.
12. Whether in our thinking or actions, we must not take part in the sinful desires of the world. Rather than follow the materialistic trends and pursuits of the world, we must be transformed by the renewing of our minds and walk according to God's will (Rom 12:1,2; cf. Jas 4:4; 1Jn 2:15-17).
13. In one day (8); in one hour (10,17,19).
- 14a. 1) The kings of the earth (9-10); 2) the merchants of the earth (11-16); 3) every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea (17-19).
- 14b. The people of the world, deceived by the charm of fleeting splendor and luxury of wealth (cf. 23), have now lost what they cherished the most. All their pursuit has come to nothing.
15. "no...be found anymore," "shall not...anymore."
17. Because of the violence and enmity against God's people that results from the world's indulgence in sin, believers become the victims of the wicked and adulterous world (cf Mt 23:34-36).

Lesson 25

Observation

Outline

- Praise and Thanksgiving in Heaven (19:1-10)
 - Praise to God for the judgment on the great harlot (1-4)
 - Praise to God for His reign and for the marriage of the Lamb (5-10)
- Christ's Victory (19: 11-21)
 - Appearance of Christ on white horse (11-16)
 - Defeat and destruction of the beast and his followers (17-21)

Key Words/Phrases

Alleluia, true, righteous, judgments, worship, reigns, marriage of the Lamb, testimony of Jesus, Faithful and True, make war, Word of God, armies,

winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, King of kings and Lord of lords, lake of fire.

Segment Analysis

19:1-10

1. The scene in 18 is one of weeping and wailing, whereas the scene in 19 is one of singing and rejoicing.
- 2a. Alleluia. It is a transliteration of the Hebrew expression that means “praise the Lord!”
- 2b. God’s righteous judgment on the harlot (2,3); God’s reign (6); the marriage of the Lamb (7).
- 3a. All God’s servants and those who fear Him, both small and great. They should praise God because God has avenged on the harlot the blood of His servants. They should praise God because the marriage of the Lamb has come. Those who serve God and fear Him should give glory to God for because of all that He has done for them and because their hope of salvation is now fully realized.
- 4a. The wife of the Lamb is the church (Eph 5:23-32), which is also the heavenly Jerusalem in 21:2, and the church consists of all true believers throughout history. This marriage will take place when Christ returns. He will welcome the believers into God’s eternal kingdom, where they will see the Lord as He is and be with Him forever (22:4; 1Jn 3:2).
- 4b. The church has made herself ready through the righteous acts of the saints (8). In other words, believers have kept themselves from the evil pollutions of sin and have watchfully waited for the Lord’s return. They have been sanctified by God’s word and spirit and are blameless before God (cf. Eph 5:26,27; 1Thess 5:23)
- 4c. This is the ultimate hope of all believers (2Pet 3:13,14). We will enjoy close communion with the Lord and will be with Him forever. “There shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” (21:4)
- 4d. These are those called and chosen to come into God’s kingdom (cf. Mt 22:2-14). They are the called, chosen, and faithful followers of the Lamb (cf. Rev 17:14). At the marriage of the Lamb, we will rejoice as the wife of the Lamb (the church as a whole) and as the invited guests (as individual believers).
5. The angel who had also shown John the vision of Babylon’s fall. He was one of the seven angels with the seven bowls (17:1).
6. The harlot was adorned with luxury (purple and scarlet), and had in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. The wife of the Lamb is arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright. While the harlot committed fornication with the kings of the earth, the wife of the Lamb remained faithful to Christ. The harlot was destroyed and burned, whereas the wife of the Lamb joins her husband with gladness and joy.
7. The message of Revelation points to Jesus Christ the Lamb. He is the Redeemer, Judge, Savior, Bridegroom, Lord, and King. The entire book testifies for Christ and directs our faith and hope to Him. For this reason, the angel would not accept John’s worship. He was only a servant who testified for Christ.
8. He was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war (11). His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself (12). He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God (13). Out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God (15). He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS (16).
9. The descriptions of this rider parallel those of Christ in chapter 1. In 3:14, Christ further identified Himself as the Faithful and True Witness. Jesus is also the Word that became flesh (Jn 1:1-3,14; 1Jn 1:1). Verse 16 spells out His name as King of kings and Lord of lords—this can be none other than the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Phil 2:9-11).
10. The Lord Jesus said, “No one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him” (Mt 11:27). No one may know Christ without God’s self-revelation. So the revelation of the name has to do with God’s sovereignty. That no one knows His name means that Christ is the sovereign Lord and that He has absolute authority and power.
11. He will strike the nations with the sharp sword from His mouth. He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron (15). These are images of Christ’s judgment. He will judge all nations by His word and crush all forms of resistance (Jn 12:48; Ps 2:9; Rev 2:26,27).
12. Treading the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God means carrying out divine judgment. As in 14:19,20, the treading of the winepress is connected to bloodshed. Here, it is connected to the carnage described in 17,18, and 21.
13. While the marriage supper is a joyful banquet, the supper here is the execution of God’s vengeful judgment.

- 14a. 16:12-16; 17:13,14. The kings of the earth gathered to make war with the Lamb as a result of the deceptive work of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet.
- 14b. The beast and false prophets were captured and cast into the lake of fire burning with brimstone to be tormented forever (this is referring to hell fire cf. 20:10; Mt 25:41; Mk 9:47-49). Their followers were killed with the sword and the birds were filled with their flesh (21).
- 14c. The passage simply says that the beast and the false prophet were captured and cast alive into the lake of fire. It seems to suggest that they were completely powerless against Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Lesson 26

Observation

Outline

- Binding of Satan (20:1-3)
- Thousand-Year Reign (20:4-6)
- Release and Doom of Satan (20:7-10)
- Great White Throne Judgment (20:11-15)

Key Words/Phrases

Dragon, Devil, Satan, bound, a thousand years, deceive no longer, judgment, lived and reigned with Christ, first resurrection, priests of God and of Christ, released, deceive, Gog and Magog, battle, lake of fire, great white throne, Book of Life, according to works, Death and Hades.

Segment Analysis

- 1a. The angel bound the dragon and shut him up in the bottomless pit so that he should deceive the nations no more.
- 1b. The binding of Satan symbolizes the removal of Satan's power and activities from the earth.
- 1c. Despite Satan's great power, he still has to submit to God's authority. He can exercise his power only with God's permission.
- 2a. These are thrones of judgment. They who sit on them will reign with Christ.
- 2b. The souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and

had not received his mark on their foreheads. These are the faithful followers of Christ who did not love their lives to the death (cf. 12:11).

3. In order for Christ and His saints to reign with complete authority, Christ must put a stop to Satan's work so that people may restore their spiritual eyesight, be released from sin's bondage, and acknowledge Jesus as Lord (cf. Mt 12:28,29; Lk 4:18; Acts 26:18).
4. **View A:** Physical resurrection. Since the resurrection of the rest of the dead in verse 5 is physical resurrection, it would be natural to understand the first resurrection in verse 4 as referring to physical resurrection. The phrase "they lived and reigned," when placed in connection with "but the rest of the dead did not live again until," suggests that both verses 4 and 5 refer to bodily resurrection. The passage also does not indicate otherwise.
- View B:** Spiritual resurrection. In Jn 5:25 and 28-29, Jesus made a distinction between spiritual and bodily resurrection. So the first resurrection should be a spiritual one and the final resurrection a bodily one. In other words, those who have been born again through faith in Jesus Christ participate in the first resurrection (Eph 2:1-5). The resurrection passages of 1Thess 4:15-17 and 1Cor 15:51,52 make no mention of a millennial reign with Christ after the bodily resurrection; i.e. there is only one bodily resurrection and the resurrection in Revelation 20 should be referring to a spiritual one.
5. The second death is being cast into the lake of fire (14). Sinners will resurrect on the last day to be judged and their souls will be condemned and thrown into the lake of fire (21:8). But those who have part in the first resurrection are believers who have overcome through the redeeming work of Christ. Since Christ has conquered death, His believers will not be harmed by the second death (Jn 11:26; 1Cor 15:54-57; Rev 2:11)
6. They will be priests of God and of Christ (6). Believers are redeemed by Christ to be royal priests and kings (1Pet 2:5-9; Rev 1:5,6; 5:9,10). They have power over sin and dedicate themselves to God's will (Rom 5:17; 6:12-14). They will offer up intercession and thanksgiving (cf. 1Tim 2:1; 1Pet 2:9; Heb 13:15). They will also judge the world and angels (1Cor 6:2-3; Rev 20:4).
- 7a. **View A:** Jesus' earthly ministry. The Lord Jesus exercised power over Satan through His powerful ministry and thereby inaugurated the thousand-year reign on earth (Lk 10:18,19; Mt 12:28,29).
- View B:** The establishment of the true church in the last days. God poured out His Holy Spirit once again in the early 1900s (latter rain) and revived His true church on earth. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, believers were able to cast out and subdue Satan while winning souls to

Christ. So the revival of the true church marks the beginning of the thousand-year reign.

The difficulty with the above two views has to do with the binding of Satan. While Christ exercises authority over Satan through the church, the work of Satan has not been removed from the earth. Satan still continues to “deceive the nations.” Unless we interpret “the nations” as believers rather than the people of the world (an interpretation that doesn’t seem to fit the context because in verse 8, it is the nations of the world that Satan will deceive after his release), it is difficult to explain why Satan’s work on earth is still rampant although the thousand-year reign has already begun.

View C: After Christ’s return. This view is held by those who interpret the first resurrection as bodily resurrection. It follows the chronological sequence of Revelation begun at 19:11, where Christ returns to earth and defeats the anti-Christ. After the binding of Satan and resurrection of believers, Christ reigns with His saints for a thousand years. 1Cor 15:22-26 also seems to support this sequence (i.e. resurrection—Christ’s reign on earth—destruction of Death).

This view also has its difficulties. In other passages in the Bible, the final judgment and destruction of the universe seem to immediately follow Christ’s return (Mt 25:31,32; Jude 14,15; 2Pet 3:10). There is no mention of Christ’s earthly reign after His return.

- 7b. If we adopt view A or B to the previous question, then the reign of Christ must begin before the tribulation period. In other words, the tribulation will take place either during or after the millennial reign. If we adopt view C, then the thousand-year reign would come after the tribulation period.
- 8a. The release of Satan will be in preparation for the final judgment. Those who do not submit to Christ’s rule will join Satan in the battle against God’s people. Their actions will mark them out for condemnation at the final judgment (cf. 2Thess 2:9-12).
- 8b. They will gather to battle, surround the camp of the saints and the beloved city (8,9).
9. The church—the community of believers (cf. 21:2; Heb 12:22,23; Gal 4:26; Rom 9:25).
10. Fire will come down to devour the enemies and the devil will be cast into the lake of fire.
12. This refers to the passing away of the old world (Ps 102:26; Is 51:6; 2Pet 3:10-12; Rev 6:14; 16:20)
- 13a. The dead, small and great.

- 13b. He will judge everyone according to their works, by the things which were written in the books (12; Mt 12:36,37; 25:31-46; Rom 2:6; 2Cor 5:10; Ps 62:12). A person’s lot is also determined by whether he is found written in the Book of Life (15).
- 13c. Our works are the outward manifestation of our hearts, and they will demonstrate whether we are true believers (Mt 7:21-23; Eph 2:8-10; Jas 2:17,22).
14. There will be no more death (1Cor 15:26,52-55; Rev 21:4).
15. The atonement of Jesus Christ (Jn 3:16; Rom 8:1,34; 1Thess 1:10). According to verse 15, anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. Rev 13:8 tells us that this Book of Life belongs to the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Only those written in the Book can be preserved from the deception of the beast. So it is by the slain Lamb who takes away our sins that we can escape the second death.

Lesson 27

Observation

Outline

- New Jerusalem Coming Down out of Heaven (21:1-8)
- The City’s Structures (21:9-14)
- The City’s Measurements (21:15-17)
- The City’s Construction (21:18-21)
- God’s Presence and Glory (21:22-27)
- The River of Life from God’s Throne (22:1-5)
- Promise and Warning (22:6-20)
- Benediction (22:21)

Key Words/Phrases

New, holy city, Jerusalem, bride, behold, no more, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last, life, light, measured, the Lamb, glory and honor, Book of Life, river of water of life, throne, tree of life, I am coming quickly, blessed, testify, come, words of prophecy.

General Analysis

- 1a. It has the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal (21:11). She had a great and high wall with 12 gates, and 12 angels at the gates (12). 3 gates on each side (13). The

city was laid out as a square; its length, breadth, and height are equal; extremely large, 12,000 furlongs, which is equal to 1,500 miles on each side (16). The wall is also very high, about 216 feet tall (17); The wall was made of jasper and the city was pure gold, like clear glass (18). The foundations are adorned with 12 kinds of precious stones (19-20). The 12 gates are 12 pearls, and the street was pure gold, like transparent glass (21).

- 1b. Those who thirst (21:6; 22:17); those who overcome (21:7); those who are saved (21:24); those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life (21:27); God's servants (22:3); those who do God's commandments (22:14).
- 1c. God dwells with the inhabitants (21:3); The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple (21:22); The glory of God illuminated it and the Lamb is its light (21:23; 22:5); God and the Lamb sit on the throne, giving life to everyone (22:1-4).
- 1d. No more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain (21:4); The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. (21:23; 22:5); The nations of the saved will walk in the light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it (21:24,26); Pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb (22:1); In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations (22:2); there is no more curse (22:3); God's servants shall serve Him (22:3); there is no night (22:5).
- 1e. The cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie; anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie; dogs; anyone who adds to or takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy (21:8,27; 22:15,18,19).
2. Similarities in Isa ch. 60; 65:17-25: God will be the light of Zion, and the nations and kings will come to the light (60:1-9,19); the gates will never be shut (60:11); the former things will not be remembered or come to mind (65:17); the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard no more (65:19); there is no oppression or evil (65:20-25); the new heavens and new earth are God's holy mountain (65:25).

Similarities in Ezek 40-48: the city is on a high mountain (Ezek 40:2); the city was measured (ch. 40-42); God's glory filled the temple (43:4,5); God's servants shall serve Him (44:16); water from the temple makes the land fruitful and provides healing (47:1-12); 3 gates on each side with the names of the 12 tribes (48:30-34); the name of the city will be "The LORD is there" (48:35).

2Peter 3:13 states that the new heaven and new earth is the home of righteousness. This is similar to the description of the holy city, where there is complete absence of evil.

3. The Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last (21:6; 22:13); the Lamb (21:9,14,22,23,27; 22:1,3); the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star (22:16).

Segment Analysis

1. The new Jerusalem is both a city and a bride. Verse 9 tells us that the bride is the Lamb's wife. Since both the city and the bride represent the church (Gal 4:25,26; Eph 5:23-27,31-32; Heb 12:22,23), we know that the new Jerusalem in Revelation symbolizes the church in glory. The holy city is not a physical entity because a city cannot also be a bride. Rather, it is the community of God's people in heaven.

Although the New Jerusalem is a picture of our eternal dwelling in heaven, it also has direct relevance to the church today. The Bible tells us that after we have believed in Christ, we are seated in the heavenly places (Eph 2:6; cf. Col 3:3-4), and we have come to the heavenly Jerusalem (Heb 12:22). Therefore, in the spirit, we are in the New Jerusalem. While we are still striving to reach perfection in the present, the holy city is being prepared in heaven (2; cf. 19:7,8). In time, the perfect church will become a reality, coming down out of heaven from God. So the descriptions of the holy city are things we can relate to even now in God's church while we continue to prepare ourselves until we are ready to meet our Lord in glory.

2. It is coming down out of heaven from God (2,10; cf. 3:12). This means that God is the builder and maker of this city (Heb 11:10,16). God is the founder of the church through the redemption of His own blood (Acts 20:28). The true church is not founded by man, but is built completely according to God's will.
3. God's dwelling among men refers to the intimate relationship between God and His people, and with this restored relationship, we can enjoy God's favor, love, and protection (Lev 26:9-13; Rom 5:1,9-11). Whereas in the first creation man was cut off from God's presence because of sin, in the new heaven and new earth we once again become God's children (7).
5. All things are made new (5), including a new relationship with God and a new spiritual life. The former things are death, sorrow, crying, and pain. They are cowardice, unbelief, abomination, murder, sexual immorality, sorcery, idolatry, and lies. In the new heaven and new earth, and in the new Jerusalem, God will wipe away our tears and remove the former things, along with all their curse (21:4; 22:3).

6. After a believer is baptized into Christ, he puts on a new life in the likeness of God. He has no more part in the past life of sin (Rom 6:4-7; Eph 4:20-32). We are now reconciled with God and have put on God's righteousness; we no longer live for ourselves but for Him who died for us and was raised again (2Cor 5:14-21); "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2Cor 5:17).
7. The sea is a symbol of unrest and wickedness (Isa 57:20). In Revelation, it is the source of the beast (13:1) and the place of the dead (20:13). Thus, the absence of the sea symbolizes the complete removal of all sin and death.
- 8a. Fear is a sign of lack of faith (Mt 8:26). Being cowardly means not having the faith and courage to acknowledge Christ (cf. Mt 10:32-39).
- 8b. The first three things in the list, which are inter-related, have to do with the attitude and inclination of the heart, whereas the remaining sins in the list have to do with specific offenses. The abominable refers to everything that God detests. So "the abominable," like "the cowardly" and the "unbelieving," would include the sins that follow: "murder, sexual immorality, sorcery, idolatry and lies."
- 8c. These are those who bear false testimonies (cf. Ex 20:16). They include the dishonest, the hypocritical, those who would not accept or practice the truth, as well as preachers of false teachings (cf. Mt 23:33; Jn 8:44,45; 1Jn 1:10; 2:4,22; Rev 2:2,9,20; 3:9).
- 10a. Protection and separation from evil. No sinner may enter the city. This teaches us that believers must live a life of separation from sin (Rom 12:1-2; 2Cor 6:14-18; 1Pet 1:13-17).
- 10b. The gates on all four sides may represent the universal nature of salvation (Gal 3:26-28). The saved ones will come from every tribe, language, people, and nation (Rev 5:9). The names of the twelve tribes may represent that the city is for all of God's elect, since the twelve tribes of Israel represents God's chosen people (cf. Jn 4:22; Acts 13:23).
- 10c. As in Mt 7:6; 13:45-46, the pearl here may likewise represent the truth. In this case, the pearly gates would symbolize that the gate of salvation is the truth as taught by Christ and the apostles (Mt 7:13-23; Jn 14:6). Today, if we wish to enter the holy city we need to come into the only true church that preaches the complete gospel.
- 10d. Like the twelve pearly gates, the twelve foundations with the names of the twelve apostles may represent that the true church is built on the gospel of Jesus Christ and the teachings of the apostles (cf. Eph 2:20).
- 10e. Measuring the city is an act of defining the boundary of the city, which means separation and protection (cf. Rev 11:1-2). This boundary represents the commandments of God. Only those who abide by God's commands may come into the city (22:14). The equal height, breadth, and length of the city (i.e. 12,000 furlongs, a complete number), may also represent perfect and complete accordance with God's word.
- 10f. The 12 kinds of precious stones, which are objects of great beauty and splendor, may represent the perfect spiritual qualities of believers. Like the precious stones on the breastpiece of the high priest (Ex 28:15-20), these precious stones may also refer to the glorious state of God's elect.
11. In the old Jerusalem, the temple was a symbol of God's presence. But the temple also separated the holy from the common so that only the priests may enter it. But in the NT, because of the atonement of Christ, believers have access into the most holy place (Heb 10:19-20). Since there is no more separation in the holy city, there is no need for a physical temple. God's presence now fills the whole church. He and the Lamb become the temple.
- 12a. God's glory and the Lamb.
- 12b. The light may be a symbol of God's glory and righteousness. In this sense, the people of God will walk in complete righteousness, and there will be not the slightest trace of evil and sin (cf. Jn 1:7-9; 3:19; 8:12; 12:35-36; 1Jn 1:1-7).
13. They will bring glory and honor into it (24,26). In the church, believers constantly offer thanksgiving and praise to God for His salvation (cf. 19:5-6). In their holy conduct, they also bring glory and honor to God (cf. Mt 5:14-16; Phil 2:14-15).
14. God and the Lamb sitting on the throne.
- 15a. The Holy Spirit of God (Isa 44:3; Jn 4:13-14; 7:37-39); the Holy Spirit comes from the throne of God because He is from the Father (Jn 15:26; Acts 2:32,33).
- 15b. It brings life to the holy city so that the tree of life may yield fruit every month and its leaves may provide healing. In the same way, the Holy Spirit brings life to the believers so that they may bear fruit and manifest the nature of God. The healing of the leaves may represent the comfort and restoration that the Holy Spirit brings to us (cf. Ezek 47:7-12). Today, the true church is characterized by constant renewal of the Holy Spirit, which brings out the new life of God in the believers (cf. Rom 8:9-11; Tit 3:5-6).
- 16a. I am coming quickly (7,12,20; cf. 10).
- 16b. The entire message of Revelation centers on the imminent coming of Christ. To read Revelation without preparing for Christ's return would be missing the point. Since Christ will soon bring judgment and reward

- with Him, everyone must be ready for His coming by obeying the words of the prophecy.
- 16c. At the very beginning of the book, Christ tells us that the time is near. Now at the end of the book, He tells us again and again He is coming quickly. Because of such imminence, we will be blessed if we read and keep the words of the prophecy of this book (1:3; 22:7). Both the beginning and ending chapters offer promises to those who overcome and warn wicked doers. In both places we also read of the identity of Christ as the Alpha and the Omega. He is the sovereign Lord of history who is faithful to promise and who will carry out justice. We need to submit to His will and be faithful unto death so that we may receive His reward and be with Him in glory forever (cf. 2Tim 2:11-13).
- 17a. Anyone who thirsts and desires may take the water of life freely. Salvation is a free gift for everyone who believes (1Jn 7:37-39; Rom 3:24)
- 17b. While the NKJV reads, “blessed are those who do His commandments,” some other translations render verse 14 as “blessed are those who wash their robes.” While doing God’s commandment refers to the righteous deeds of the saints, we are made righteous through Christ in the first place (Eph 2:8-10; Tit 3:5). The obedience of the saints is a response in faith to God’s mercy and Christ’s saving work; it is not our own righteousness. But after we have put on Christ, we need to keep our robe clean by doing deeds of righteousness (1Jn 3:7). Such life of faith will enable us to gain access into the holy city.
- 18a. “These words are faithful and true. And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place” (6). “Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book” (7). “For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book” (9). “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, because the time is at hand” (10). “I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star” (16). “For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” (18,19).
- 18b. 1) The time is near and Christ is coming quickly to reward everyone according to His work (7,10,12,20). 2) Whether we obey the words of the prophecy will determine whether we will enter into the holy city (14,15).
19. They warn us against sin and invite us into God’s gracious gift of life. Out of His love, He urgently calls us to prepare for His coming so that we will not suffer the second death but may receive everlasting life.
20. Because the time is at hand (10), we need to make an immediate decision about our conducts. Believers must persist during this final hour so that they may receive the Lord’s reward. This verse should not be taken to mean that evil doers ought to remain evil. Rather, it is a call to immediate response; there is no time for procrastination and wavering.
- 21a. The coming of the Lord will be the ultimate fulfillment of our hope. Since the ascension of Jesus, believers have been expecting the Lord’s return. Now believers wait with patience and great eagerness, longing for that glorious day to come (Rom 8:18-25; Gal 5:5; Phil 3:20; Jas 5:7-9). Even the saints of the past are waiting for this day so that together we may receive this promise together (2Tim 4:8; Heb 11:39-40). The people of God, including the souls of the martyrs, also cry out day and night for vindication (Lk 18:7; Rev 6:9-11). The body of believers throughout the ages is waiting eagerly. Here, at the end of the Bible, John speaks on behalf of all believers and heartily responds to Christ’s promise, saying, “Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”
22. 1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6, 22:7,14.

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