

REVELATION

I. Introduction

A. History

1. Timeline

- a. 168 LAZARUS of Bethany ministered in Citium in Cyprus for 30 years, then traveled to Marseilles in Gaul where he spent 7 more years and also visited Britain. He retired to Cyprus where he died (again). JOHN MARK was dragged to death through the streets of Alexandria, Egypt on Easter. BARTHOLOMEW, after having ministered in India with THOMAS and JUDE and with PHILIP at Hierapolis, died after being beaten with clubs, flayed alive and crucified in Armenia by the priests of Albanus, led by ASTYAGES, the king's brother. PAUL was imprisoned in Rome and wrote "Second Timothy" shortly before he was beheaded in May by NERO. JUDE wrote his epistle. HEBREWS was written, probably by PAUL. VESPASIAN attacked Jerusalem. NERO committed suicide on June 9th and was succeeded by GALBA. JOSEPHUS wrote his "History of the Jewish War."
- 69 POLYCARP was born. After having ministered in the foothills of the Caucasus mountains, to the Scythians in South Russia around the Black Sea, establishing churches in Scythia, Byzantium, Greece, Thrace, Macedonia and Patros, ANDREW was crucified at Achaia on a cross in the form of an "X", hanging there for three days before he died on the last day of November. LUKE, who had been ministering with ANDREW, was crucified at Patros, Greece by being hanged on an olive tree by the idolatrous priests.
- 70 VESPASIAN arrived at Rome. TITUS, his son, with 80,000 men, captured and destroyed Jerusalem in August. 700 Jewish prisoners were taken to Rome. Judea was detached from Syria and made a separate Roman province.
- 71 *All astrologers and philosophers were banished from Rome.*
- 72 After ministering in Syria, Edessa and northern Persia, JUDE (THADDAEUS) was killed with a halberd at Edessa and was buried at Kara Kelesia. SIMON ZELOTES was sawn asunder in Persia. *Jewish revolts in Egypt and Cyrene. ANTIOCHUS IV was deposed. Asia Minor was added to Cappadocia.*
- 73 BARNABAS was killed by the Jews in Salamis on Cyprus. *Greece was made a senatorial province. Censorship of VESPASIAN and TITUS.*
- 75 *HEROD AGRIPPA II and BERNICE moved to Rome. VESPASIAN began building the Roman Coliseum.*
- 76 JOSEPH of Ariamatha died in Britain and was buried at Glastonbury.
- 79 *Mt. Vesuvius erupted, destroying Pompeii and Herculaneum.*
- 80 *Rome was burned again. TITUS dedicated the Roman Coliseum.*
- 81 "Targums", Aramaic versions of the Old Testament, began to appear. *TITUS died, succeeded by his brother DOMITIAN, son of VESPASIAN and FLAVIA DOMITILLA.*
- 85 JOHN wrote his Gospel.
- 88 CLEMENT I was bishop of Rome.
- 90 Jewish rabbis gathered at Jamnia to establish the Jewish canon of Scripture. JOHN wrote I John, II John and III John. *DOMITIAN began his persecution of Christians.*

¹A *Chronology Of Biblical Christianity*. by Dr. R.C. Wetzell, 1995.

- 94** *Roman persecution of Jewish and Christians. Josephus' "Antiquities" was published.*
- 95** POLYCARP was baptized by JOHN on December 25th. JOHN was banished from Ephesus to Patmos by DOMITIAN where he wrote "Revelation". During his banishment, TIMOTHY ministered at Ephesus. CLEMENT wrote his first epistle to the Corinthian church from Rome.
- 96** JOHN was released from exile on Patmos by NERVA and returned to Ephesus. *DOMITIAN was stabbed by STEPHANUS in September and MARCUS COCCEIUS NERVA became Emperor. KANISHKA, ruler of the Kushan dynasty in India, died.*
- 97** TIMOTHY reprovved the pagans of Ephesus for their idolatry, causing them to fall upon him with clubs and beat him. He died two days later from the beating. CLEMENT wrote his second epistle to the Corinthian church. JOHN the Apostle died at Ephesus on September 26th.
- 100** *HEROD AGRIPPA II died. The book "Bhagavad Gita", which influenced Hinduism, was composed.*
- 103** JUSTIN MARTYR was born at Neapolis, Samaria.
- 107** IGNATIUS, bishop of Antioch, wrote seven letters to churches, and TRAJAN had him thrown to the lions in Syria.
- 110** POLYCARP, elder of Ephesus, wrote to the Philippians.
- 111** *PLINY the Younger was governor in Bithynia.*
- 112** *PLINY wrote TRAJAN for advice on how to deal with Christians. The first organized persecution of Christians.*

2. 2. Authenticity

- a) Universal Acceptance in Early Church
- b) P⁹⁸ (Papyrus dated to early 200's)

B. Author

1. "John" (1:1, 4, 9; 22:8)

2. 4 Johns in the New Testament

- a) John the Baptist
- b) Jn 21:15
- c) Acts 4:6
- d) Son of Zebedee & Brother of James

(1) What do we know about this John?

- (a) Jn 13:23; 20:2
- (b) Jn 21:20-23
- (c) Jn 19:34-35; 21:24

(2) What is the significance of John remaining this long?

(3) What does it say for the authenticity of the New Testament?

3. Other possibilities

- a) "John the Prophet": 1:3; 22:7, 10, 18, 19

4. Arguments for John the Apostle

- a) Irenaeus (c. 130-200), a student of Polycarp, cites John as having written Revelation during the reign of Domitian
- b) Justin Martyr
- c) Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-215) mentions John's exile to Patmos

5. Arguments against John the Apostle

- a) Papias (companion of Polycarp) possibly distinguishes between John the apostle & John the Elder
- b) Caius (early 200's): a pastor, credits Cerinthus, a Gnostic heretic
- c) Dionysius of Alexandria (d. c. 264) concludes a different John based on writing style

C. Literary differences between Revelation and other Johannine writings

Gospel & John I-III	Revelation
Greek grammatical structures	Hebraisms
Well-crafted sentences	Written seemingly without careful formation of structures

D. Theme/Purpose

1. Christology

- a) "...unveiling of Christ in his exalted glory as the reigning Lord."²

2. Celebration of the Saints

II. Setting

A. Patmos

B. "In the Spirit"

²Brighton, Louis A. *Revelation*. CPH:1999. p. 9

III. Literary Characteristics to watch for**A. Apocalyptic Literature**

1. Deliverance from Affliction
2. Dualism
3. God's Control
4. Revelation of divine secrets
5. Symbolism

a) Beasts

- (1) Beast
- (2) Dragon
- (3) Lamb

b) Numbers

- (1) Seven: Covenant or completion
- (2) Ten: Completion or Multitudes
- (3) Three and one-half: Broken Covenant
- (4) Twelve: The Church
- (5) Twenty-four
- (6) One thousand: multitudes too great to count
- (7) One hundred forty-four thousand: multitudes of God's people
- (8) Cosmic Calendar

B. Parallelism (21:23)

1. Antithesis (3:3; 10:4)

IV. Two methods for interpreting Revelation**A. Millenarian (Straight Line)****B. Recapitulation (Cyclic)**

1. Note repetition (6:12–17; 11:15–19; 14:14–20; 16:17–21; 19:1–21)
2. Seven seals, trumpet angels, and censers are parallel & cover the same time period

V. Preliminary Questions

A. How is John's time like ours?

B. How is Revelation's message particularly applicable to our daily lives?

C. Why is Revelation relevant to all eras of God's people?

VI. Introduction**A. Prologue (1:1–8)**

1. What is the difference between a servant and a slave?

Note: In Revelation, "apo" ("from") never refers to an angel as it refers to the *source*.

2. What does "firstborn from the dead" mean? What does it mean for us?

3. Who, specifically, is referred to in 1:4–5?

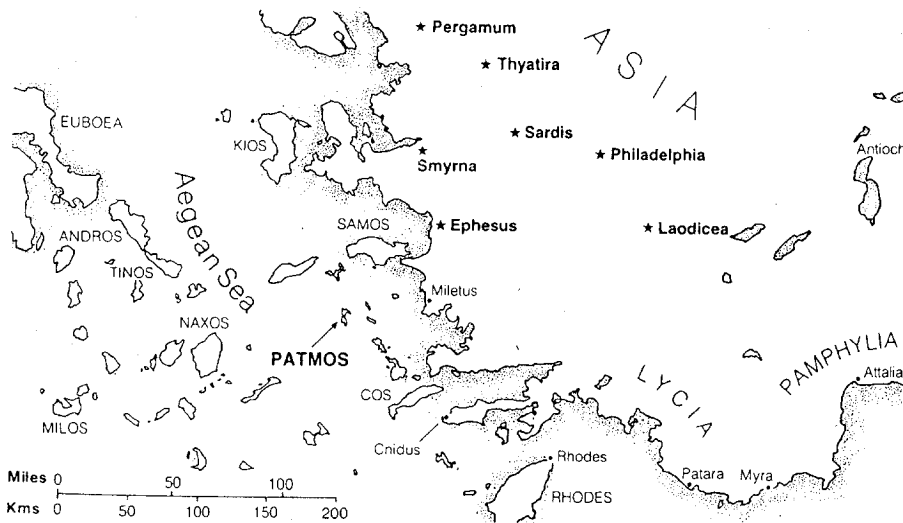
4. What and Who are the Alpha & Omega?

B. Commissioning of John: Vision of the Son of Man (1:9–20)

- 1. Why does John say “*like* the Son of Man” in v. 13?**
- 2. Has John ever seen Jesus like this before?**
- 3. Compare 1:13 to Daniel 10:6; 7:9,13.**
- 4. What do the eyes of fire signify?**
- 5. What is the right hand of God?**
- 6. What is in Jesus’ right hand?**
- 7. What is the two-edged sword in Jesus’ mouth?**
- 8. What is the difference between “A & ” and “First & Last”? Why is it a comfort to John? Compare Isaiah 44:6, 48:12.**
- 9. What is the difference between “Son of Man” and “Lamb of God”?**

B. Letters of preparation to the seven churches (2:1–3:22)

The Seven Churches of Revelation



To	Local Detail	Image of Christ	Christ sees Good	Christ sees Bad	Call to Repent	Promise to Conqueror
Ephesus						
Smyrna						
Pergamum						
Thyatira						
Sardis						
Philadelphia						
Laodicea						

1. Ephesus

a) Nicolaitans: (Antinomians)

b) Isn't hatred sin?

c) What does God have to say to us through the angel of Ephesus?



Site of Ephesus³

2. Smyrna

a) Ten days:

b) What is the remedy for fear of persecution?

c) What is the “crown of life”?

d) What does God have to say to us through the angel of Smyrna?

3. Pergamum

a) Balaam & Balak (See Numbers 22)

b) What was the teaching of Balaam? (Num 25:1–5, 31:13–16) Why was this bad for the church?

c) Is eating meat sacrificed to idols okay or forbidden? (cf. 1 Cor 8:1–13; Acts 15:29)

d) In v. 17, what is the Manna referring to? (John 6:31–35)

e) What is the significance of the white stone?

f) What is the new name on the stone? Has God given you a white stone with a new name on it?

g) What does God have to say to us through the angel of Pergamum?

4. Thyatira

a) Who is Jezebel? (qv. 1Ki 16:29–33; 19:1–3; 21:1–16; 2Ki 9:30–37)

b) How is Jesus like the morning star?

³Dictionary of the Bible by Dr. William Smith

c) What does God have to say to us through the angel of Thyatira?

5. Sardis

a) Significance of keeping watch: Sardis was taken captive twice because of lack of vigilance.

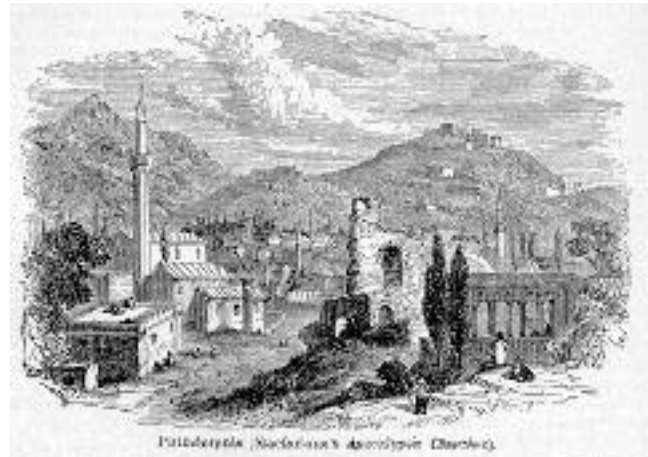
b) What does God have to say to us through the angel of Sardis?

6. Philadelphia

a) What is the “little power” that they have?

b) What is “the word of My endurance”?

c) What does God have to say to us through the angel of Philadelphia?



Philadelphia⁴

7. Laodicea

a) What do “hot” and “cold” refer to?

b) What does it mean to be lukewarm?

c) Why are hot & cold both preferable to lukewarm?



Laodicea⁵

⁵Ibid

d) Is there a danger of Christ “spitting us out”?

e) What does God have to say to us through the angel of Laodicea?

II. The Prophetic Message

A. The Inaugural Vision of Heaven, Introducing the Message (4:1–5:14)

1. The Throne of God & His Heavenly Court (4:1–11)

a) What is the most beautiful thing you've ever seen?

What made it so beautiful?

b) How is God on His throne described in the Old Testament? (cf. Ezekiel 1:4–28, Isaiah 6:1–8, Daniel 7:9–10, 13–14)

(1) Which person of the Trinity is emphasized in these visions?

(2) Who is emphasized in Revelation? Why? (cf. Ch. 5)

(3) Who/what else is present in each account?

(4) Who is missing from the Old Testament accounts? Why?

(5) What is the dominant image?

c) How does John describe God?

(1) What does the jeweled throne tell us?

(2) What is the significance of the rainbow halo? (cf. Ezekiel 1:27–28)

(3) What did the rainbow mean to Noah? What does it mean to us? (cf. Isa 54:8–9)

d) What hymn does this text remind you of?

e) Who are the 24 elders? Who would they represent?

(1) How do we know these elders are not angels?

f) Why thunder & lightning? (cf. Ex 19:16)

g) What is the seven lamps of fire?

h) What does the sea represent? How is it unlike the real sea?

i) Compare the “Four Winged Creatures” to Eze 1:10; 10:14

(1) What were their faces like?



(2) What are they?

(3) How is this like the Ark of the Covenant? (Ex 25:22, Num 7:89)

(4) Why 4 of them?

(5) Why are they covered in eyes?

j) Who sings the hymn? (Watch for it throughout the book!)

(1) When did it begin? (Job 38:4–7)

(2) When will it end?

(3) Where is it sung?

2. The Coronation and Enthronement of the Lamb: The Seven-Sealed Scroll (5:1–14)

a) Why is the scroll in the *right* hand of God? How is God's Right hand different from His Left? What does this tell us about the scroll?

b) Compare this scroll to that of Ezekiel 2:9–10. What do they have in common?

c) How is the vision in 5:5 like that of 7:13–14)? What is the message of these two visions? Compare 1 Peter 1:12.

d) Where is the Lamb? What is the significance of His location?

e) Why the seven horns & eyes?

f) Compare 5:7 to Daniel 7:13–14.

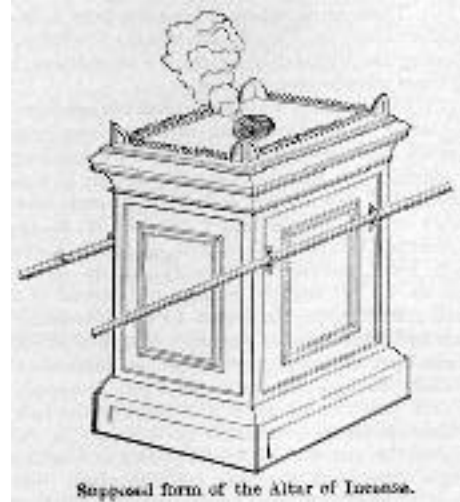
g) What does the scroll represent? Why is the Lamb the only One who can open it? Why is this good news for us?

h) What is a censer? Why is it used in worship?

i) What themes are present in the “New Song”?
What’s new about it?

j) Who are the “priests” in v. 10?

k) Why are wisdom & wealth only ascribed to the Lamb?



B. The Prophecy (6:1–16:21)

	The Three Sevenfold Visions	
1st Vision: Seven Seals	2nd Vision: Seven Trumpets	3rd Vision: Seven Censers
Scenes 1–5: Seals 1–5	Scenes 1–5: Trumpets 1–5	Scenes 1–5: Censers 1–5
(No battle scene)	Scene 6: 6th Trumpet, Great Battle	Scene 6: 6th Censer: Battle of Armageddon
Scene 6: 6th Seal: End of This World	Scene 7: 7th Trumpet, End of This World	Scene 7: 7th Censer, End of This World
Scene 7: Seventh Seal Introduces the Second Vision		

1. First Sevenfold Vision of History from the Cross to the End (6:1–8:5)

a) The First Six Seals: Tribulations and the End (6:1–17)

(1) The First 4 Seals: The Four Horsemen (6:1–8)

(a) Do the 4 horsemen represent natural or supernatural phenomena?

(b) The white horseman: Is this the same horseman as in 19:11?

(c) What does the white horseman represent? What are some historical/modern examples?

(d) What is the significance of the white color?

(e) How could you potentially be a “white horseman”?

(f) The red horseman: what does he represent? Historical/modern examples?

(g) Where does the red horseman get his sword? What does this mean?

(h) What does the black horseman represent? Historical/current examples?

(i) What does v. 6 represent?

(j) What does the last mean to us?

(k) In what way do the first three horsemen lead to the last?

(l) How do the 3 latter horsemen follow in the wake of the first?

(m) Compare these horsemen to Zech 1:7–17 & Zech 6:1–8.

(2) The Fifth Seal: The Saints beneath the Altar (6:9–11)

(a) Note that an intervening creature (angel) does not introduce this seal as the first four. Why not?

(b) Have you ever asked, “How long, Lord?”

(c) Why does God wait to avenge His people?

(d) What is the significance of the white robes (v. 11)? (Compare Galatians 3:27)

(e) What does “fulfilled” refer to?

(3) The Sixth Seal: The End and its Terror (6:12–17)

(a) Compare the earthquake with Hebrews 12:26–28

(b) The “Lamb” image is not usually associated with judgment & wrath. How is Jesus’ sacrifice related to judgment?

(c) Are God’s people also subjected to this violence? What does this mean to us?

b) Interlude: The Church Militant & The Church Triumphant (7:1–17)

(1) Does 7:1 suggest that John thought the earth is flat?

(2) What do the 144,000 represent? (7:1–8) (q.v. Rom 4:1–12)

(3) Note that, in the list, Levi & Joseph have supplanted Ephraim & Dan. Why? (See Judges 17:1–13; 18:1–31) What does this say about the church?

(4) What is the significance of the seals? What message does this give us in contrast to 6:12–17?

(5) How are we sealed? (Eph 1:13–14)

(6) What is the significance of the winds & horsemen being held back? When are they released? What does this mean for us?

(7) What do those before the throne represent? (7:9–17)

(8) What do the palm branches signify? (cf. John 12:13)

(9) Who is singing in 7:10–12? Why?

(10) What is the “Great Tribulation”?

(11) How are the multitude different from the martyrs in 6:9–11?

(12) What does it mean that God “spread His tent over” them? (cf. John 1:14)

c) The Seventh Seal Introduces the Second Sevenfold Vision (8:1–5)

(1) What is the significance of the silence?

(2) What do the burning coals in v. 5 represent? Note that the tense of the verb implies a continuous action, that the coals continue to be poured out as the upcoming angels sound their trumpets. What does this tell us about the trumpet angels?

(3) Does God “permit” these plagues or “send” them?

2. Second Sevenfold Vision of History from the Cross to the End (The Seven Trumpet-Angels): Disorders in Nature Accompanied by Sufferings of Evil Afflict Humanity (8:6–11:9)

a) The First Four Trumpet-Angels: Upheavals in Nature (8:6–13)

(1) What is the effect of the hail? What aspect of human life does it affect?

(2) What does the flaming mountain do? What aspect of human life does it affect?

(3) What does Wormwood do? What aspect of human life does it affect?

(4) What brings the darkness? How is all creation in darkness??

(5) What is the significance of only $\frac{1}{3}$ of the earth being harmed by each plague?

(6) How are these plagues like the plagues of Egypt?

(7) The first four plagues are natural phenomena. What do they affect directly?

Indirectly?

(8) Compare the eagle’s cry in 8:13 to the angels’ in 4:8.

(9) Compare the eagle in 8:13 to the angel in Rev. 14:6–7.

b) The Fifth & Sixth Trumpet-Angels: Demons from the Abyss & the Last Battle (9:1–21)

(1) Who is the fallen star in 9:1? Compare Isaiah 14:11–15.

(2) Compare 9:1 to Matthew 16:19.

(3) What does the smoke of the abyss do to the earth? Has this smoke enveloped the earth now?

(4) What do the locust-like creatures affect directly? How are they unlike the first 4 plagues?

(5) What do these locusts represent? What is their purpose?

(6) What is the significance of the description?

(a) horses prepared for battle:

(b) Crowns in the appearance of gold:

(c) Faces of men:

(d) Hair of women:

(e) Teeth like lions

(f) Breastplates of iron:

(g) noise of wings like chariots:

(h) Scorpion stings:

(i) injure for 5 months:

(7) Why are they *not* allowed to kill? (q.v. 1 Tim 2:4)

(8) Who are spared from the locusts? What does this mean to us?

(9) How are these like the plagues of Egypt?

(10) Who is the Angel of the Abyss? Should we fear him?

(11) How does the sixth trumpet angel relate to the vision of Christ in the sixth letter? (3:7-13)

(12) Note: The Euphrates river is in the north, the direction of most of Israel's enemies.

(13) Who are the four angels in 9:14-15? Compare to the story of Sodom & Gomorrah.

(14) Whom do the creatures attack? Does it change the victims?

(15) Do we see people acting like this today? What happens to them as consequence?

c) First Scene of the Interlude: The Mighty Angel from Heaven Commissions John (10:1–11)

(1) What is the significance of the description of the angel:

(a) Mighty:

(b) Coming out of heaven (q.v. Rev. 3:12 & 21:2):

(c) Clothed with a cloud (q.v. Ex 13:21; Mt 17:5; 24:30; Ac 1:9):

(d) Rainbow-like halo on his head (q.v. 4:3):

(e) Face like the sun (q.v. Rev. 1:16; Mt 17:2):

(f) Legs like pillars of fire (q.v. Rev. 1:15; Dan 10:4–6; Ex 13–14):

(g) Feet on the sea & land with a scroll:

(h) Voice like a lion's roar (q.v. Amos 3:8; Hosea 11:10):

(2) What is the small scroll given to John? (10:2)

(3) What are the “7 Thunders” (10:3b–4)? (c.f. Amos 1:2)

(a) What do they say?

(b) Why is John forbidden to write?

(4) What is the purpose of the angel's oath in 10:5–7?

(5) What is the “mystery”?

(6) What's so mysterious about it? (q.v. Col 1:26; Ac 2:23; 1 Cor 2:6–9)

(7) Of what part of our liturgy does 10:8–10 remind you?

(8) Why does John eat the scroll? (cf. Ezek 2:3–4; 2:9–3:4)

(9) Why is the scroll sweet and bitter?

(10) What is the giant angel's message to us?

d) Second Scene of the Interlude: The Temple Measured & the Two Witnesses (11:1–14)

(1) What does the temple signify?

(2) Why is the temple measured? (cf. Ezek 40:1–5, Zech 2:1–5)

(3) What does this mean to us?

(4) What specific part of the temple is included in the measuring? (11:1) What is the significance?

(5) What is the Outer Court? What does it signify?

(6) Why is the outer court not measured? What happens to the Outer Court? What does this mean to us?

(7) John is now involved in the action. How is this true to life?

(8) Throughout Revelation, the time period of 42 months, 3 1/2 years, and 1260 days, are used (all signifying the same amount of time in a lunar calendar). (cf. Daniel 7:25, 12:11) What happens during this time?

(9) What is the significance of the amount of time? (q.v. Luke 4:25) Note also that the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes lasted this long (sometime between the years of 168–164 BC), as did the Jewish War (67–70 AD). Note also that 3 1/2 is a portion of 7.

(10) Why are the “witnesses” wearing sackcloth? (11:3)

(11) What does it mean that they are lampstands & olive trees? (q.v. Zech 4:2–3) What do these witnesses represent?

(12) What happens to the witnesses? (11:7–10) Who does the killing?

(13) What does this mean to us?

(14) Does this happen in our time?

(15) What happens to the witnesses in 11:11–12? What does this mean to us?

(16) Does this happen in our time?

(17) What does the earthquake do? (11:13)

(18) What are some historical examples of such an earthquake?

(19) What is the effect of the earthquake to “the rest of them”?

e) The Seventh Trumpet-Angel: The End and Its Joy (11:15–19)

(1) In 11:15, how has the “kingdom of the cosmos” become God’s? Wasn’t it already?

(2) In what way is this joyous time a “woe”?

(3) In 11:18, why is the “is coming” omitted? (q.v. 1:4, 8)

(4) What is the significance of the Ark of the Covenant? In what way is the Ark with us now?

3. Interregnum: The Cosmic War Between Christ & Satan, Between God’s Saints & the Forces of Evil (12:1–14:20)

a) The Woman with Child & the Dragon (12:1–18)

(1) Who is the “woman clothed with the sun”?

(2) Where is she? What does this mean?

(3) What does it mean that she’s clothed with the sun? (cf. Ga 3:27)

(4) What are the 12 stars?

(5) Who is the dragon?

- (6) Compare the “signs” in 12:1 & 12:3. Which is greater?**
- (7) Why does the dragon have 7 heads?**
- (8) Why is the dragon wearing crowns & horns?**
- (9) What color is the dragon? (cf. 6:4)**
- (10) What do the stars in his tail represent? To where were they thrown?**
- (11) Who is the “male son”?**
- (12) Why is the child’s father not mentioned?**
- (13) Other religions have stories of a dragon pursuing a woman who will give birth to a son. In these stories, the son, after he’s born, destroys the dragon. Does this give credence to or detract from the truth of Scripture?**
- (14) In what way did the dragon *literally* pursue the Son when He was born? (Mt 2:13–18)**
- (15) Is the “woman” in the wilderness now?**
- (16) What do we know about Michael the Archangel? (q.v. Dan 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9)**

6



(17) When does this war occur? (12:5) (cf. Job 1:6–11; 2:1–5); Zech 3:1–7)



(18) What causes the dragon's expulsion? (q.v. Lk 10:18, Jn 12:31–32)

(19) Compare the time of the exile in 12:14 to 11:2.



(20) Who are the seed of the woman whom the dragon attacks?



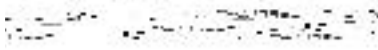
b) The Evil Forces & the Dragon: The Beast from the Sea and the Beast from the Earth (13:1–18)



(1) What does the sea represent? What are some historical examples?



(2) What is the beast which comes from the sea? (cf. Dan 7:2–7)



(3) Why is there only one beast this time? Why are the animals reversed?

(4) Why are the crowns on the horns, not the head like 12:3?

(5) Whose authority does this beast have?

(6) How has the beast been mortally wounded and revived?

(7) In 13:4, contrast the words spoken of the beast with the name “Michael,” which means, “Who is like God?”

(8) When were the names written in the Book of Life? (13:8; 17:8; Eph 1:4)

(9) Is there escape from suffering by the saints in this world? (13:10)

(10) Who is the beast from the earth? (13:11)

(11) Why is it from the earth, not the sea?

⁶Michael & The Dragon: Statue outside of Concordia Seminary Library, St. Louis, MO.

(12) What is the significance of this beast's description in 13:11?

(13) Note how this beast evolves: Rev. 16:13; 19:20; 20:10; Rev. 17-18; 1Jn 4:1-3)

(14) Note that the beast of the earth serves the beast of the sea. What does this tell us?

(15) Have you ever seen "signs and wonders" within religions that led those in the church away from Christ?

(16) What is the mark of the beast?

(a) Would this mark be tangible? (cf. Rev. 7:3; 9:4; 14:14)

(b) Why is it on the forehead? (13:16)

(c) Why on the right hand?

(d) What is the effect of not having the mark of the beast? What does this mean to us?

(e) What does "666" mean? To whom does it refer? (Ϟ Ϟ Ϟ ΝωϞ Ϟ) What does it mean to us?

c) The Conquering Lamb & the Victory Song of the Saints (14:1-5)

(1) Where is Mt. Zion and why is the Lamb there? How is this similar to our church architecture?

(2) What seal are the 144,000 wearing?

(3) Who are the 144,000?

(4) Compare 14:3 with 13:17. Which is better, to purchase or to be purchased?

(5) Can only male virgins be saved (14:4)? (cf. Eph 5:25-27)

(6) In what way are we a firstfruits offering to God (14:4)? (q.v. Rom. 12:1)

(7) Does this section cover "the now" or the "not yet"?

(8) Are we unblemished?

d) The Defeat of the Dragon & His Beasts Announced (14:6–13)

(1) How is the angel's message "Gospel" in 14:6–7?

(2) What does Babylon represent? (q.v. 17:3–17) What are some historical and modern examples of "Babylon"?

(3) Why is the wine undiluted? (14:10)

(4) What does 14:12–13 encourage us to do? Why?

(5) Do our deeds follow with us into heaven? (14:13)

e) The Son of Man & the Harvest at the End (14:14–20)

(1) Why is the cloud white in 14:14?

(2) What does the harvest signify?

(3) Compare Jesus' crown in 14:14 to Mk 15:17. What has changed?

(4) What does Jesus harvest in 14:14–16? Compare Mt 13:24–30.

(5) Note that Jesus harvests the grain, but an angel harvests the grapes. What does this mean for us?

(6) What is the relationship between the incense altar and the grape harvest? (14:18) (cf. 6:9–11)

(7) Compare 11:2, 14:20, and Heb 13:12. Where does the trampling happen? How have the tables turned?

(8) What is the significance of 1600 furlongs/stadia? (14:20)

4. Third Sevenfold Vision of History from the Cross to the End (The Seven Censor-Angels): Plagues of God's Wrath as God's Judgment is Poured Out on the Human Race (15:1–16:21)

a) Preparation for the Last Plagues: Introduction of the Seven Censor-Angels (15:1–8)

(1) Who are those who've been conquered by the beast? (15:2) (cf. 11:7; 13:7)

(2) If they're defeated, how can they be victorious?

(3) Compare the glassy sea in 15:2 with the one in 4:6. Why the difference?

(4) Compare this song to the Song of Moses in Ex 15.

(5) To what does this song refer?

(6) What is the significance of the presence of the Tabernacle (15:5)? Why the Tabernacle and not the temple?

(7) What is the significance of the angels' clothing? (15:6) What does this tell us about the censors?

(8) What does the smoke signify? (cf. Ex 40:34–35)

b) The First 5 Censors of God's Wrath (16:1–11)

(1) Whose voice is speaking? (q.v. 15:8)

(2) How could a loving God cause such destruction?

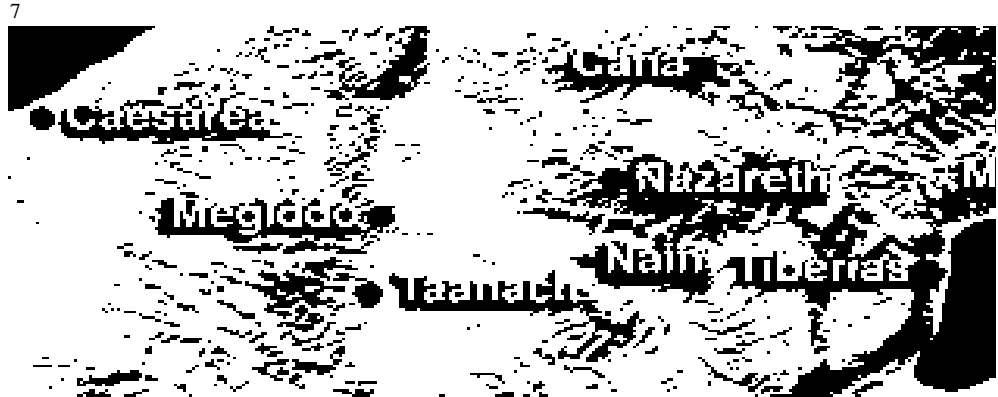
(3) What is the purpose of these plagues?

(4) Why are they so much more intense than before? (e.g. 8:8–9 vs. 16:3)

(5) How do the people respond? Have you ever seen this happen?

(6) What happens to the beast's kingdom? What does this mean?

c) c. The Sixth
Censor of God's
Wrath:
Armageddon
(16:12–16)



(1) When does this battle occur? (cf. 9:13-21)

(2) Where is the censor poured out?
What is the significance? (q.v. 9:14)

(3) In 16:12, we have yet another Exodus parallel. How is this like Exodus 14:21-31? How is it different?

(4) Why do the kings come from the East? What does this tell us about them?

(5) Who are the three unclean spirits in 16:13? Why frogs? (cf. Leviticus 11:9-11 and Exodus 8:3-4)

(6) Who are the great kings warring against in 16:14?

(7) Is 16:15 Law or Gospel? How do you “guard your garments”?

(8) Is Armageddon (“Megiddo Mountain”) the literal location of this battle (16:16)? Why Megiddo?

d) The Seventh Censor of God's Wrath: The End (16:17–21)

(1) Whose voice speaks in 16:17? What do these words indicate?

(2) When were these words (or similar words) spoken previously?

(3) What does pouring the plague into the air indicate?

(4) When God speaks, what is the result? (16:18)

(5) Note the effect of *theophany* (“God’s voice”) on both the sky and the earth. Contrast 4:5, 8:5, and 16:18.

(6) What did “Babylon the Great” (16:19) signify for the original recipients of this letter? What does it signify to us?

(7) What is the purpose of the destruction in 16:20-21?

(8) What is its effect on those who survive?

(9) Note: Yet another Exodus parallel!

C. The Conclusion: The End and The New Heaven and New Earth (17:1–22:5)

1. The Judgment & Overthrow of the Forces of the Dragon (17:1–18:24)

a) The Judgment of the Harlot (17:1–18)

(1) What is the time frame of this chapter? Is the the now or the not yet?

(2) Who is the angel in 17:1? (cf. 1:20, 8:2, 15:1)

(3) Who is the harlot?

(4) Why is she called a harlot? (cf. Hos 4:10–15) Contrast her with the woman in Rev. 12 and 19:7.

The Bride of Christ (Rev. 12; 19:7)	The Harlot (Rev. 17)
Rejected by the world (12:13; 13:7, 15-18)	Honored by the world (17:2,4; 18:3)
Clothed with the sun (12:1)	Clothed in scarlet and purple (17:4)
Named Jerusalem, the City of God	Named Babylon, Israel’s ancient enemy
Fled to the desert (12:6, 14)	Is in the desert, presumably pretending to be the church (17:3)
Acclaimed by God as the bride of His Son (19:6–8)	Will end in ruin (18:1–2, 5–6)

(5) v. Note: The “many waters” reference in 17:1 corresponds to the “many waters” that the city of Babylon sat on (cf. Jer 51:13).

(6) What is she also called? (q.v. 13:11–18, 16:13, 17:1) Why does she keep changing shape?

(7) What beast is she riding on? (q.v. 13:1)

(8) In what way does the second beast ride the first?

(9) What are some examples of kings consorting with her (17:2)?

(10) Why is the beast full of the names of blasphemy”? Historical/present examples?

- (11) What is so enticing about her cup (17:4)? What alternative cup do we have?
- (12) Compare the beast's description in 17:8 with the description in 4:8.
- (13) How is it that the beast "was, is not, and is about to come...?"
- (14) According to 17:8, when was your name written in the Lamb's Book of Life? (cf. Rom 8:28–30)
- (15) Why is it *the Lamb's Book of Life*? (q.v. Isa 49:15–16)
- (16) What do the seven hills represent? (17:9)
- (17) Who are the seven (and eighth) kings? Historic/modern examples?
- (18) What are the ten horns (7:12-14) and how do they differ from the beast?
- (19) How does the Lamb fare in the war? (17:14)
- (20) Who are the "peoples and nations..." the harlot sits on? (17:15)
- (21) Compare the harlot of Rev. 17–18 to the Antichrist of 2 Thess 2:1–12. What are some modern examples?⁸
- (22) What is the message of Ch. 17?
- b) The Fall of Babylon and the Rejoicing of the Saints (18:1–24)**
- (1) What does the angel's glory indicate about him? (18:1) Compare this angel with the one in ch. 10.
- (2) Where does that glory come from?
- (3) Only in Revelation is the term "mighty" (ισχυρα) used of angels. Otherwise, it is always used only for God. Why is it used in 18:2?
- (4) Compare Revelation 18 and Ezekiel 27. How are they alike? What do these mean for us?

⁸"Indeed, Christ, who alone should be adored and worshiped—Him the pope treads underfoot and blasphemes; he wants people to cherish his own dogmas, to fear him, and to place confidence in what he himself teaches. This is truly setting himself above the proclaimed and worshiped God. Therefore it is proper to call him the Antichrist." (Martin Luther. *Luther's Works*, vol. 3:121)

- (5) How was the “fall of Babylon” (18:2) a comfort to the Christians in John’s time? How is it a comfort to us?
- (6) Why is the fallen Babylon inhabited by scavengers and demons? (18:2)
- (7) For what sin is the harlot primarily punished? (18:3)
- (8) Compare Babylon’s sins (18:5) with those of Sodom & Gomorrah (Gen 18:21-22).
- (9) Compare 18:8 with Isaiah’s prophecy about Babylon (Isa 47:9).
- (10) Why are the merchants and kings so upset (18:9ff)? What does the fall of Babylon mean for them?
- (11) What does 18:13 tell us about the Biblical view of slavery?
- (12) “Souls of men” in 18:13 probably refers to captives of war sold as slaves (cf. 1 Chr 5:21), which were considered lower than experienced slaves. What is the destiny of those who live on the misery of others?
- (13) Notice the sudden contrast from 18:19–18:20. Why the celebration in the midst of such calamity? (cf. Deut 32:43)
- (14) What does the throwing of the millstone represent in 18:21? (cf. another Exodus parallel! Ex 15:4–5,10)
- (15) What is the purpose of the “never be heard” statements in 18:22–23?
- (16) Note the comparison of music and life. No music in Babylon denotes no life, but the music in heaven goes on forever. How does this remind you of our liturgy?
- (17) What does “sorcery” refer to in 18:23b?
- (18) What are some “harlots” people trust in today? How does the lifespan of Babylon compare to God’s holy city, Zion?
- (19) What do the similarities of the harlot to the bride (the church) tell us about the harlot and how to recognize her?

2. Victorious Celebration (19:1–21)

- a) A Song of Victory and the Marriage Feast of the Lamb (19:1–10)

(1) What song from our liturgy is based on this song?

(2) What does “Hallelujah” mean? In the Old Testament, the word only appears in the Psalms. Why might it be chosen to be used here? (19:1)

(3) What does the eternal smoke in 19:3 signify? Is this something to sing “Hallelujah” about?

(4) In 19:5, who are God’s slaves? (cf. 11:18)

(5) In 19:6ff, why is the cry so loud?

(6) In 9:6b, it says God has taken His reign. Wasn’t He reigning before? Which of His three kingdoms does this refer to?

(7) How did God betroth Himself to us? (Hos 2:19–20) Why was this necessary? (1 Pet 1:18-19)

(8) Note how betrothal is different from modern engagement. How does this affect our relationship to God? Are we married to Him yet?

(9) In light of our relationship with Christ through our betrothal, why does God treat sexual immorality as such a serious sin?

(10) In 19:8, it says the garment is “the righteous deeds of the saints. Aren’t we covered in the robe of *Christ’s* righteousness? (cf. Ti 2:10)

(11) What do the angel’s words in 19:10 tell us about praying to saints and angels? About Universalism?

b) The Second Coming of Christ at the End (19:11–21)

(1) Who is the rider on the horse? (19:11)

(2) Several places in Scripture say He will come on a cloud (Mt 24:30; 26:64; Dan 7:13; Acts 1:9-11) Here, it says He will return on a horse. Is this a contradiction? What does the horse signify?

(3) According to Isaiah 13:4, Who leads the war? What does this tell us about Jesus?

(4) What do the “many diadems” represent? (19:12) Compare with 12:3.

(5) What is the name in 19:12? Who will find out what it is and when?

- (6) What does the blood signify? (19:3) Whose blood is it? (cf. Isa 63:1-6)
- (7) What does His designation as the “Word of God” indicate about Him? For what purpose does God use His Word?
- (8) Who are the hosts who attend Him at His coming? (19:14) (q.v. Mt 24:29-31; 26:64; Rev. 14:14-20)
- (9) In 19:15, what is the sword, and what is its purpose?
- (10) What is the purpose of the iron rod? (19:15)
- (11) Why is the name written on Jesus’ thigh? (19:16) (cf. Gen 32:25) Whom does this identify Jesus with?
- (12) What does this name tell us about Jesus?
- (13) Why is the angel “in the sun”? (19:17) What is his job?
- (14) Compare this angel with 18:1, 21. This is probably the same angel. How are the jobs similar?
- (15) Compare the “banquet” in 19:17 with that of 19:7,9. What do they both signify, although in very different imagery?
- (16) Is the battle in 19:19-21 a literal military confrontation? Note that this is another view of the “Armageddon” battle in 16:12-16.
- (17) What is the message of chapter 19?

3. The Judgment and Overthrow of the Dragon (20:1–10)

a) The Millennium: The New Testament Era, When the Dragon’s Power is Restricted (20:1–6)

- (1) Note that in 20:1, John does not say, “After these things...” as he usually does. (Re 4:1; 7:1,9; 15:5; 18:1; 19:1) Why might that be?
- (2) Compare 9:1-6 with 20:1-3. Who is the master of the abyss? (q.v. 1:18)
- (3) Where else in the Bible is Satan described as bound? (Mt 12:29; Mk 3:27) How is Satan bound?
- (4) When is Satan bound? (Jn 12:31-33; 16:11) (cf. 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6)

(5) How is the Abyss different than the “Lake of Fire” (20:10)? (q.v. Lk 8:31; Rev 11:7; 17:8) Where is the devil now?

(6) What does the seal indicate (20:3)?

(7) Should the “thousand years” be taken literally? How else does the Bible use the term? (q.v. Ps 94; 2 Pet 3:8) (cf. Ps 50:10) How should we understand the use of the number 1000?

(8) When does the saints’ reign with Christ begin? (Rom 5:12-21; 6:1-4)

(9) Who are the beheaded ones in 20:4?

(10) What is the first resurrection? (20:5)

(11) How do you avoid the mark of the beast? (Which beast is it?)

(12) Note the difference between the descriptions of the resurrections in 20:5-6 and 20:11-15.

(13) Where else in Scripture are two resurrections mentioned?

(14) What does it mean to be priests? Who are these priests? (1 Pet 2:5, 9)

b) The Battle of Gog & Magog and the Final Doom of Satan (20:7–10)

(1) Who are Gog and Magog? (q.v. Ezek 38:2) What do they represent?

(2) During the millennium, Satan is withheld, unable to *directly* attack the church. Does he directly attack the church today?

(3) Can we find any evidence within Christendom that he is having a direct effect on the church? (Remember that he doesn’t normally use physical force, since his main goal is deception and turning people away from the cross, although he will use physical tactics when useful.)

(4) What kinds of casualties of the war do we see today? How great is the number of casualties compared to past ages?

(5) What did Satan use to attack the church during the millennium?

(6) Do you ever feel like the church is surrounded? (20:9)

(7) Why does God send fire from heaven? (20:9)

(8) How does the devil's suffering (20:10) compare to ours?

(9) Why does God allow the church to be tormented by Satan? How does the church respond? Who benefits from this? Can you think of any historic examples?

(10) What does God do during the tribulation? How is this characteristic of Him?

(11) How does this tribulation further humiliate Satan and glorify God?

(12) How can this help when we are under attack by God's enemies?

(13) When does this tribulation happen? (q.v. Matt 24:3-51) What is the greatest sign of the imminence of the end? Has that sign appeared yet?

4. The Bodily Resurrection and the Last Judgment (20:11–15)

(1) Who is judged first? (20:10) Who comes next?

(2) Why is the throne large and white? (20:11) How is the throne different from the description in ch. 4? Why the difference?

(3) Why do earth and heaven try to flee from God's face? (20:11) (cf. Gen 3:8) Is this a literal hiding?

(4) What do the books (scrolls, actually) contain? (20:12)

(5) Are we judged by our works? Which of our deeds are recorded in the book? (cf. Matthew 25:34-40)

(6) Note that the resurrection in 20:13 *follows* the judgment in 20:12. This is typical Hebrew mentality, using order and flashbacks for emphasis. The same method is used in Rev 19 & 20, where the Second Coming precedes the millennium.

(7) Why does John emphasize the *sea* giving up its dead? (20:13)

(8) In 20:14, death and the grave are depicted as enemies of God. How does this contrast with the modern view of death such as the view of physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia?

5. The New Heaven and New Earth Portrayed as the Heavenly City Jerusalem (21:1–22:5)

a) The New Heaven & New Earth (21:1–8)

(0) What is the significance of “the sea is no longer”? Does this mean fishermen will be disappointed in heaven? ☺

(2) What does the “new Jerusalem” represent? (20:2) (cf. Rev. 3:12) What is the bride of Christ?

(3) What is the significance of the tabernacle of God being among men? (20:3) Where is the “tabernacle” of the present era?

(4) Why might the description describe what is *not* there instead of what *is* there? (21:4)

(5) In 20:1-5, we see the destiny of the current creation. What does this tell us about materialism?

(6) Note that, in 20:4-5, we see that God intends to replace the old creation with the new, a restoration, much like creation before the fall, not something completely different. Holy Baptism is a “type” (foreshadowing) of this recreation.

(7) How is the faithfulness of these words a comfort? (20:5)

(8) Who is “The Alpha and the Omega”? (cf. 1:8) How is this different than the teachings of such groups as the Mormons and Jehovah’s Witnesses who say Jesus is not God?

(9) Why does God use the Alpha and Omega expression in 21:6? What does that title mean in this context?

(10) Reread the promises on chapters 2-3 (2:7, 2:11, 2:17, 2:26-27, 3:5, 3:12, 3:21) How are these promises fulfilled in chapter 21? Why are some thrown into the lake of fire?

(11) Note that not all of these have yet died, but it is the second death for all. (21:8) What is the first death?

b) The New Jerusalem (21:9–27)

(1) What does “the bride, the wife of the Lamb” refer to?

(2) Why are the twelve tribes’ names on the gates?

(3) Why are the apostles’ names on the foundation stones? (q.v. Eph 2:20)

(4) How is this “mountaintop” experience (21:10) like John’s experience at the Transfiguration? (Luke 9:28-36)? Who is shining with the glory in 21:10-11?

(5) Since God's enemies are defeated, why does the city have a wall? (21:12)

(6) Why is the city measured? (21:15-20) How is this different from common views of eternity?

(7) The size of the city measures about 1,380 miles per side, but the important number is the original:12,000. What is the significance of this number here? (Note that the Holy of Holies in the original temple was also a perfect cube.)

(8) Each gate, labeled with the name of a tribe, is a single pearl. Compare this to Matthew 13:45-46⁹.

(9) What is the significance of the streets of gold? (21:21)

(10) In the new creation, we will see God's glory. Why does He hide it from us now? (21:22)

(11) What was the purpose of the temple and Holy of Holies? Why doesn't the new creation need a temple? (21:22)

(12) Is 21:23-24 talking about physical light or something else? (cf. John 8:2, etc.)

(13) Compare 21:24 to Isaiah 60:1-6. (q.v. Matt 2:1-12) How is Isaiah's prophecy fulfilled? (Note: "Nations" can also be translated "Gentiles".)

(14) Why are the gates never closed? (21:25)

(15) What does 21:27 tell us about our resurrected bodies? What comfort does this give us?

c) The Garden Restored (22:1-5)

(1) What images here remind you of the Garden of Eden?

(2) Why is the river flowing from the throne? (22:1) How is this like Baptism?

(3) What happens to those who eat of the Tree of Life? (Gen 3:22) What is the significance of it being in the New Jerusalem?

⁹ Traditionally, the "Pearl of Great Price" parable equates the pearl with salvation and the merchant to a Christian, but more recent scholarship (Rev. Jeff Gibbs, et al.) suggests that, according to the context of the parable, the pearl represents humanity, for which Christ was willing to give up all. Either interpretation could apply to the pearl being the gate of heaven, the latter especially in light of the names on the gates and foundations.

(4) How can the tree be on both sides of the river? (22:2)

(5) What “curse” will there no longer be? (22:3)

(6) Why is the singular pronoun used in 22:3?

(7) What does it mean to be slaves of God in the new creation? (22:3) (cf. Romans 12:1) In what ways are our vocations acts of worship now?

(8) Do we already reign? (cf. 20:4-6) How does the reign of the New Jerusalem compare to our current reign?

B. Epilogue (22:6-21)

1. What “events are soon to take place?” (22:6)

2. Why does John stress his seeing and hearing? (22:8) (q.v. 1 Jn 1:1-4)

3. Again, John is rebuked for worshipping the angel (22:8). What does this tell us about a proper attitude toward God’s messengers?

4. Compare Rev 22:10 with Daniel 8:26. Why the difference? What does this mean for us?

5. What does it mean to “keep” the words of this book? (22:7)

6. What is the reward? (22:7) Does this mean we earn it? What is a modern illustration of this kind of “reward”?

7. In 22:10, John is told not to seal the message, but Daniel (Dan 8:26) was told the opposite. Why the difference? What is the significance to us?

8. What bad news do we find in 22:11? What does this verse compel us to do?

9. In 22:12, why is it called “My reward” instead of “their reward”?

10. Note the three titles given to Christ in 22:13. They are similar, but not exactly the same, as “The First and the Last” is used only of Jesus Christ.

a) Alpha and Omega: Beyond all creation

b) Beginning and End: of creation

c) First and Last: of the church

11. Why is the Holy Spirit not mentioned here? Where is He identified?

12. 22:16 is the *only* time in the Bible that Jesus identifies Himself by name. Why here?

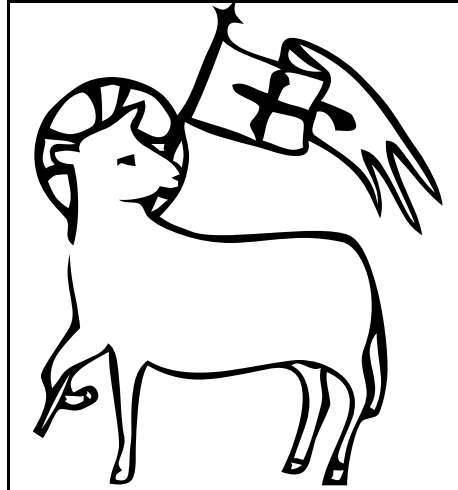
13. Why does Jesus describe Himself with this series of prophetic names? (22:16) (cf. Ps 110:1; Isa 11:1-10; Num 24:17)

14. Who is called to “Come”?

15. Does the warning in 22:18-19 apply only to Revelation or to all of Scripture? (q.v. Deu 12:32; Gal 1:6-9)

16. Is John's prayer in 22:20 proper for all Christians to pray? Where do we see this in our liturgy?

17. Summarize the message of Revelation in a sentence or two.



II. Reference key to Revelation**A. Numbers (and multiples thereof):**

1. 3: God, the Trinity
2. 3 1/2: A partial amount, not complete
3. 4: Creation (4 compass points)
4. 6: Short of perfection, sin
5. 7: Completion, God's Kingdom (3+4), perfection, fulfillment
6. 10 (and multiples of 10): Completion, a great (uncountable) number
7. 12: The church (3 x 4)
8. 144: The church throughout history (12 tribes x 12 apostles)

B. Characters:

1. Angels: Servants of God who often speak for God, even using "I" to speak on God's behalf.
2. Beast out of the Earth: The Anti-Christ, corruption *within* the Christian church
3. Beast out of the Sea: Governmental persecution of the church
4. Dragon: The Devil
5. Elders: The entire people of God, both Old & New Testament
6. False Prophet: The apostate church, Anti-Christ
7. God: The Trinity
8. Gog & Magog: Government-sponsored persecution of the church

9. Harlot: The Anti-Christ (Contrast with the Bride of Christ, the church)

10. Horsemen: Forces used by God to awaken repentance

11. John: Son of Zebedee, the last living apostle

12. Living creatures: Four Angels who serve as God's personal attendants

13. Woman clothed with the sun: The Church

C. Locations

1. Armageddon: Symbolic of the ongoing battle between the devil and the church

2. Babylon: The Harlot, contrast with Jerusalem

3. East: Where the enemies of the church came from

4. Jerusalem: The Church, where God is found

5. Lake of Fire: The final hell

6. Mid-Heaven: between earth and heaven

7. North: Where the enemies of the church came from

8. Sea: A dangerous place, separation

9. Temple: God's sacramental presence

D. Colors

1. Red: Blood, murder

2. White: Purity