

SYLLABUS

(Notes taken from **More than Conquerors** by William Hendriksen.)
(Compiled and edited by Luke Wilson.)

- I. Purpose, Theme, and Authorship of Revelation
- II. General Analysis
- III. The Unity of the Book
- IV. Progressive Teaching Concerning Final Judgment
- V. Symbolism in the Book
- VI. Background and Basis for Interpretation

TEST #1

- VII. Revelation 1: Introduction, The Son of Man
- VIII. Revelation 2, 3: The Seven Lampstands

TEST #2

- IX. Revelation 4-7: The Seven Seals
- X. Revelation 8-11: The Seven Trumpets

TEST #3

- XI. Revelation 12-14: The Christ versus the Dragon and his Allies
- XII. Revelation 15, 16: The Seven Bowls

TEST #4

- XIII. Revelation 17-19: The Fall of the Dragon's Allies
- XIV. Revelation 20-22: Victory Through Christ

TEST #5

PURPOSE, THEME, AND AUTHORSHIP OF REVELATION

- I. The main “purpose of the book of Revelation is to comfort the militant Church in its struggle against the forces of evil.” In other words, the purpose of the book is to assure the church that we win even though Satan engages everything within his power to combat us. The Church is on the offensive by the power of the King, and Satan will fall before this onslaught. The book of Revelation comforts and helps the suffering Christian. It fixes our hope on the glorious second coming of our Lord, while communicating that The Living One is with us now in Spirit. We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. (Romans 8:37)
- II. The theme is “the victory of Christ and His Church over the dragon (Satan) and his helpers.” Revelation communicates to us that things are not really what they seem to be. Example of “The Matrix.” (2 Corinthians 5:7) The theme is stated within the book in Revelation 17:14.
- III. The writer of the book is John the apostle; God is the author. (2 Peter 1:20-21, 2 Timothy 3:16) An accurate interpretation of the book of Revelation must begin with the premise that the book was written for believers living in John’s day and age as well as for Christians throughout the whole Church age. (My comments: Revelation must be understandable; if we used to see in a mirror dimly but now face to face, then every Christian must understand it. Problem with the historical viewpoint that I was teaching. Revelation is an uncovering, which means that it is meant to be understood.) The date of A.D. 95 or 96 is clear historically and makes sense internally.

GENERAL ANALYSIS

I. The Seven Parallel Sections

As we divide the book into seven sections, it is important to note that each division covers the entire Church age, from the beginning of the Church to the second coming of Christ in judgment. Example of a play with different acts portraying the same events from a different perspective.

1. Christ in the midst of the seven golden lampstands (1-3)
2. The book with the seven seals (4-7)
3. The seven trumpets of judgment (8-11)
4. The woman and the Man-child persecuted by the dragon and his helpers (the beast and the harlot) (12-14)
5. The seven bowls of wrath (15,16)
6. The fall of the great harlot and of the beasts (17-19)
7. The judgment upon the dragon (Satan) followed by the new heaven and earth, new Jerusalem (20-22)

In the first section, each individual church describes conditions that are repeated in various congregations throughout the church age. The second section opens with the once-slain Lamb now ruling in heaven (5:5-6). It ends with the final judgment being introduced and the saints receiving a final reward (6:16,17 and 7:16, 17). The third section has as its theme the seven trumpets that impact the world and the Church. It also ends with a picture of final judgment (11:15, 18). The fourth section also covers the whole church age as it begins with a clear picture of Christ's birth (12:5) and ends with a description of final judgment (14:14,16). The fifth section reveals the bowls of wrath that cover the history of the church age and clearly ends with a reference to the final judgment (16:20). The sixth division pictures the fall of Babylon, the beast, and the false prophet with Christ bringing judgment at the end (19:11ff.). The final sector of Revelation begins with Satan being bound for a thousand years (church age) and ends with the final overthrow of Satan with Christ's second coming.

II. Other Arguments for Parallelism

Different sections ascribe the same duration to the period described. The third part of the book describes a period of 42 months or 1260 days. The fourth division describes this period as 1260 days or time, times, and half a time. Another example is that the section on the seven trumpets runs parallel with the seven bowls of wrath. The parallel runs as follows: 1st of both affect the earth, 2nd of both affects the sea, 3rd of both refer to rivers, 4th of both refer to the sun, 5th of both refer to the pit of the abyss or the throne of the beast, 6th to the Euphrates, and the 7th to the second coming in judgment. By comparing the rise and fall of Satan, the beasts, and the harlot, you get a parallel of sections six and seven. The fifth section on the bowls of wrath ends with a battle scene, as do the sixth and seventh parts. The fact that all of these are

synchronous isn't surprising in light of the apocalypse of Daniel. Both books contain different visions covering the same time frame.

Proposition I. *The book of Revelation consists of seven sections. They are parallel and each spans the entire new dispensation, from the first to the second coming of Christ.*

III. The Two Major Divisions

The seven sectors of the book of Revelation can be classified into two major groups. Chapter 12 is where the first series of visions ends and the second begins. In the first group we see the struggle between Christians and non-Christians. In the second group of visions we are shown that the struggle on earth has a deeper background. We get to glimpse behind the scenes and see the major players, the devil and Christ. This underlying war between the devil and Christ is what drives the action on the surface, the world persecuting the church. This leads us to a completed outline of the book of Revelation:

- a. The struggle on earth. The Church persecuted by the world. The Church is avenged, protected and victorious (chapters 1-11).
 1. Christ in the midst of the seven golden lampstands (1-3)
 2. The book with the seven seals (4-7)
 3. The seven trumpets of judgment (8-11)
- b. The deeper spiritual background. The Christ and the Church persecuted by the dragon (Satan) and his helpers. Christ and His Church are victorious (chapters 12-22).
 4. The woman and the Man-child persecuted by the dragon and his helpers (the beasts and the harlot) (12-14)
 5. The seven bowls of wrath (15, 16)
 6. The fall of the great harlot and the beasts (17-19)
 7. The judgment upon the dragon (Satan) followed by the new heaven and earth, New Jerusalem (20-22).

Proposition II. *The seven sections may be grouped into two major divisions. The first major division (chapters 1-11) consists of three sections. The second major division (chapters 12-22) consists of four sections. These two major divisions reveal a progress in depth or intensity of spiritual conflict. The first major division (chapters 1-11) reveals the Church, indwelt by Christ, persecuted by the world. But the Church is avenged, protected, and victorious. The second major division (chapters 12-22) reveals the deeper spiritual background of this struggle. It is a conflict between the Christ and the dragon in which the Christ, and therefore His Church, is victorious.*

THE UNITY OF THE BOOK

Having split the book of Revelation into seven sections with two major divisions, we now turn to the unity of the book. We find that the two main divisions complement one another and the seven sections are completely unified. We can now focus on the meaning of the book as a whole. How do its various parts relate to each other?

I. Christ in the Midst of His Church

There is obvious unity between chapter 1 and chapters 2 and 3. In chapter 1 we see the vision of the glorified Christ. In chapters 2 and 3 we see that same Christ with His presence among the churches. Note the unity in the following column:

<u>Description of Christ in Chapter 1</u>	<u>Description of Christ in Chapters 2 and 3</u>
1: 16, 13	(stars, lampstands) 2:1
1:17, 18	(first and last and living one) 2:8
1:16	(sharp, two-edged sword) 2:12
1:14,15	(eyes like flame, feet of bronze) 2:18
1:4,16	(spirits, stars) 3:1
1:5,18	(faithful witness, keys) 3:7
1:5	(faithful witness, 1 st born) 3:14

II. The Conflict Between the Church and the World

In chapters 1-3 the light shines in the darkness, and in chapters 4-7 the darkness hates the light. Chapters 2-3 show that the Church needs afflictions that it may be purged and purified. Chapter 4 opens with the Christ on the throne overruling evil for good. He governs the world in the interests of the Church! Notice similarity between 5:5 and 6:2. The rider on the white horse is Christ. When Christ appears in history with His saving power, the sword appears. You can gauge the effectiveness of the movement by the size of the opposition. Christ's disciples must bear their cross daily. Compare Revelation 6:2,4 with Matthew 10:34. The section on the seals describes all the woes and trials of the Church as well as those that the Church shares from being in the world. How do these trials affect the Church? These persecutions purify the Church and the Church doesn't have to fear. In the end the Church comes out of this tribulation victorious over all. We are more than conquerors.

III. The Judgments Upon the Persecutors

What will happen to the persecutors? Will they go free or will the Lord avenge them? The section on the seven trumpets establishes that the Lord will avenge the wrong. By plagues upon the land (8:7), sea (8:8), the rivers (8:10), the sun, moon, and stars (8:12), the evil influences of demons (9:3, 11), the battle-field (9:16), and the expectation of final judgment (11:15), our Lord is constantly avenging the Church. These judgments are warnings of the final judgment to come; their purpose is to call

men in the world to repentance. They only destroy a third part. The purpose of the trumpets is to warn.

IV. Victory Through Christ

The section of the trumpets ends with a song of victory. The saints receive their reward and God destroys the destroyer. We are more than conquerors. The first major division of the book ends here. However, the book doesn't end here because two major questions are unanswered. 1) Why does the world hate Christians with such utter abhorrence? Why such intense persecution of Christians? 2) What will happen to those who don't respond to the warnings of the trumpets?

The second major section answers both of these questions. Chapters 12-14 teach that the struggle between the Church and the world is a manifestation of war between Christ and the devil. The dragon's purpose is to devour the Child (Christ). Since he cannot do this, he persecutes the woman (the Church). The dragon employs the sea beast (antichristian government), the earth beast (antichristian religious propaganda), and the great harlot, Babylon (antichristian seduction). Who is victorious, Christ or the dragon? Chapter 14 shows the Lamb standing as Victor on Mount Zion with 144,000 saints. What happens to the enemy? Chapters 12-14 picture five enemies of the Church all working together to destroy Her. These enemies include: 1) the dragon, 2) the beast from the sea, 3) the beast from the earth or false prophet, 4) the great harlot, Babylon, 5) the men having the mark of the beast. The final demise of each of these takes place on the Day of Judgment. They arise together and fall together, although their destruction is described separately. What happens to those who refused to heed the warnings of the seven trumpets? These are those who have the mark of the beast. The answer of chapters 15 and 16 is that there will be a final outpouring of wrath upon them. Trumpets always warn while bowls always pour out. What about the other enemies? They are introduced in the order of the dragon, the two beasts, and the harlot. The doom of each is described in reverse order. However, they are all overthrown at the same time, on the day of final judgment. Chapters 17-19 describe the fall of Babylon as well as the destruction of the two beasts. Chapters 20-22 relate the complete defeat of the dragon. He is already bound (20:2) and he will be thrown into the lake of fire to be tormented forever and ever. What about the saints? We get to reign with Christ in the new heavens and new earth. The Lamb has the throne and we are more than conquerors.

V. The Book an Organic Whole

The book of Revelation, while covering the entire church age in each of seven divisions, still has perfect unity. It is a single, beautiful, gradually developing whole. Every part of the book is exactly where it should be. The whole book describes consistent principles of human conduct as well as continual divine moral government. The teachings of the seven sections underscore the whole Bible.

1. Chapters 1-3 – Matthew 5:14 – “You are the light of the world.”

2. Chapters 4-7 – John 16:33 – “In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.”
3. Chapters 8-11 – Luke 18:7 – “Now shall not God bring about justice for His elect, who cry to Him day and night...?”
4. Chapters 12-14 – Genesis 3:15 – “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.”
5. Chapters 15,16 – Romans 2:5 – “But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself...”
6. Chapters 17-19 – I John 2:17 – “And the world is passing away, and also its lusts...”
7. Chapters 20-22 – Romans 8:37 – “But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.”

Proposition III. *The book is one. The principles of human conduct and divine moral government are progressively revealed; the lampstands give rise to the seals, the seals to the trumpets, etc.*

PROGRESSIVE TEACHING CONCERNING FINAL JUDGMENT

The book of Revelation communicates to us the constant principles of human conduct and divine moral government. It applies as much in this century as it did in the first century and applies in China as well as America. Wherever there is a church, there is a light shining in a dark place. When this happens, the world hates the church and persecutions follow. God uses these trials for the good of the Church. Praise God that the throne is always in heaven and that Christians are always victorious. When God sees that His people are persecuted, He then sends the trumpets of judgment. This surface struggle on earth is representative of the deeper struggle in the spiritual realm between Christ and Satan. Bowls of wrath always follow trumpets of judgment for those that refuse to repent. Satan and his helpers seem to be victorious, but in reality are always defeated. When we understand these constant principles, the book of Revelation is simple to understand. This is the real philosophy of history. We now can properly interpret the newspapers and history books.

Throughout history we see that bowls of wrath always follow trumpets of judgment. "Babylon" falls whenever kingdoms collapse, but the great and final fall of Babylon comes with the return of Jesus Christ in judgment. The final sections of the Apocalypse have a special emphasis on the final judgment. In the first three sections (the first major division) of Revelation, we only see announcements of the final judgment. However, in the second major division, we see real descriptions of this judgment. These descriptions become more intense and less symbolic as we move into the end of the book.

Proposition IV. The seven sections of the Apocalypse are arranged in an ascending, climactic order. There is progress in eschatological emphasis. The final judgment is first announced, then introduced, and finally described. Similarly, the new heaven and earth are described more fully in the final section than in those that precede it.

SYMBOLISM IN THE BOOK

The book of Revelation is a series of constantly changing pictures and scenes. Altogether, it is like a magnificent movie. But what do these pictures mean? The book is obviously not literal as evidenced by the fact that the seven stars and the seven lampstands are clearly defined as representing the messengers and the churches as early as chapter 1. To what extent, though, do the pictures of the book of Revelation communicate specific details?

I. The Need to Concentrate on a Central Theme.

Example of the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) (pp. 38-39, More than Conquerors). Some people see in this parable quite a bigger meaning. The man represents Adam, who falls into the hands of the devil. They beat him, leaving him for dead in his trespasses and sins. The priest and Levite represent the law and the sacrifices, which cannot save him. The Good Samaritan, representing Christ, helps the poor sinner by dressing his wounds with His blood and the Holy Spirit. He then mounts the man on His own donkey and pays two denarii representing the Word and the Sacraments. Then the Good Samaritan leaves, but promises to return later. This explanation of the parable is interesting, but completely wrong. The context of the parable tells us nothing about a deeper meaning to any of the pictures of the parable. The overall parable communicates exactly what Jesus wanted it to: we should be a neighbor to any person that the Lord places in our path.

II. The Need to Distinguish Between Principle and Detail

We need to have the same care as illustrated above in examining the book of Revelation. As an example, the locusts that come up out of the abyss in Revelation chapter 9. What is the separate meaning of the hair, teeth, etc.? We must ask what is the picture taken as a whole? Then we need to find the one central meaning of the picture. As a rule, the details belong to the symbol in order to help us see the central thought.

Proposition V. The fabric of the book consists of moving pictures. The details that pertain to the picture should be interpreted in harmony with its central thought. We should ask two questions. First, what is the entire picture? Second, what is the predominant idea?

III. What Do the Symbols Mean?

Understanding that we should interpret the symbol as a whole, then we ask what the symbol means. There are two types of symbols in the book of Revelation. The first type of symbols deals with the beginning and end of the church age. These symbols, as evidenced by the context, generally refer to a specific event. The second type signifies the time between Christ's first and second coming such as the lampstands, the seals, etc. Do these also refer to specific events in history? If they do, then we

cannot interpret them and the Apocalypse remains a closed book. However, we know that the book of Revelation is an unveiling, so it is meant to be understood. We expect that these symbols would not refer to specific events, but to principles that are operating throughout the history of the world. This is consistent with what we find on the basis of the symbols themselves. For example, the seals, trumpets, and bowls affect fourth and third parts of the earth, sea, trees, etc. This couldn't be true if we were speaking of one specific event in history, but when we link all of the series of similar happenings for which the symbol stands, it makes sense. They refer to events that happen time and time again so that the book of Revelation is always completely relevant. The symbols usually come in groups of seven, which communicates completeness. Seven lampstands picture the whole Church throughout history, not seven periods of the church age. In the same way, seven seals, seven trumpets, seven bowls, seven mountains, etc. indicate the constant happenings of history in the church age.

Proposition VI. *The seals, trumpets, bowls of wrath and similar symbols refer not to specific events, particular happenings, or details of history, but to principles – of human conduct and of divine moral government – that are operating throughout the history of the world, especially throughout the new dispensation.*

BACKGROUND AND BASIS FOR INTERPRETATION

The book of Revelation is grounded in contemporary happenings of John's day as well as in direct revelation of the mind and purposes of God. We must bring this into consideration when interpreting the book of Revelation. Some of the questions that must be asked whenever we consider the meaning of something written include: 1) Who is writing? 2) To whom is it written? 3) When was it written? 4) Why was it written?

I. The Need to Note the Contemporary Background

We have already answered that John wrote the book of Revelation from the island of Patmos around A.D. 96. We also have touched on the fact that this book was written specifically to the persecuted Christians of the first century as well as to all Christians throughout the church age. The purpose and theme of the book have also been examined briefly as we discussed the comfort for the Christian in seeing the overwhelming victory of Christ and His Church. However, we want to emphasize that the immediate purpose of the Apocalypse was to strengthen the hearts of Christians in the first century. We cannot understand the message for today unless we understand the specific needs of that day. Example of Kevin Simpson's class on the gospels. The gospels were written for our benefit as well as the early Church, but we can't get all of the meaning unless we understand some of their customs. These early Christians were primarily interested in the struggle of their time between light and darkness, the Church and the world, Christ and the dragon. While the book of Revelation speaks of forces that operate throughout the whole church age, they are expressed in terms of the time in which the book was written. Thus the beast is described in terms which would specifically fit Rome, but which also apply to all oppressive government throughout history.

Proposition VII. *The Apocalypse is rooted in contemporaneous events and circumstances. Its symbols should be interpreted in the light of conditions that prevailed when the book was written.*

II. The Need to Have Regard to the Whole Context of Scripture

While the contemporaneous circumstances and events supply the topsoil of the book of Revelation, the whole Bible is the subsoil. John's mind was immersed in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testament. Thus, when God gave him pictures, he viewed them in light of all Scripture. The book of Revelation must be interpreted in light of the whole Word of God as well as the external events of first century times. Example of sea-beast in Revelation 13 and beasts of Daniel 7. The logical explanation is that the composite beast of Revelation 13 refers to antichristian government in successive phases of the church age. We must always allow Scripture to interpret Scripture. There are parallel passages within the book of Revelation as well as throughout the whole New Testament. Many of the pictures are similar to thoughts and images of the Old Testament. We must then interpret the book of

Revelation based on the sacred Scriptures. (Warning: Be careful of using O.T. that has not been clearly defined or interpreted from the rest of N.T.). We must always move from the clear passages of Scripture to determine the more obscure passages, not the other way around.

Proposition VIII. *The Apocalypse is rooted in the sacred Scriptures. It should be interpreted in harmony with the teachings of the Bible.*

III. The Origin of the Book in the Mind of God.

Having looked at the topsoil of contemporaneous events and the subsoil of Scripture as a whole, we must realize that the book has its roots in the special revelation of God. God prepared John to receive the prophecy, and God gave the vision.

Proposition IX. *The Apocalypse is rooted in the mind and revelation of God. God in Christ is the real Author, and this book contains the purpose of God concerning the history of the Church.*

Prepare for Test #1

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION, THE SON OF MAN

1. The Introduction (Vs 1-3)

The Revelation is an unveiling or uncovering of the plan of God for the world. The Church has the central role in God's plan – Ephesians 3:8-12. This unveiling is communicated through six different links: God, Christ, the angel, John, the reader, and the hearer. God is the one who raised Christ, seated Him at His right hand, and gave Him sovereign rule over the whole world in the interest of the Church – I Corinthians 15:24-28. God gave His plan to Christ in order that Christ may communicate the general principles to His servants. This plan consists of the future that will shortly come to pass. Jesus, as the One Mediator (1 Timothy 2:5-6), reveals the plan to the Church. He is the glorified Minister of State who ensures that this plan will be carried out in history. The angel is the mediator for John by which he views the visions, etc. John then bears witness to all that he sees. The public reader is blessed for communicating the words of the prophecy. Finally, those who hear and obey the words are also blessed, for the time is near.

2. The Salutation and Adoration (Vs 4-6)

The book is addressed to the seven churches of Asia. These churches consist of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea (Show map). These seven churches represent the Church of Jesus Christ throughout the whole church age. Grace and peace are given from God; the Father, the Spirit, and the Son. The Father is the unchangeable eternal God who is, was, and is to come. The Holy Spirit is represented by the seven spirits who are before the throne. The completeness of God is in the Spirit who dwells in us and gives us a heavenly perspective. The Son is described as the faithful witness; ultimately, He testifies the complete nature and plan of God from the throne – (Hebrews 1:1 ff.). He is the first to proclaim light by reason of His resurrection and is the ruler of the kings of the earth – Christians. What a display of power and victory right in the salutation! Christ loves us and has not merely forgiven us from our sins but has released us from them. We are not free to sin, but free from sin! What another great picture of victory. He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to God. In the Church, Israel lives on. Every Christian is a priest and every Christian reigns with Christ in the heavenly places by faith. This is the picture that God wants us to have as we see His plan in the world.

3. The Announcement of Christ's Second Coming (Vs 7)

While the second coming is not the main point of the book, it is important in bringing comfort to the Church. The fact that Jesus is coming back in glory is the great hope of the Christian – Philippians 3:20-21, 1 John 3:1-3. He is coming with the clouds in glory to bring judgment – 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10. Every eye will see Him; the Scripture never speaks of a secret return of the Christ; there is no such thing as the rapture. All the tribes of the earth mourn over Him; all the unrepentant will be in fear and dread, wishing they could escape the day of His return. The great hope for the Christian is the great dread of the non-Christian.

4. Christ's Self-designation (Vs 8)

When Jesus says that He is the Alpha and the Omega, He designates Himself as the full revelation of God – Colossians 1:15, Hebrews 1:3, 2 Corinthians 4:4. Jesus is the Eternal Father – Isaiah 9:6-7. He asserts that He is the One who is and who was, and who is to come. The same phrase that was used to describe the Father is here used in reference to the Son. The Christ on the throne is Yahweh!

5. John's Commission to Write the Apocalypse (Vs 9-11)

John gives the common ground that he has with other Christians when he reminds them that he is a fellow partaker of the tribulation, kingdom, and perseverance which are in Christ Jesus – 1 Peter 5:9. John is in the Spirit on the Lord's Day. It was the first day of the week, the day that we celebrate the resurrection of Christ with the Lord's Supper. John is under inspiration of the Holy Spirit as he hears the voice of Christ as the sound of a trumpet. This voice commands John to write in a book what he sees and send it to the seven churches. The visions of the book of Revelation are meant for the whole Church throughout the church-age.

6. The vision of the Son of Man (Vs 12-16)

Turning, John sees seven golden lampstands and among them he sees the glorious Christ. This is the One he heard and saw in the flesh; the One whose breast he had leaned back against. This is the One that was transfigured before him on the holy mountain, but now He is different. Here the Son of Man is shown in full glory, clothed with power and awe and terror. He is wearing the clothing of a King, the robe reaching to the feet with a golden buckle across His breast. Even His head and hair communicate the majesty of a King; they are white like wool or snow – The Ancient of Days (Daniel 7:9). His eyes are like a flame of fire; He penetrates the very hearts of men – Romans 8:26-27, 1 Corinthians 2:10-11. His feet are like burnished bronze; they are glowing as they are ready to trample the wicked – Revelation 19:15. His voice is powerful like the many waters; it has the power to create and to destroy – Hebrews 12:25-26. He holds the seven stars in His right hand; He is the head of the Church – Matthew 16:18, Matthew 28:18. In His mouth He holds a two-edged sword; His words will judge on the last day – Hebrews 4:12, Revelation 19:15. His face is like the sun shining in its strength; His glory is so great that no man can behold it – 1 Timothy 6:15-16. The picture taken as a whole communicates the fact that the glorified Christ is coming back to purge His Church and to punish those that persecute the Church.

7. The Effect of the Vision on John (Vs 17-20)

When John saw Him, he fell at his feet as a dead man. However, the purpose of the vision was not to terrify John, but to comfort him. Jesus lays His right hand upon him, comforting and strengthening him. Christ then tells him not to be afraid, "I am the first and the last and the living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades." Death has no power whatsoever over the Christian. John is then instructed to write the things that he saw (the vision of the Son of Man), the things that are (the condition of the churches), and

the things which would take place after these things (the events of the future according to their general principles).

REVELATION 2,3 – THE SEVEN LAMPSTANDS

The book of Revelation is divinely tied together. You cannot understand chapters 2 and 3 unless you have read chapter 1. Chapters 2 and 3 form the setting for the rest of the book. The promises made to those who conquer are explained fully in later portions of the book.

<u>Promise</u>	<u>Chapters 2 and 3</u>	<u>Later Chapters</u>
Tree of Life	2:7	22:2,14
No harm from 2 nd death	2:11	20:14
New name	2:17	3:12,14:1,22:4,19:12
Authority over nations	2:26	12:5, 20:4
Morning star	2:28	22:16
Book of Life	3:5	13:8,17:8,20:12,21:27
New Jerusalem	3:12	21:2
Throne	3:21	17:14,20:4

The main pattern of the letters to the churches includes: the address, Christ's self-designation, commendation, condemnation, warning, exhortation, and promise. All but Laodicea have something to commend, while Smyrna and Philadelphia are the only ones exempt from condemnation. These letters describe conditions that are reoccurring throughout the church-age.

1. The letter to Ephesus (2:1-7)

Ephesus was a wealthy city famous for the temple of Diana. It was for a long time the commercial center of Asia. Paul first visited Ephesus during his second missionary journey around 52 AD and spent 3 years there on his third missionary journey. He said goodbye to the elders in 57 AD and wrote the epistle to the Ephesians somewhere between 60-63 AD. Timothy was appointed evangelist there and history records that John the Apostle spent time there after 66 AD. Thus, the church in Ephesus was more than 60 years old when the book of Revelation was written. There were some things that had gone awry in this time. Christ establishes that He is the head of the Church because false apostles had troubled Ephesus. The congregation here is praised for rejecting those false teachers and for its work, labor, and endurance. In all of this, she had not grown weary. However, she had lost her first love. The primary calling of the church is to seek and save the lost; this is the ultimate test of love for Christ. Christ warned that He would jerk the lampstand if they did not repent. He then returns to praising them for hating the works of the Nicolaitans; those that attempted to justify immoral and idolatrous practices. To those that overcome or conquer would be given something better than any food offered to idols. The conqueror gets to eat of the tree of life and live forever.

2. The Letter to Smyrna (2:8-11)

Smyrna was a rival to the city of Ephesus. It claimed to be the "First City of Asia in beauty and size." This city was known for its loyalty to Rome. Paul probably began the church during his third journey around AD 53-56 (Acts 19:10). The emphasis of Christ's

character for the church at Smyrna was the fact that He was the ever-living One. He is the One who was alive even when He was dead. He exhorts with full authority, “Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.” Jesus says that He knows their tribulation and poverty. He means extreme poverty; the Christians of Smyrna often lost employment as a result of their open confession of Christ. From an earthly standpoint, Christianity was a real sacrifice. It could mean poverty, imprisonment, or even death. The Lord reminds those that had made this sacrifice that they were rich in the things that were eternal. They were storing up treasure in heaven where neither moth nor rust destroys – Matthew 6:20. On the flip side were the Jews who had chosen to live in Smyrna because it was a place of commerce. They not only rejected the Christ but they were quick to accuse the Christians before the Romans. Jesus calls them the synagogue of Satan; they are in no way God’s chosen people. The Jews are behind the Roman persecutions, and the devil is the force behind the Jews. However, while Satan tempts the Christians, God tests and proves them. God promises that this tribulation would be only “ten days” – a short period of time. The final exhortation is for those in Smyrna to be faithful unto death. This doesn’t only mean until the time that you die, but also to remain faithful even if it costs your life. Christ guarantees that the second death will have no power over these. Christ has only positive exhortation for this congregation. Smyrna was a great light-bearer in the world.

3. The Letter to Pergamum (2:12-17)

Pergamum was located upon a huge rocky hill and was the capital of Asia-minor. The Roman god of healing was worshipped here under the emblem of a serpent. There were all sorts of pagan altars including the altar of Zeus. This would contribute to Jesus’ description of Pergamum as the place of Satan’s throne. However, what really seems to be the thrust is that Pergamum was the center of emperor-worship. Being the Roman capital of the province, there were temples dedicated to the worship of Caesar. Christians were pressured to offer incense to Caesar and declare him Lord. Thus, Antipas was put to death because of his faithful witness that Jesus is the only Lord. While the Church at Pergamum was faithful in confession of Jesus as the Christ, She seemed to neglect discipline of the members. Some in the Church thought that it was okay to participate in the immoralities common to the pagan feasts. Withdrawal from these feasts meant that you would be a social outcast. There were definite economic liabilities associated with refusal to participate. Thus, some Christians would try to justify their fellowship in these events. The reality is that certain destruction and slavery follows fellowship with demonic forces just as in the days of Balaam. If there is no Phinehas to step up and put an end to these practices in the Church, Jesus will certainly make war with the sword of His mouth. Jesus gives verbal warnings from His word, and He will destroy those who do not heed the voice of the Heavenly Prophet. The conqueror will receive the hidden manna and a white stone with a new name written on the stone. The one who overcomes will receive the fullness of Jesus. He also will receive the name of Christ with particular relevance to the inner character change of the individual.

4. The Letter to Thyatira (2:18-29)

Thyatira was located in a valley with connections to two other valleys. It became a city of trade since it was a hub of communication. Trade guilds were common in Thyatira,

somewhat like the unions of today. In that day and place, each guild had its god who was its protector. Therefore if economic success was your desire, you would have to go along with the practices of the guild. What should the Christian do? The solution by the prophetess Jezebel was to know the enemy by participation with him. Attend the feasts of the guild and participate in the immoral practices therein. You can still be a Christian, actually, you might become a better Christian. Many Christians would be deceived through this justification (and still are), but the One Who has eyes like a flame of fire will not be misled. He praises the saints for their deeds, love, faith, and perseverance, but He warns that there is need of repentance. The One whose feet are ready to trample the wicked will destroy the children with pestilence. In the end, all will know that Christ searches the minds and the hearts. Christ knows the thoughts as well as the motives behind them. Any attempts at self-justification are futile, for the Lord tests the secrets of men's hearts. Those who remain faithful have no other burden placed upon them. They need to persevere in their present course and hold fast what they have. In the future, the reward will be granted to those who oppressed by the world while maintaining a clean conscience. In the world they received their bad things, but in eternity they will get to rule with Christ (Lazarus and the rich man). The conquerors will be given the morning star as they share the symbol of authority with Christ.

5. The Letter to Sardis (3:1-6)

Sardis was situated on a hill that was nearly impregnable and in ancient times had been the proud capital of Lydia. The citizens were arrogant and thought they were invincible. The enemy came in 549 BC and 218 BC and dominated Sardis. Time and again the boastful citizens of Sardis had surprisingly faced destruction. The church in Sardis was dying spiritually. Thus, the Christ reminds them that He has the seven Spirits of God and therefore is the sole source of life. He also holds the seven stars; He has messengers to distribute the Word of Life. The congregation here had a reputation of being alive, but it was dead at the core. The majority of the body had defiled their garments. That which was to be a light set on the hill was instead undistinguishable from the darkness of the world. The church enjoyed peace from the enemies of God because they convicted no one of their sin. Jesus said that their deeds were not completed in the sight of God. They may be a great church in the eyes of men, but were of no account in the righteous judgment of God. Jesus then gives the exhortation to wake up and repent! If there were no repentance, He would come like a thief – Surprise! The physical experiences of Sardis being taken by surprise were about to be experienced in the spiritual sense by the church. While the majority was dead in the world, there were a few names who had not soiled their garments. Jesus knows us individually, whether or not we are faithful. Those known by the omniscient Christ would receive the garments of eternal glory. It is promised that their names would remain in the book of life, and that Jesus would confess their names before the Father. Confession of Christ obviously consists of deeds as well as words. The reward of great deeds is public acknowledgment by the King!

6. The Letter to Philadelphia (3:7-13)

Philadelphia was located in a valley on an important road. Its name was derived from Attalus II who was famous for his love to his brother Eumenes. Christ describes himself to the congregation in Philadelphia as He who is holy and true. False pretenses mean

nothing to He who embodies truth. Christ is the only One who holds the key of David; He has the ultimate power in the Kingdom of God. Jesus knows that the church in Philadelphia has a little power and has been faithful both to the word and name of Christ. Therefore Christ promises to open a door that no one can shut. There will be a great opportunity to put forth the gospel. Although the church here may have been small in the eyes of the world, it was great in the eyes of God. The Philadelphia congregation was faithful to keep Christ's word in the midst of the world; therefore, Christ would keep them from the period of testing. Protection from God is granted to those that do their part. Philadelphia was a great example of the Church of Jesus Christ shining in a dark world. A fourfold reward would be given: 1) Victory over Jewish accusers, 2) Safety in the hour of testing, 3) They would be made pillars in God's temple, 4) The conqueror would be given the name of God, the new Jerusalem, and the new name of Christ.

7. The Letter to Laodicea (3:14-22)

This city was located in an area of hot springs. Lukewarm water was something that citizens of Laodicea would understand. Renowned for many things, Laodicea was especially famous for its great wealth. This city was the home of bankers and millionaires; the people were rich and they knew it. This attitude had crept into the church where they boasted of their great spiritual riches. They thought that their physical wealth was an indicator of their good standing with God. However, God was disgusted with their casual attitude about righteousness. They were lukewarm – they were mediocre in what they did. Mediocrity may be the greatest killer of souls ever known. Jesus was sick to the point of vomiting them out of His mouth. Their hypocrisy was contrasted with His faithful and true witness. Jesus not only sees the hearts but declares in truth what He sees. Laodicea was neither the light of the world nor the salt of the earth. Here is a classic case of the salt losing its saltiness, and being good for nothing, not even the manure pile. The purpose of the warning of Christ is to get those in Laodicea to repent of their casual attitude. Who is more to be pitied than he who thinks that he is in good spiritual standing, but in actuality is in dire straits? What a false sense of security to be self-deceived into thinking that Christ is pleased when He is ready to vomit you up. Jesus gives advice to those in the congregation to buy from Him refined gold, white garments, and eye salve. Thankfully the Lord has a plan where those who are spiritually poor can purchase these things from Him if they so desire. The fact that Jesus gives a warning shows His love for them; “Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline...” Get a grasp of this picture: Christ is continually knocking at the door of these people who have made themselves odious to them. They have separated themselves from Him, but He still earnestly desires to dine with them (a gesture of close friendship) if they will just repent. Those who overcome will get to sit with Him on the throne in eternal fellowship.

Each of these seven letters has the exhortation for those who have ears, to hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The condition of the churches existed then; it exists today, and has the whole duration of the church age. The real question that reverberates in our ears is whether the church is being a light-bearer. In Sardis and Laodicea, the world seems to have snuffed out the light. In Ephesus, Pergamum, and Thyatira, the light is shining but is growing dim. In Smyrna and Philadelphia, the light is burning bright and

impacting the world. Is this congregation being true to our King in the midst of the world? The temptation to become worldly and deny Christ in John's day came in three areas: 1) antichristian persecution at the hands of the Jews and Romans, 2) antichristian religion or emperor worship, and 3) antichristian seduction; indulgence of the flesh in immoral feasts to ensure economic prosperity. These temptations are the same in nature today; he who has ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The church was in the world then and is today. We are to shine in the midst of the darkness that we may be overwhelming conquerors!

Prepare for test #2

REVELATION 4-7: THE SEVEN SEALS

Whenever and wherever the Church is faithful, persecution is guaranteed to follow. Not only that, but the Church is in the world and therefore suffers consequences of the world along with the world. The hard times of war, famine, pestilence, and death are experienced by the Church as well as the world. However, God uses these tribulations to purify and sanctify His Church. While on this earth, we get to experience God's footstool, but we always need to look to His throne. Chapters 4 and 5 of Revelation bring us a vision of the throne from which the whole universe is ruled. When suffering persecution in this world, we need to see our King on His throne. As we examine chapters 4-7, we get to view trials and tribulations from the perspective of the glorious, heavenly throne.

1. The Vision of the Throne (4:1-6)

John beholds a vision wherein he sees a door standing open in heaven. He is then asked to come up to the throne. We get a true understanding of history only when we view all things, including our tribulations, from the perspective of the throne! The various objects that John sees in his vision comprise one main picture and teach one main lesson. View diagram on (page 28 of notes) page 83 of Hendriksen's "More than Conquerors." These chapters do not give us a picture of heaven; rather, they show the entire universe from the viewpoint of heaven. The main point is that the throne rules over all. In order to establish this point, the word "throne" is used seventeen times in chapters 4 and 5. John sees the Father sitting on the throne in all of His glory. His holiness is communicated through the white jasper. God's holiness expresses itself in judgments characterized by the bloody red of the sardius. In accordance with God's judgments, lightning flashes and thunder peals come forth from the throne. However, there is a rainbow around the throne, which communicates that the storm is over for the Christian. Christ has stood in our place, paid the price for our sins, and has declared us to be holy. We can stand before God with confidence, and thus receive the aspect of the throne – all things work together for good for the Christian – Rom 8:28.

2. The Elders and the Living Ones (4:7-11)

John sees twenty-four elders sitting on twenty-four thrones surrounding the main throne. These twenty-four elders represent God's people throughout history. There were twelve patriarchs – the foundation of the nation of Israel, and twelve apostles – the foundation of the new Israel, the Church. These elders are wearing holy garments and crowns of victory. They are mentioned first, because they are the most important of all of God's creatures. However, the main point of them in this picture is that they are constantly worshipping the One on the throne. The One on the throne is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Father is seated upon the throne in the true Holy of Holies symbolizing His sovereignty. The seven lamps of fire before the throne (also in the original tabernacle – Exodus 25:37) represent the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. The sea of glass (the laver of the tabernacle) signifies the cleansing of Jesus Christ for those who have been immersed in His name. (1 Peter 1:2 touches on the work of the Father, Son, and Spirit). There are also four living

creatures before the throne, one for each side of the throne. These living creatures are obviously cherubim (Ezekiel chapters 1 and 10). While some of the details differ, which we would expect in symbolism, the overall similarity cannot be mistaken. In both the cases of Revelation and Ezekiel, there are four living creatures with many eyes whose faces are compared to that of man, lion, ox, and eagle. In both cases, there is fire moving among them and a rainbow around them. Cherubim guard the holy things of God and were present in the physical holy of holies. Here we find them guarding the throne in the true Most Holy Place. These cherubim are a special group of angels guarding the throne. They are described here to show the awesome majesty of the throne of God. The twenty-four elders and the cherubim signify all the redeemed and all the angels praising God in worship before His throne.

3. The Sealed Scroll Taken by the Lamb (5:1-7)

In the right hand of God the Father lays a scroll or book that is sealed up with seven seals. This scroll represents God's great, eternal plan consisting of His purpose for the universe throughout history. The fact that the scroll is sealed means that God's plan is both unrevealed and unexecuted. If the scroll remains closed, then God's plan will not be brought to completion. Therefore, to break the seals means not only to reveal God's plan, but to carry it out. In other words, when the book is opened, the universe is then governed in the interest of the Church. John began to weep because no one in the whole universe was able to open the scroll or take a peak inside of it. One of the elders pointed out that the Lion from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, had conquered in order to open the book and the seals. Through His crucifixion and resurrection, Jesus conquered and won the right to rule the universe in accordance with God's plans – Colossians 2:15, Ephesians 1:20-21. John looks up expecting to see a Lion, but instead sees a Lamb as if slain. Christ is both the Lion and the Lamb; He is both the conqueror and the great sacrifice. This Lamb has seven horns – symbolizing complete authority, and seven eyes – signifying the fullness of the Holy Spirit. The Lamb takes the scroll out of the hand of the One on the throne. This refers to Christ's ascension and coronation, whereby He received the Kingdom. From now on, the throne is described as that of God and of the Lamb. When Christ ascended, the Father didn't leave the throne; rather, they are both there as One. With the ascension of Christ, there is a new era both in heaven and on earth. The world is now ruled for the benefit of Christ's Kingdom, His Church.

4. The Adoration of the Lamb (5:8-14)

As soon as the Lamb takes the book, there is a great expression of praise from everyone that is before the throne. First, the elders and cherubim fall down with song and prayer. They sing a new song because never before had such deliverance been accomplished, or such great honor bestowed. Christ has received His reward for His suffering and death. This is a song about redemption by those who have been redeemed. The kingdom of priests is composed of those from every possible group on earth; every tribe, tongue, people, and nation. First, the elders sing because they have experienced salvation. Then the angels sing, followed by the entire universe with all its creatures. God through the Lamb governs the whole creation. All things must glorify God; His sovereign will must be carried out in this world. The throne

rules and the Lamb reigns. What then do Christians have to fear through persecution and tribulation?

5. The Four Riders and Their Horses (6:1-8)

The seals described in chapter 6 signify times of trials and tribulations. The first four seals contain four horses and their riders. The horse generally communicates strength, terror, warfare, and conquest. A different cherub introduces each of these horsemen.

- a. The White Horse – The first horseman described is on a white horse going forth *conquering and to conquer*. Immediate context as well as the whole context of Revelation leads us to see this rider as the Christ. The evidence for this position consists of the following: 1) Immediate context of Revelation 5:5 speaks of the Lamb who has *conquered*. 2) The horse is white, the color of which communicates that which is heavenly and holy. 3) The rider receives a crown. Christ is pictured throughout the book of Revelation as King and is shown wearing a crown in the 14th verse of chapter 14. 4) Every time that the word “conquer” is used in the book of Revelation except for twice, it refers to Christ or His people. (The exceptions are found in 11:7, 13:7). 5) The parallel passage of Revelation 19:11 clearly tells us that the rider on the white horse is Christ. 6) The fact that Christ is the conqueror is in line with the whole theme of the book of Revelation – victory! 7) Whenever the conquering Christ appears in history, the sword is sure to follow (Matthew 10:34). In verses 2 and 3 of chapter 6, a red horseman who receives a sword follows the white horseman. 8) There are passages in the Old Testament bearing Christ in the same light – e.g. Psalm 45, Zechariah 1:8. Upon viewing these points of evidence, we can conclude that the rider on the white horse is Christ. He is both conquering now and His cause continues to move forward. Our Lord is riding victoriously! Thus, we would expect the following riders to be subservient to the first. We would expect that Christ would use the persecutions of the wicked world to refine His Church. As in the day of Christ’s crucifixion, again Satan is thwarted by his own agents. That which was intended to destroy the Church ends up strengthening and furthering God’s Kingdom. What confidence we get when we view God’s unfolded plan from the perspective of the throne!
- b. The Red Horse – The second rider is given a great sword as he goes forth on a red horse. The evidence points to the red horse and its rider symbolizing persecution of the church. The following information is given to support this meaning: 1) Immediate context points toward persecution. As mentioned above, the sword always follows the Christ. 2) The Scripture here tells us that men will “slaughter” or “slay” one another. This is not the general term that John uses for warfare. Every place except for once, John uses this term to describe Christ or Christians (Revelation 13:3 is the exception). The Scripture speaks of the Lamb that

was “slain” as well as the souls that had been “slain” for the Word of God. Religious persecution seems to be the point rather than warfare. 3) When the fifth seal is opened, John sees the souls of those who have been slain. It makes sense that those being slain under the second seal would correspond with those that have been slain under the fifth seal. 4) This book was specifically written to those that were being put to death for the sake of Christ. Their immediate problem was persecution more than warfare. The conclusion that we reach is that the rider on the red horse symbolizes persecution. The red horse always follows the white horse. The rider is not one particular person, but is indicative of governing principles of history. The world is always persecuting the Church. Let us remember, though, that all things are in the hand of God. The Lamb is reigning on the throne.

- c. The black horse – the third rider is given a pair of scales in his hand as he rides on his black horse. This signifies economic hardship – a further description is a full day’s wages for enough wheat for a person for one day. Barley is available at one-third the price, whereby a man could barely support the food necessities of his family. Many view this horse and rider as indicative of famine, but there are two reasons why this is not probable. First, the prices, though high, are not famine prices. Second, you can get as much wheat as you want if you have the money. Rather than famine, it seems that a certain class of people is going to have a tough time economically. The oil and wine are not damaged; in other words, the fineries of life are readily available to those in a certain economic standing. The rich are full of life’s comforts and pleasures, but the poor can hardly make ends meet. This seems to indicate that Christians will have a tough time economically. We saw that this principle was manifested in the letters to the churches, and we see that it is true throughout history. James deals with this very issue in the second chapter of his book. “Is it not the rich who oppress you and personally drag you into court? Do they not blaspheme the fair name by which you have been called?” (James 2:6b-7). Later in Revelation 13 it is said that unless you have the mark of the beast, you will be unable to buy or sell. Economic woes are to be expected for the Christian. It was true of Lazarus the poor man, it was true of the first century church, and it is true throughout the history of the church in the world. While the red horse described those who were slaughtered for their faith, the black horse symbolizes those who suffer poverty and hardship for Christ. The heavenly perspective shows that God uses these things to further His kingdom. Every Christian must fully trust in the Lord and depend upon Him for provision.
- d. The pale horse – the last rider is seated on a pale horse, a horse that is the color of death. We might say it looked like death warmed over. This horse symbolizes that which is common to everyone who enters this earthly realm. While there are hardships that are peculiar to Christians,

there are general difficulties that every human being gets to face. These difficulties of disease and death are shared by the Christian due simply to our existence in the physical universe. Authority is *given* to Death and Hades to kill a fourth part of the earth with the sword, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts. The fourth seal describes four universal woes. Note that this seal is not a repeat of previous seals, but describes woes to which every living body may be subject while here on earth. This time the word for sword signifies war; war between nations throughout the entire history of the church in the world. Famine is clearly mentioned as another woe to which the world is subject. Pestilence or disease hit Christians and non-Christians alike. Wild beasts also do not distinguish who they kill. All four of these woes are general in character and impact believers along with the rest of humanity. God is still in control. Health problems and death force people to reflect on a resurrection. There is One who holds the keys of Death and of Hades. Our Sovereign Lord uses these woes to sanctify His Church and to further expand His kingdom.

6. The Cry of the Martyrs (6:9-11)

Upon opening the fifth seal, John saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the Word of God and their testimony. In the vision, the picture is compared with the tabernacle of old. The bronze altar was the altar of burnt offering where the blood of sacrificed animals was poured out (Leviticus 4:7). Under the true altar in the true tabernacle is shown the blood of the saints who have been slain for Christ. (This helps me understand the end of Ezekiel; sacrifices that continue to be made under the New Covenant. Romans 12:2, Colossians 1:24). These saints have offered their lives as a sacrifice as they hold to the word of God; they have been martyred for Christ. The Greek word “marturion” simply means witness or one who bears testimony. Martyrs are those who have died for their testimony. These souls cry out for justice and vengeance. The purpose for desiring vengeance is not a personal vendetta, but rather that God’s sovereign rule be made known. Those upon this earth who reject God and persecute His body on earth deserve the fiery judgment of hell. The souls of those who have been slain for Christ are then given white robes and told to rest until the sacrifice of souls is complete. God’s plan is being fulfilled through the testimony of His saints. When the testimony is complete, the day of final judgment can come.

7. The Final Judgment (6:12-17)

The sixth seal introduces the day of judgment under the picture of a crashing universe and a terror-stricken world. The world in general is seized with dread during this final outpouring of the wrath of God upon mankind. Knowing that the number 666 is the number of man, it is interesting that the judgment day is described under the sixth seal, affecting six objects of creation, and impacting six classes of men. The six objects which are described include the following: 1) an earthquake, 2) black sun, 3) bloody moon, 4) falling stars, 5) the sky rolled back as a scroll, and 6) the

displacement of mountains and islands. The purpose of the picture is to show that there will be terror upon the earth for all of the wicked. The wicked are grouped into six classes of people upon the earth: 1) kings, 2) great men, 3) commanders, 4) the rich, 5) the strong, 6) every slave and freeman (all of the lower class). The entire godless world is seized with fear and begs for death. The Face of the glorified Christ will be a terror to those who are not His. The saints will be confident and the unconverted will be shrinking back in shame at His coming. Final and complete punishment will not be rendered until judgment day, but prior judgments are sent as warnings to those who persecute God's people. Throughout history the seals of persecution give rise to the trumpets of judgment. We should view all world happenings from the perspective of this principle.

8. The Sealed Multitude (7:1-17)

The trumpets of judgment which come out of the seventh seal are described in chapters 8 and 9. Everything seems to be ready for the execution of these judgments, so why the interlude? The four angels are ready to carry out their mission, but another angel ascends with the seal of God and halts the judgments. The servants of God must first be sealed upon their foreheads. The woes of judgment are for the wicked only. God's seal protects the Christian, marks ownership of the Christian, and certifies that his character is genuine. The sons of God are sealed on their forehead; Christians have been given the very mind of Christ. The first Adam ushered in sin (the number 666, failure upon failure upon failure). The second Adam, Christ, brings forth life and perfection; the very character of God. The number of those sealed is 144,000. This number represents all the redeemed of God under the Old and New Testaments. The twelve tribes of Israel represent God's people under the first dispensation, while the twelve apostles represent the Church in the last days. Multiplying 12 x 12 gives us 144, symbolic of God's people throughout history. (Along the same lines, 144 cubits is the literal height of the wall in Revelation 21:17). Multiplying 144 x 1000 (10 x 10 x 10, the perfect cube) gives us the full number of those sealed. This is a picture of spiritual Israel, God's people on earth. The Church of Jesus Christ is sealed, so Hallelujah, let the judgments come. Next, John views the eternal triumphant Church in the immediate presence of God and His throne. There is complete fellowship with the Lamb for all eternity. One of the elders asks John who comprises this multitude. John then returns the question and the elder responds. The glorious multitude is the Church that has come out of the great tribulation. Remember that the setting of these chapters is the Church in the midst of tribulation. Praise God, Christians do not remain in tribulation forever. The saints come out of their trials. The great tribulation includes all of the persecutions and trials of the Church throughout history. Those whose robes have been made white in the blood of the Lamb get to spend eternity before the throne. The saints worship God in His very presence and have the Lamb as their shepherd. The water of life is theirs to drink forever as Christians commune with the Holy Spirit for eternity. God wipes away every tear from the eyes of the victors. All of the trials, tribulation, and persecution are no longer remembered because of the great joy and sweet fellowship of the throne. In chapters 4-7, God paints us a picture of history from the viewpoint of the

throne. All is worthwhile, yes, can even be considered joyous when given the perspective of the throne. The Church needs trials to be perfected, and the pain of those trials is not even worthy to be compared with the joy of the glory that awaits him who overcomes.

Diagram #1

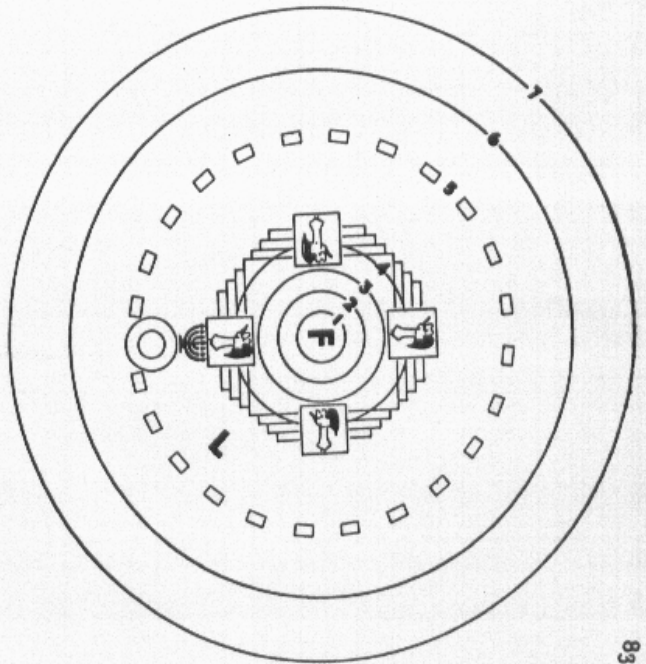
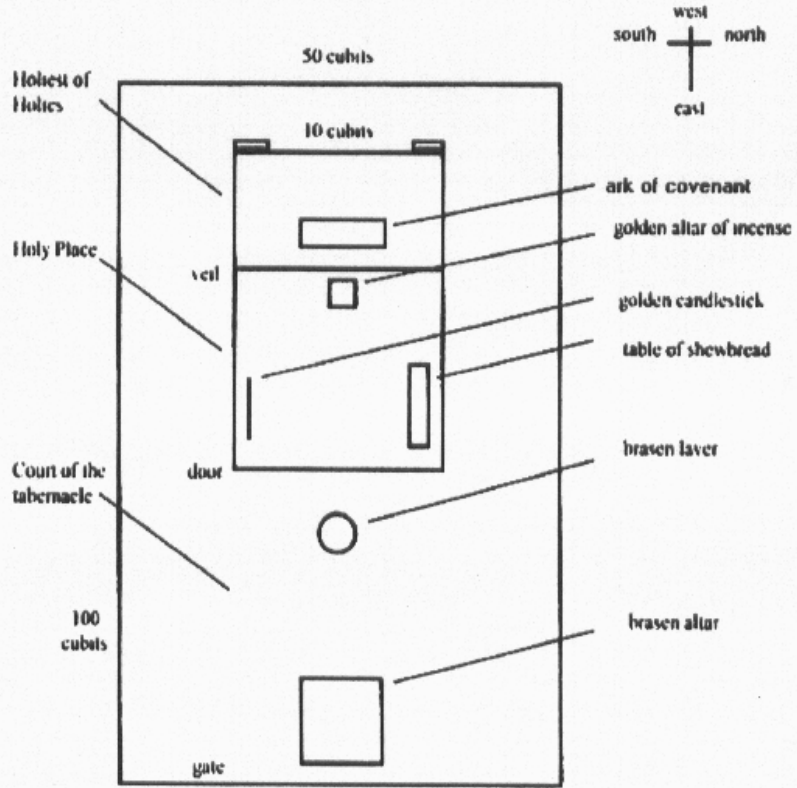


Diagram of the vision described in Revelation 4 and 5:

THE UNIVERSE GOVERNED BY THE THRONE

The vision consists of one single picture and teaches one main lesson. The square at the centre represents the throne with steps leading up to it. In the centre of the throne sits the Father (Rev. 4: 2). The innermost circle 1 represents the sparkling white diamond (4: 3); circle 2 the sardius (4: 3); circle 3 the emerald rainbow (4: 3); circle 4 the four living ones or cherubim (4: 6); circle 5 the twenty-four thrones with their elders (4: 4); circle 6 the many angels (5: 11); and circle 7 all other creatures in the entire universe (5: 13). The seven lambs and the sea of glass are also before the throne (4: 5,6). The Lamb (L) stands between the throne and the living ones on the one side, and the twenty-four elders on the other (5: 6). But the Lamb later advances to the throne (5: 7), and is now seated on it with the Father (22: 1).

The throne rules over all. Take this lesson to heart!

REVELATION 8-11: THE SEVEN TRUMPETS

The whole view of Church history has already been shown from two different perspectives in the book of Revelation. In chapters 1-3, we saw the glorified Son of man walking among the seven lampstands. We viewed Christ as the light of the world shining through his church. We pondered some of the trials that the Church must withstand in order to be victorious. Antichristian persecution, antichristian religion, and antichristian seduction are directed from the world toward the church throughout the whole church age. Yet those who are victorious will be greatly rewarded on the day of final reckoning. In chapters 4-7, we were once again taken back to the beginning, to the ascension of our Lord. The door of heaven was opened and we watched the consummation of the ages, the coronation of King Jesus. He took the scroll out of the right hand of the Father on the throne and broke the seals. Our Lord began the open declaration and execution of God's plan for His church and the world. Under the first seal, we saw Christ on the white horse going forth conquering and to conquer. We glimpsed the red horse of persecution following the white horse. The seals describe persecutions that the Church must endure along with all tribulation. We saw that the slain souls underneath the bronze altar would be avenged. While the final judgment is reserved for the last day, even now seals of persecution are followed by trumpets of judgment. However, the Church was first sealed against all harm before these judgments are introduced. The Church was shown to be triumphant over the great tribulation and gets to spend eternity in fellowship with the Lamb. Now all is ready for the seven trumpets of judgment as pictured in chapters 8-11.

The trumpets of judgment do not single out specific events, but show series of disasters that occur repetitively throughout the church age. The trumpets refer to calamities that may take place any day throughout the world. The trumpets run concurrently with the seals. The trumpets of judgment come upon the world in retribution for their persecution of the church. But the purpose of these judgments is to call the ungodly to repentance. These woes communicate God's initial judgments. Remember that trumpets warn while bowls pour out. The function of the trumpets of judgment is to warn the wicked to turn from their ungodly ways. Notice that the trumpets impact all parts of the universe; nowhere can the wicked find refuge. However, there is an order to the sounding of the trumpets. The first four affect the wicked in the physical realm, while the last three bring spiritual agony. In the last three, demonic forces and hell itself are turned loose. Remember that these judgments fall upon the wicked world that crucified our Lord and persecutes the saints. Christians are sealed and cannot be harmed by the judgments.

1. The Seventh Seal (8:1-6)

When Christ opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. Why was there silence? It seems that the silence prepares us for the terror of the judgments that are to follow. The silence makes the sound of the trumpets all the more noticeable. The silence also is consistent with the character of God; He does

not send judgment without full consideration of its effects. After this silence, John sees seven angels standing before God and seven trumpets given to them. Then he sees another angel come and stand before the golden altar of incense. Much incense is given to this angel that he might add it to all the prayers of the saints. This incense represents that which the Holy Spirit does in conjunction with the work of Jesus as our great High Priest. Remember that on the Day of Atonement under the Old Covenant, the incense had to be placed inside the Holy of Holies so that the high priest could be in the presence of God without being killed. In the same way, our prayers must have the intercession of Jesus in order that God can hear them. (Hebrews 7:25, Romans 8:26-27, 1 John 2:1-2, John 14:16). After the incense from the angel, the smoke of the incense along with the prayers of the saints goes directly to God. The Lord on the throne sees the sufferings, hears the thanksgivings and requests of His Church that is in tribulation. Now that the censer is empty of incense, it is filled with fire from the golden altar and thrown upon the earth. In other words, God has heard the prayers of His children, and the trumpets of judgments are His answer to them. Now the seven angels prepare to sound the trumpets.

2. The First Four Trumpets (8:7-13)

The first angel sounds his trumpet and brings forth a storm of fire and hail mixed with blood. A third of the earth with a third of the trees and all the grass is burned up. This seems to indicate that the persecutors of the Lord's Church will be afflicted with all sorts of disasters on land. These are thrown upon the earth from heaven above. God uses these to judge the world for their treatment of the Church.

The second angel trumpets and John sees something like a mountain ablaze thrown into the sea. Our Lord not only uses calamities on the land to judge men, but He also uses the sea against them. We should view all catastrophes in this light. Again, we see that a part of the sea becomes blood.

The third angel sounds his trumpet and a fiery star falls from heaven. It falls on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters. The message is that God will use everything in His creation as instruments against the enemies of the Church. Nowhere will those who persecute the Church find real rest or enjoyment. We need to remember that all disasters are the act of God. These judgments are God's warning voices. Wormwood or great sorrow is intended by God to turn people to repentance.

The fourth angel blasts his trumpet and a third of the sun, moon, and stars are struck. God is willing to use every force in the whole universe to carry out His judgments upon the wicked. Whether you are part of the lower class or one of the great men in this world, certain events of this world are beyond control. The best-laid plans of man come to ruin whenever God wants to send a warning judgment.

Four angels have sounded and there is a temporary break. John views an eagle flying in midheaven crying out, "Woe, woe, woe ... because of the remaining blasts of the

trumpet of the three angels which are about to sound.” The message is clear: the three remaining blasts are going to be worse than the first four.

3. The Fifth and Sixth Trumpets (9:1-21)

When the fifth angel trumpets, John sees a star that has fallen from heaven to earth. John then sees that the key of the bottomless pit is given to this angel. Hendriksen believes this to be Satan who fell from heaven like lightning. However, Revelation 20 views an angel coming down out of heaven with a key to the same pit in his hand. In chapter 20, the angel binds the dragon and throws him into the bottomless pit and seals it over him. It doesn't seem to make sense that Satan could be sealed in the abyss and have a key to it. We know that it is Jesus who holds the key to death and to Hades. We know that the demons mentioned in Luke chapter 8 asked Jesus not to send them to the abyss. The angel who holds this key must be Christ or an angel to whom Christ has given this key. It is true that the angel opens the shaft of the abyss and lets out demonic forces and influences to torment men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. This is consistent with 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12. God allows the forces of Satan to work in a limited fashion upon the earth. Under the symbolism of a locust plague, God shows John devilish influences operating in the hearts and lives of wicked men. These locusts do not affect the landscape; rather, they harm those men without the seal of God. The picture that is given to John consists of locusts like horses prepared for battle with gold-like crowns on their heads. They also had faces like men, hair like women, teeth like lions, breastplates like iron, wings sounding like chariots, tails like scorpions, and stings. When we view this picture as a whole, we see that it is a true representation of the powers of darkness in the souls of the wicked. There is not a much better picture that communicates men in such torment that they wish for death and cannot find it. These locusts signify the demonic forces that rob men of all light. The king of these locusts is the angel of the abyss whose name is Abaddon or Apollyon. This is clearly Satan, the one who brings about death and destruction (Hebrews 2:14, John 10:10). The entire picture communicates one idea: death and destruction, the work of Satan. The first woe is past, yet two come.

The sixth angel now sounds his trumpet. The same powers of darkness that brought about destruction in the hearts of men now are loosed to kill men. The sixth trumpet describes war throughout history. Under the fourth seal, war was mentioned as a tribulation, which the saints must endure with the rest of the world. Here, in the vision of the trumpets, war is described as a warning punishment for unbelievers. From the altar of incense, we saw the prayers ascending to heaven. Here we see the answer to these prayers coming from the four horns of the golden altar. Four angels who had been bound at the great Euphrates (representing Assyria, Babylon, the wicked world) are now released. As God permits them to carry out war, He gives a warning voice to the wicked. War is also included in God's plan; He has the hour and day and month and year planned. John now sees the armies on the field of battle. There are two hundred million horsemen, indicating a tremendous host. These armies kill one-third of mankind.

The general meaning of these trumpets is clear. From the time of Christ's ascension, the Lord will repetitively punish those who persecute His Church. He will deal out retribution covering all aspects of life, both physical and spiritual. The blood of the martyrs is precious, and the prayers of the saints are heard. Foolish men continue to sin against God's law in spite of the warnings of judgment. The persecuting world becomes the impenitent world. This failure to repent brings about the outpouring of the bowls of wrath as well as the final judgment.

4. The Angel With the Little Book (10:1-11)

In order to announce the final judgment, another angel appears. He comes down out of heaven planting one foot on the earth and the other on the sea. He is a strong angel with a description that is very closely related to that of the glorified Christ. He has in his hand a little book that is open. This angel cries out with a loud voice as when a lion roars. Why does he stand upon the sea and the land and let out such a roar? His message concerns the whole universe and must be heard by everyone. In answer to the shout of the angel, the seven thunders bring forth their voices. John is about to write down the words of the seven thunders when he hears a voice from heaven telling him not to record them. The meaning of the unrecorded thunders is that we will never know all the factors that determine the future. We understand the lampstands, seals, trumpets, bowls, and etc. but there are other agencies at work in the universe. Thus we should be careful about predictions of the future; we could be missing something very important.

The angel now raises his right hand to heaven and swears that there shall no longer be any delay. The mystery of God with respect to the close of history in final judgment is about to be finished. Now the final judgment can come! We expect the next sentence to read, "And the seventh angel sounded his trumpet." We expect a description of judgment day, but it is not introduced for another chapter. Just as between the sixth and seventh seals there is an interlude describing the victory of the Church, there is a pause between the sixth and seventh trumpets. Again, the suffering and final victory of the Church must be communicated so that Christians can rejoice when judgments are rendered upon this world. The certain character of the final judgment becomes very clear when it is shown that the world not only refuses to listen to the warning voices of the trumpets but also rejects the testimony of the "two witnesses." So is there really a delay? The insert of information from 10:8 – 11:13 is not a chronological description of events happening between the sixth and seventh trumpets. Rather, it is a communication of the church age from the viewpoint of the suffering, power, task, and final victory of Christ's Church.

John is now told to go and take the little book out of the angel's hand. The angel tells him to eat it, that it will be sweet in his mouth and bitter in his stomach. Again, we see the point that the gospel is sweet, but that persecution always follows the proclamation of it. The meaning is that those who digest the message of the gospel must experience both its sweetness that comes from personal application and the

suffering that comes from sharing it with others. This suffering for Christ's sake purifies us and produces endurance in us that we can continue to carry out the mission of evangelism. John is then told that he must prophesy again concerning many peoples and nations and tongues and kings. (This is seen specifically in chapter 17).

5. The Measuring of the Temple (11:1,2)

Revelation chapter 11 gives us a picture of the "bitter" experiences that the Church withstands as a result of preaching the "sweet" message. John is given a reed and told to measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship in the temple. He is told not to measure the court outside the temple. Why this measuring? Examining the context along with the parallel passage of chapter 21 and O.T. usage, we conclude that measuring the temple simply means to set it apart from that which is profane. The temple is accepted and the court is rejected. John sees this temple in a vision. Throughout the book of Revelation, we have seen imagery that is associated with the Old Testament temple. Everything from the bronze altar, the laver, the golden altar of incense, and now the courtyard is pictured from the physical temple to communicate spiritual truths. John is told to measure the part of the temple that contains the Holy place and the Holy of Holies, but to reject the outside court. John and his readers would have been familiar with Herod's temple although it had been destroyed some 25 years previously. The court of the Gentiles is to be rejected. Outside this court lies the city of Jerusalem, which also will be overrun by the nations. Let us see this vision clearly. John views earthly Jerusalem with its earthly temple and then measures the inner sanctuary while rejecting the outside court. The holy city, Jerusalem, along with the outer court is trampled upon by the unbelieving for forty-two months.

Now that we have taken the picture as a whole, we ask, what does it mean? The temple or sanctuary clearly symbolizes the true Church. (Here, as in Ezekiel 38:10, the Church is pictured as being the center of the world). All who worship in spirit and in truth are set apart and made holy. True Christians are protected from the judgments that are being loosed upon the world. But this protection does not extend to the court. In other words, not everyone claiming to be a Christian gets to avoid the judgments of God. In the vision, the nations trample upon the courtyard, so the world tramples those who do not worship in spirit and in truth. The world invades the false church and takes possession of it. Remember the seed sown among the thorns; the worries and riches and pleasures of this life choke it out. This trampling by the nations will take place for forty-two months, a symbol for the whole church age. (We will discuss this time frame in more detail later in chapters 11, 12 and 13). A few quick notes to support this conclusion: 1) The Church is called the temple of God throughout the N.T. (1 Corinthians 3:16,17, 2 Corinthians 6:16, Ephesians 2:21, etc.). 2) When John is told to leave out the court, he is literally told to cast it out. This is a clear reference to those who are thrown out of the Church, whether excommunicated here or only in heaven. 3) The city of Jerusalem is symbolic for the wicked world as seen in verse 8 of this same chapter.

6. The Two Witness (11:3-14)

Now that we understand the foundation of chapter 11, it is not too difficult to understand the main point of the rest of the chapter. The Church is now pictured as two witnesses. (Difference between Hendriksen's viewpoint and mine). These witnesses represent the militant Church bearing witness by means of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit (John 5:39, Acts 5:32). The Church will carry on its work of evangelism for forty-two months or twelve hundred and sixty days (also equivalent to "time, times, and half a time" or 3 1/2 years). This period is the Church age, from Christ's ascension almost until judgment day. The forty-two months well describes the siege of a city, while the 1260 days represents the day-to-day prophesying (evangelism) of the church. The Church preaches repentance, which is symbolized by the wearing of sackcloth. Christ's Church is pictured here in a few different ways. 1) The two olive trees and two lampstands are pictures taken directly from Zechariah chapter 4. Remember that in chapters 2 and 3 of the book of Revelation, the Church was represented as lampstands. The Church is the only means by which the light of the Word and the light of the Holy Spirit really shine. In Zechariah chapter 4, the lampstand is said to be the Word of the Lord as administered by the Holy Spirit (seven lamps with seven spouts – the eyes of the Lord moving throughout the face of the earth). The two olive trees in Zechariah 4 are said to be the Lord's two anointed ones. They seem to be Joshua the high priest as well as Zerubbabel of the tribe of Judah. Both of these anointed ones are fulfilled in the anointing of Jesus Christ, the Branch, who is both High Priest and King. The Church is described as the body of Christ, for we fulfill His mission on earth. 2) Just as the fire of judgment and condemnation came from the mouth of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 5:14), so this comes from the Church when necessary. Just as fire came from heaven to torch those coming to arrest Elijah, so those wishing to do harm to true ministers of the Lord will be harmed (2 Timothy 4:14). The message that saves also condemns (John 3:17-21). We must understand the authority that has been given to the Church of Jesus Christ. Elijah prayed and shut the heavens, Moses turned the water to blood, the Church that is carrying out Christ's mission can pray and God will answer. When the Church is true to the Word of God, the judgments of the Church are the judgments of Heaven (Matthew 18:18, 19).

However, this gospel age does come to an end. The beast that is loosed for a short time and comes up out of the abyss will kill the witness of the Church. Just before the second coming of Christ, the corpse of the Church (the smothering of public proclamation), will lie in the street of the world, represented by earthly Jerusalem. In the midst of the world, the public voice of the Church is dead. The world doesn't even bother to bury the bodies as they celebrate their death. Crazy world! The corpse begins to stir, the breath of God comes into it, and the witnesses stand on their feet. The Church ascends to heaven and the enemies behold it. The summary of the history of the Church has taken us to judgment day and beyond. An earthquake that fells a tenth of the city and kills seven thousand people symbolizes the events leading up to the judgment day for the world. Those who remain alive are terrified and give glory to God. In other words, they acknowledge God's power. Now all is ready for

the final judgment. In spite of all the trumpets of warning, the world did not repent. Instead, the world has rejected the testimony of the Church and has silenced the voice of the two witnesses. The final reckoning must come – the third woe comes quickly.

7. The Seventh Trumpet (11:15-19)

The seventh angel sounds his trumpet and the final judgment is introduced. The angels sing as they declare the dominion of Jesus Christ over the world. God always reigns, but that fact is not evident to the world until the Day of Judgment (Acts 17:30-31, Hebrews 2:8). Sometimes it appears that Satan is the ultimate ruler, but on that final day it will be apparent to all that Jesus Christ is Lord. After the angels sing, the twenty-four elders, representing God's people of both O.T. and N.T., bow before God. The description of Jesus Christ here is: "the Almighty, who are and who were." Notice that it is no longer the One who is, who was, and who is to come. Now Christ has come and is on the throne with God the Father. God's wrath has finally been revealed in full on judgment day. Heaven is opened and God is fully revealed. The Church has full fellowship with Christ and the world experiences God's complete wrath.

Prepare for test #3

REVELATION 12-14: THE CHRIST VS. THE DRAGON AND HIS ALLIES

As in each of the preceding sections, once again we return to the beginning of the Church age and examine events that take us from the first coming of Christ unto His second coming. In this section, we are clearly taken back to Christ's birth and ascension. This particular vision closes with judgment day as the Christ holds a sharp sickle in His hand in order to reap the final harvest. While chapters 12-14 cover the entire Church age just as previous sections, they also begin the second major division of the book of Revelation. The main antagonists of chapters 12-22 are introduced in this portion of the book. These leading characters include the dragon, the sea-beast, the earth-beast, Babylon, and the men having the mark of the beast. The rest of the book of Revelation describes in detail the fall of these antichristian forces that are pictured in chapters 12-14.

The theme of the first major section was the victory of Christ and His Church over Satan. This theme is continued in the second major section as the background of the struggle is shown. Chapters 12-22 show clearly that the combat between the Church and the world is the outward manifestation of the great war between Christ and Satan. Chapter 12 first pictures the dragon intending to destroy the Christ. Upon failing in this regard, he then attacks the woman who brought forth the Christ. Still unsuccessful, he wages war against the rest of the woman's seed.

1. The Woman, the Child and the Dragon (12:1-6)

Verses 1-6 take us into heaven to show us what drives the battle on earth. John sees a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon as her footstool, and having a crown of twelve stars. She is in pain because she is about to give birth to a male child. Suddenly John sees in front of the woman a ferocious dragon with seven crowned heads and ten horns. This dragon stands in front of the woman so that he might devour the child as soon as he is born. The woman gives birth to a son who is to rule the nations with a rod of iron. Before the dragon can kill the child, the child is caught up to God and to the throne. Upon recognizing that destruction of the male child is impossible, the dragon then turns his wrath upon the woman. However, the woman flees into the wilderness where God has provided nourishment for 1260 days.

Now that we have taken the picture as a whole, we ask, what does it mean?

There are three characters that we must define in order to arrive at the proper meaning. First, there is the glorious woman. This woman symbolizes the Church, both Old and New Testament. She is the Israel of the Old Covenant at first (as symbolized by the crown of twelve stars) and the spiritual Israel of the New Covenant at last. Israel of old was poorly esteemed by the nations around her, yet God viewed her as His chosen people. The nation of Israel had a miraculous birth and God greatly honored her in the midst of the arrogant nations. In a much greater sense, the Church may seem like nothing to the mighty of the world, but the heavenly picture is that of a glorious bride. Secondly, there is the child whom the woman bore. This child obviously denotes the Christ. He is described as the One who is to rule the nations with a rod of iron. This is a direct

quotation from Psalm 2:9 which clearly prophesies of the Christ. Also, the Scriptures often speak of the Christ as being born of a woman, which is the picture we receive from chapter 12. The final character that is shown here is the dragon. This dragon, later called the serpent of old, is obviously representative of Satan. His seven crowned heads are symbolic of his world dominion. Remember that in Revelation, the number seven signifies completeness. Satan has full authority in this realm (John 14:30, Ephesians 2:2, Ephesians 6:11-12). These crowns are not crowns of victory but of arrogated authority. The ten horns symbolize the power of destruction that Satan holds. When Satan rebelled, he drew with him quite a force of evil spirits as shown by his tail sweeping away a third of the stars of heaven.

Now that we have a clear definition of the characters of the picture, we can study the main thought. The main point is that Satan is constantly engaged in warfare hoping to destroy the Christ. This war between Satan and Christ is shown throughout the Old Testament. It is interesting to examine a brief outline of the Old Testament from this perspective.

- a. The Initial Promise (Genesis 3:15). Revelation 12 obviously has its foundation on this verse. The same characters appear in both, and the same point is made. The serpent of Genesis 3 is the dragon of Revelation 12, while the seed of woman is now the male child.
- b. From Seth to the Flood. After the death of Abel by Cain, Seth is born to replace the loss of Abel. The family of Seth is chosen as the family from which the Messiah will be born. Satan turns his attention to these “sons of God” to tempt them to marry the “daughters of men.” However, there is one family that stands firm – the family of Noah. In this one family, God’s plan for the birth of Christ is continued.
- c. From the Flood to Jacob. The promise of the coming Christ is now given to Abraham and Sarah. God intercedes by granting the miraculous birth of Isaac. He again protects Isaac on Mount Moriah by staying Abraham’s hand. God takes away the barrenness of Rebekah’s womb so that the promise can be continued through Jacob.
- d. From Jacob to the Israelites in the Desert. God sends Joseph to Egypt as a slave in order to ensure the livelihood of Israel. He then leads the people out of Egypt to serve Him. The Israelites quickly fall into idolatry, but Moses intercedes to keep the promise alive.
- e. From the Desert to David, the King. Out of the tribe of Judah, God chooses that the Messiah will come from the family of David. The devil tries to kill David by the hands of Saul. God’s protection was evident to keep David alive and seat him on the throne.

- f. From David to Queen Athaliah. The wicked queen desires to destroy the seed of David. By the hands of Jehoshaba, a Godly woman, and Jehoida, the high priest, God saves Joash and maintains David's line.
- g. From Athaliah to King Ahaz. The combined forces of Aram and Israel are against Judah in order to unseat the seed of David, and set up a foreign king. Isaiah meets Ahaz and tells him to ask for a sign – as deep as Sheol, or as high as heaven – of God's help. Ahaz refuses, but Isaiah responds that the Lord Himself will give a sign – the virgin birth of Immanuel. Once again, God's purpose will stand.
- h. From Ahaz to Esther. In the days of Ahaseurus, a decree is signed that all Jews are to be put to death. However, Esther was born for such a time as this, and the Jews are once again saved.
- i. From Esther to Bethlehem. Baby Jesus is born at last in Bethlehem just as prophesied. The intensity of the dragon heats up against the Christ. Herod engages the magi to give him the whereabouts of the Christ so that he may kill him. However, God warns them in a dream to return another way, avoiding king Herod. Herod is enraged and kills all the male children two years old and under in the surrounding area of Bethlehem. Joseph and Mary, having been warned by God, took Jesus to safety in Egypt. Another victory for the Lord and His plan. The death of Jesus on the cross seems to be a victory for Satan, but turns into a crushing defeat with the resurrection and ascension of Christ.

2. The Expulsion of the Dragon (12:7-12)

The second picture in this chapter shows the impact of Christ's birth, death, resurrection, and ascension to the throne. Let us see the picture as a whole. There is war in heaven. Michael and his angels are waging war against the dragon and his angels. Two generals and two armies are engaged in battle. Notice that Michael and his angels are on the offensive. The dragon is not able to stand and is cast out of heaven. The meaning of the picture is clearly explained. The devil and his angels are thrown down to the earth. This is not a literal hurling down out of heaven, but rather, the fact that the devil no longer is able to accuse the brethren. When Christ ascended to heaven, He cleansed the Most Holy Place once for all, and Satan is no longer granted access to the throne of God. The finished work of atonement was accomplished at the ascension. According to Romans 8:33-34, "Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us." Satan's defeat at the hand of Christ has a threefold effect. First of all, God's plan of salvation is manifested and His power revealed. This results in a joyful sound in heaven. Secondly, God's persecuted people triumph. Again, all who dwell in heaven rejoice. Finally, Satan is filled with wrath because of his defeat. He knows that his time is short, and that this

first downfall is a guarantee of his final defeat at the end of the age. Let heaven ring with great joy!

3. The Final Assaults of the Dragon (12:13-17)

This picture portrays the dragon after he has been thrown down to the earth. The dragon persecutes the woman because she gave birth to the male child. The dragon's desire to destroy the woman is an outgrowth of his anger against the child. The woman receives the two wings of the eagle so that she can flee to the wilderness where she is nourished for a time, times, and half a time. In the wilderness, the woman is away from the presence of the serpent. The dragon tries to swallow the woman with a stream of water pouring from his mouth. However, the earth helps the woman and swallows up the stream. The dragon is furious and heads off to do battle against the rest of the seed of the woman.

Now that we have seen the picture, let us discuss its meaning. Satan was unsuccessful against Christ, thus he turns his war against the Church because the Church brought forth the Christ. But the Lord protects His people and provides a place of rest and nourishment for them. This place is a refuge from Satan's most deadly attack. The devil cannot destroy the Church; he has to keep a certain distance away during this time. This 3 ½ year time frame is equivalent to the picture of 1000 years in Revelation 20. The devil, the father of lies, tries to flood the Church with all of his false ways, but the true Church cannot be deceived. On the other hand, the world drinks up the whole river of falsehood. The devil's failure to take over the true Church makes him further enraged and he turns his attention to the rest of the woman's seed, that is, individual Christians.

This period of time during which the Church experiences the fury of the devil and yet, the protection of God is described as "a time, times, and half a time." This is the same period whereby the witnesses prophesy. It is followed by a period of 3 ½ days, where the dead bodies of the witnesses lie in the street. This short time is also pictured as the battle of HarMagedon. These three and a half days are then followed by the day of judgment. It is clear that the "time, times, and half a time" begins at Christ's first coming and ends at a point in time very near to the judgment. We will find that this fits well with the pictures that are shown in Revelation chapter 20. There we find that Satan is bound from the Church for the millennium, but Satan is released for a short time at the end. This brief span is followed by judgment day. In each of the following sections of Revelation, we find the following consistent time frames: a) A long period (the gospel age) – 42 months, 1260 days, "a time, times, and half a time," and 1000 years. (Revelation 11:2,3; 12:6,14; 13:5; 20:2-5) b) A very short period of 3 ½ days. (Revelation 11:7,9; 13:7; 20:7-10) c) The judgment day. (Revelation 11:11,12,18; 14:14; 20:11).

We see that the long period of time in chapters 11, 12, and 13 is described in different terms but is an equivalent time frame in each description. Forty-two months is equal to 1260 days which is equal to "a time, times, and half a time." (A comparison of

Revelation 12:6 with 12:14 gives us invaluable insight that “a time, times, and half a time is equal to 1260 days). No matter which description is used, it speaks of a time designated by 3 ½ years. We may ask why this terminology of 3 ½ years is used to signify the Church age. Under the Old Covenant, there was a 3 ½ year period that the nation of Israel would never forget. It was a period of tribulation, but also a time of divine intervention and protection (I Kings 17 and James 5:17). There is an obvious parallel between James 5:17 and Revelation 11:6. During those days of Elijah, God’s true people were persecuted but not destroyed. God’s Word showed its power and God provided miraculous nourishment for Elijah and others. In the same way, for the time from Christ’s ascension to a short time before His return, the Church is persecuted but not destroyed. God’s Word is powerful, and the Lord provides special spiritual nourishment for His people.

The expression “a time, times, and half a time” is first used in the book of Daniel. Throughout Daniel, it is used to describe both literal and figurative periods of 3 ½ years. Of particular concern to saints under the New Covenant is the prophecy of 70 weeks (weeks of years, or periods of 7 years) in Daniel chapter 9. The Messiah makes a covenant with the many for one week but is put to death in the middle of the week. We understand that Christ’s earthly ministry lasted 3 ½ years (1/2 of the seventieth week). What happened to the last 3 ½ years of this prophecy? We find the fulfillment in the Church age described as this same period of time in Revelation. Our understanding of this 3 ½ years as the entire Church age in the book of Revelation is consistent not only within the Apocalypse but with the prophecy of the Church age in Daniel.

4. The Helpers of the Dragon (13:1-18)

Chapter 13 introduces the agents that the dragon uses in his attack against the true Church of Jesus Christ. Two beasts are described in this picture. The first is a monster that comes forth from the sea. The second is a seemingly harmless but extremely dangerous beast from the earth. The first beast is Satan’s hand, while the second beast is his mind. The first is symbolic of Satan’s persecuting power operating by the governments of this world. The second represents false religions of the world. Both of these beasts operate throughout the entire gospel dispensation. A third Satanic agent, Babylon the harlot, is first mentioned in chapter 14. In all, Satan employs three major forces against the Church. These forces are 1) antichristian persecution, 2) antichristian religion, and 3) antichristian seduction.

As John views the sea beast, he notices that it has ten horns and seven heads. These horns are covered with diadems, and the heads are covered with blasphemous names. The body of the beast is that of a fierce leopard, while its feet are those of a bear, and its mouth is that of a lion. The dragon gives his power and authority to this monster. John also notes that one of the heads of this beast looks as if it had been slain, but the fatal wound was healed. Men worship the beast and ask who is able to wage war with it. When worshipping the beast, men are really giving homage to the dragon from which the beast derives its power. The beast then begins to speak and it utters great

blasphemies. This authority of the beast lasts for 42 months. His blasphemies are directed against God and against those who dwell in heaven. This beast also is given power to wage war with the saints and to overcome them, while the entire world is in subjection to this beast.

What does this picture mean? The sea represents the nations and their governments (Isaiah 17:12, Jeremiah 46:7-8, Isaiah 8:7-8). Revelation 17:1-3,15 proves the point. The beast from the sea represents the persecuting power of Satan born out in the nations and governments throughout world history. World power directed against the Church anywhere and anytime is this beast. This monster takes on different forms; it has seven heads. In the past it was Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, Rome, etc. Although the forms differ, the fundamental nature is the same; worldly government directed against God's people. In these world governments, the persecuting power of Satan is evident. That is why there is such a similarity between the dragon and the beast; both are raging creatures with seven heads and ten horns. However, notice that the horns of the beast are crowned, while the heads of the dragon hold his crowns. In other words, Satan rules and the governments simply execute his plans. It is true that the earthly rulers are crowned but they receive their inspiration from Satan (remember the king of Babylon, Isaiah 14 and the king of Tyre, Ezekiel 28). These governments blaspheme God and want divine titles. It was true of Rome, it was evident with the "divine right of kings" in England, and it continues today with the march to the New World Order. The fact that this beast represents all persecuting government throughout history is evident upon recognizing that the beast is a composite of the beasts pictured in Daniel chapter 7. Each of the beasts from the sea of Daniel 7 represented a specific world kingdom, but the sea beast of Revelation 13 is a combination of them all.

One of the seven heads had received a fatal wound, but that wound was healed. In order to arrive at the correct interpretation of this picture, we must remember that the seven heads symbolize seven antichristian empires that succeed each other in history (Revelation 17:9-10). Therefore, the statement that one of the heads had been slain but that the head was healed must mean that one of these empires ceased to persecute the Church for a time, and then resumed its evil practices. (The following is a major difference between Hendriksen's interpretation and mine. Hendriksen believes that the head that received a wound but was healed represents the Rome of John's day. He believes that the time between Nero and Domitian was the time of the wound, but the resuming persecution showed that the wound was healed. However this period of reprieve was only 13 years and would hardly make sense to portray as a major wound to the head of this beast.) It would make sense for us to briefly examine the world empires throughout history. The first six should receive no major arguments: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome. We must ask if there has been a world power since Rome. Many within the Restoration Movement would answer this question with a resounding "no." However, when your eyes are opened to the conspiracy of men to move us to a world government (see *None Dare Call It Conspiracy* by Gary Allen or September 16, 1996 special issue of *The New American*), it forces us to ask some questions. What about the world power of

England that has dictated world policy for at least the last 400 years? The far-reaching impact of English dominion is lost on many because it has been a much more covert operation. England certainly suppressed Biblical truth and persecuted anyone who desired to be a part of the true Church. However, in terms of world dominion, it is necessary to understand that the monetary policy of the world was and still is controlled by British interests. The true test of control is to determine who funded the major wars and happenings of the world. However, as powerful as England was, it was unseated as a world power through the independence of the United States. Whereas for centuries the Bible had been suppressed, now its principles were openly used as the foundation of a new government. The principles of liberty set forth in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution came directly from the Bible. What a blow to the head of this worldwide conspiracy and establishment centered in England! Yet, immediately, Satan went to work to begin healing this fatal wound. The U.S. was not even past its infancy when it was under a barrage of attacks to steal the liberty granted to its citizens. Through the moral fortitude and historical understanding of men such as George Washington and Patrick Henry, America was able to withstand this initial conspiracy intended to bring the country under control of the moneychangers of England. However, what started out as such a blow to the arrogated authority of Satan given to his beastly government has now been healed. In the twentieth century, the United States forfeited its independence with the permanent establishment of the Federal Reserve System. Now all of the fruits of freedom have been put to use by those who enslave the people of this land. The money, power, and technology that have been generated by freedom are now being used to perpetrate a world power whose goal is to rule the world in the interests of Satan by destroying the Church of the living God. The world now is crying out after this beast and noting that none can wage war with it.

Throughout the whole Church age – the forty-two months – the governments of this world have arrogated to themselves the authority of God. At the end of this time, the Church will be overcome by the beast in that public proclamation will be shut off everywhere. Even in those end days, there will be Christians on earth – those who have not worshipped the beast, those whose names are written in the book of life. The antichristian government may kill their bodies, but it cannot destroy their souls. Christians must continue to rely upon God in these times, knowing that God will avenge those who use the sword against them. It is only those who step outside of the protection of the temple into the courtyard who need to fear (Jeremiah 15:1-2). Those who flee back to Egypt will receive their just punishment (Jeremiah 43:11) but the perseverance and faith of the saints will bring them through to the final victory that is later described. If anyone has an ear, let him hear. It is not Satan but God who rules over all.

Next, John sees the beast from the earth. This beast only has two little horns just like a lamb. This beast appears harmless, but when it speaks, it speaks as the dragon. This earth beast is in cooperation with the sea beast. It performs many false wonders and signs to deceive the people. It orders the people to make an image to the first beast, and then it makes the image speak. This second beast then orders all who

refuse to worship the image of the sea beast to be killed. Finally, the land beast orders everyone to be impressed with the mark of the beast on their right hand or on their forehead. Those who don't have this mark can neither buy nor sell. The mark of the beast is the name of the beast or the number of its name. Anyone who has wisdom can explain this number, for the number is that of man, 666.

Now we can determine the main point of this picture. The beast from the land is the false prophet (19:20). It is representative of false religion throughout the age of the Church. Even though this beast looks like a lamb, it speaks like the dragon. Speech reveals what is on the inside! False prophets always come in sheep's clothing but their fruits show that they are ravenous wolves. The two beasts – antichristian government and antichristian religion – work hand in glove in waging war against God's people. False religion and worldly politics cooperate to try to destroy the Church. The ultimate meaning of this picture is that throughout the whole gospel age, false prophets try to deceive the people and strengthen the hand of government that persecutes the Church. Recognize that none of this takes place without God's permission (verse 15). The false prophet gives the mark of the first beast to all people of every class. Many erroneous interpretations of the mark have been given over the years attempting to focus on a particular person at a particular time. However, it is true that the beast always persecutes the Church throughout history. Wherever the beast is, there his mark is also. The mark of the beast is simply the opposite of the mark that is given to the saints. The slaves of Christ have been branded with His mark while the slaves of Satan have been branded with the mark of his beast. The mark of the beast is the spirit of the antichrist and appears on the forehead or right hand. The mindset of Christ was given only to the saints, but the mindset of sinners has been given to every person of the world. This spirit of the antichrist is apparent in what a person thinks, says, and does. Those who don't have the mark of the beast will not be as successful in their business pursuits (remember those at Thyatira). As we approach the end, the intensity of the opposition throughout the world will increase. The Christian should not give up hope. The number of the beast is that of man; it is 666. The number means sin upon sin upon sin; it means failure upon failure upon failure. The seal of Christ is on our side! All who follow in the footsteps of Adam are destined to fail; those who follow Christ are destined to win!

5. The Triumph of God's Church (14:1-16)

Chapter 14 is divided into three main parts based on the three different pictures that John sees.

- a. The Blessedness of the Redeemed (verses 1-5). The first of these pictures shows the Lamb standing on heavenly Mount Zion. With Him, John sees 144,000 that have the name of the Lamb and of the Father on their foreheads. This is the same group that was sealed in chapter 7. In chapter 7, they were on the earth enduring persecutions; here they are in heaven enjoying the fellowship of the Lamb. Even though the dragon has attempted to tear them down, there is not a single sealed individual

missing in heaven. Those who received the mindset of Christ have triumphed over the dragon and his beasts. John now hears this group singing a beautiful new song. It is a new song, because it records a new experience; it communicates the joy of those who have been purchased from the earth. These 144,000 are virgins; they are not defiled. They have been faithful to Christ, their Groom, and follow Him wherever He goes. These 144,000 are described as first fruits to God and to the Lamb. They have been purchased and separated from the world. These are those who pass the test of the reapers at the harvest and are given to God. They are not “super saints,” or first fruits versus other believers. They are first fruits because they have been taken from the world and given to God. These are the firstborn ones who are enrolled in heaven (Psalm 105:36, Hebrews 12:23). Recall that just as God required the Israelites to give Him the first fruits of the harvest, so He required the firstborn of every family (He provided for the Levites to be given to Him in place of all the firstborn sons, but He still required a price for every firstborn son). All true Christians are regarded as firstborn sons; thus, we are not to despise our birthright. Every Christian has been sealed with the name of God and of the Lamb. This holy assembly of 144,000 has not bought Satan’s lie. This group stands blameless before God because they are clothed with Christ.

b. Warnings to Mankind (verses 6-13)

After viewing the blessedness of the Redeemed, we now return to the events occurring just before the Lord’s second coming. The three angels belong together because they have the same purpose. They warn mankind about the judgment that men may turn to God. The first angel is sent to those who sit on the earth. This is a good portrayal of most people right before judgment. They are so preoccupied with the events of their life in this world that they fail to notice the warning sounds of wisdom that their house is about to go “Smash!” These are the people to whom the “evil day” looks really good, because they are blinded as to what is really coming. The second angel warns about the imminent fall of Babylon the great. Babylon is pictured as the center of the seductive world. Her fall is so certain that it is spoken of as already having taken place. Those who are wrapped up in the lusts of the world had better repent, for the world is passing away. The third angel announces that everyone who worships the beast is going to suffer a horrendous judgment. Those who choose to worship Satan will pay the appropriate consequences. On earth, the wrath of God is still mixed with patience and kindness trying to get men to turn. At the judgment day, it will be unmixed; it will be the unleashing of hell. The fact that this eternal punishment will be meted out to those who persecute the Church should encourage Christians to stand strong and hold fast what they have.

c. The Harvest of the End (verses 14-16)

The blessedness of the purchased saints has been described. Those who have died in the Lord will behold His face eternally. They get to rest while their works remain. The final judgment is pictured once again. Here it is shown as a time of harvest. One like the Son of Man is shown wearing His crown of victory. He holds a sharp sickle in His right hand and is ready to reap. The harvest is His, for the righteous are symbolized as the first fruits. Jesus now gathers the wheat into His barn.

6. The Judgment of the Wicked (14:17-20)

Two angels carry out this judgment. One angel, with a sharp sickle, comes from the temple of God. He is carrying out the divine will of God, as he gets ready to reap. A second angel comes from the altar to give orders for the first angel to reap. He comes from the altar of incense in response to the prayers of the saints. The day of judgment is God's final answer to those prayers. The vine of the earth symbolizes the whole multitude of the wicked; the grapes are the individual sinners. As grapes are trodden and pressed, so all nonchristians are going to be punished eternally. As a result of this punishment, John sees a lake of blood so deep horses can swim in it. The lake extends sixteen hundred stadia (four times four times ten times ten) symbolizing complete judgment of the wicked. This great treading of God's wrath takes place outside the city. The city is now holy forevermore.

REVELATION 15, 16: THE SEVEN BOWLS

As we study the history of the Church in regards to humankind, we find it to be consistent with what the book of Revelation tells us to expect. There is a definite and repetitive order of events in this world. Churches are established through the preaching of the word. Because of Christ's presence, they shine as lights in the midst of a dark world. Time and time again, Christians are persecuted by the world. In turn, God repeatedly sends His judgments upon the world, but most men fail to repent. This outward conflict between the Church and the world continually turns us to see the deeper war between Christ and Satan.

The question that now comes up is, "What happens when men fail to respond to the trumpets of judgment?" Do these unrepentant souls avoid punishment until the final day of judgment? The answer is given in the vision of chapters 15 and 16. Whenever men repeatedly refuse to heed God's warnings of judgment, He sends forth plagues of wrath that allow no more opportunity for repentance. Obviously, at the point of death, there are no more chances for a person to turn to God. But it is possible for people to cross the point of "no repentance" even before their death (Exodus 10:27, Matthew 12:32, Proverbs 1:23-29, Isaiah 55:6, Hebrews 12:17). God's wrath is poured out upon the stubborn and unrepentant. There is an obvious connection between the trumpets of chapters 8-11 and the bowls of this vision in chapters 15-16. Trumpets warn while bowls are poured out. As obvious as the connection is between trumpets and bowls, there is just as close a connection between chapters 12-14 and chapters 15-16. The men who receive the bowls of wrath are the same ones who receive the mark of the beast. We see that the vision of the bowls, like the others, covers the entire Church age. This can be established by examining five points. First, the close connection between the vision of the trumpets and the bowls implies that they cover the same period of time. Secondly, the vision of the bowls ends with a view of the judgment just like all of the parallel visions. Thus we see that the first six bowls precede the final judgment. Thirdly, the introduction of the vision of the bowls is very similar to the preceding vision (the Christ vs. the dragon). The vision of the Christ vs. the dragon clearly began with the ascension of Christ and ended with the final judgment, so it would be reasonable to expect this vision of similar introduction to do the same. Fourthly, note that the bowls of judgment are poured out upon men having the mark of the beast. These men are those who worship the dragon throughout the Church age. This group is present at every period throughout the gospel dispensation. Finally, the antagonists of the fourth vision again make their appearance in the vision of the bowls. The dragon, the beast from the sea, and the beast from the earth are the evil forces in both of these visions. Thus, we conclude that the same era, the entire Church age, is shown in chapters 15-16 as well as in chapters 12-14. However, there is clearly a progressive movement toward the final judgment as we near the end of the book of Revelation. The vision of the bowls, although it covers the entire New Testament dispensation, is particularly concerned with the final judgment day and the conditions that bring on that day.

Here in chapter 15, John sees another great sign in heaven. In chapter 12 he had seen a sign of the woman and her child along with another sign of the great red dragon. Here John views a sign that completes the picture; he sees the seven last plagues by which God punishes those who worship the dragon. These seven plagues are administered by seven angels as God's great wrath moves toward its final day. The goal is final judgment wherein God's anger is unleashed in all its fury. The seven plagues lead us to this goal. When men become hardened, there is nothing that can stop their movement toward this final doom. The seven plagues covering the entire Church age clearly point toward the judgment day.

1. The Sea of Glass Mingled With Fire (15:1-4)

Before John communicates with us about the seven angels and the bowls of wrath, he first shows us the Church victorious on the final day. The Holy Spirit wants us to view the bowls of wrath from the perspective of triumph at the finish line. John views a sea with a conquering multitude standing on the sea. These souls are playing their harps and singing the song of Moses and of the Lamb. This vision has its roots in the Old Testament where the nation of Israel gained a miraculous victory over the Egyptians. Pharaoh and his army were drowned in the depths of the Red Sea after the Israelites had crossed it on dry ground. This tremendous triumph was a foreshadow of the victory that God's people have over the beast, his image, and his number. However, the sea that John beholds is made up of glass and is mixed with fire. This sea of glass previously was a reference to the laver of the tabernacle (Revelation 4:5-6) wherein Christians have been cleansed by the blood of Christ in immersion. Now this sea of glass is mixed with fire. The message that saves is also the message that condemns. Christians are refined in the fiery judgments of God, while those having the mark of the beast are proven to be dross. God's righteousness is still shown in the judgments of the wicked. Just as the Israelites praised God for their victory over the Egyptians, so Christians give all glory to God as the One who brought about this great success. They praise all of God's ways, including His judgments, as righteous and holy. The wicked have been warned by the trumpets of judgment and refused to repent. Thus, the fault is theirs as they declare themselves unworthy of eternal life. Because of their "stubbornness and unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgments of God." God's justice is displayed; His righteousness is clearly seen and acknowledged by the Church, and God is glorified forevermore.

2. The Opening of the Sanctuary (15:5-8)

After viewing through the eyes of the triumphant Church the absolute righteousness of God in regard to His final outpouring of wrath, John returns to the time during the Church age. He sees the tabernacle of testimony opened. This is the Most Holy Place that contains the Ark of the Covenant, which holds the tables of the testimony. The sanctuary is now opened so that we can understand that the outpouring of wrath comes from the very presence of God. (Remember that God's presence was said to dwell above the Ark of the Covenant. Also note that the tables of the covenant are

specifically mentioned. This communicates that God's wrath will be in exact accordance with His word – John 12:48). From the inner sanctuary come the seven angels, each having been given a golden bowl that is full. This fullness communicates the fierceness and finality of God's wrath. This is an eternal wrath that comes from God Himself. Again this is pictured as we see the sanctuary filled with smoke. No one can enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels are finished. In other words, there is no longer opportunity for intercession; God's great patience is finished.

3. The Seven Bowls of Wrath (16:1-21)

John now hears a loud voice of the Almighty Father. God is angry because of the refusal of the wicked to repent. The voice commands for the seven bowls to be emptied upon the earth. These seven plagues that are in the bowls are very similar to those plagues that were unleashed upon Egypt in the days of Moses. Those plagues on Egypt were a great foreshadow of the plagues that will come upon all of mankind when they are hardened as Pharaoh was. God uses every area of the universe to punish those who refuse to repent. The bowls of wrath will destroy those that do not heed the trumpets of judgment. One person's bowl of wrath may sound as a trumpet of judgment to others. As an example, the death of Annanias and Saphira in Acts 5 was an outpouring of wrath upon them but was a trumpet of judgment to all who observed their fate.

The first angel poured out his bowl and it became a loathsome and malignant sore on the people who have the mark of the beast. This communicates that God uses disease as a means of casting evil people into their final punishment. Remember King Herod in Acts 12 who was eaten by worms and died because he refused to give glory to God. It is important to note that sickness is not a bowl of wrath for the Christian but simply moves him closer to his eternal body of glory. Just as the plagues of Moses' day made a clear distinction between the Egyptians and God's people, so this bowl is only poured out on those having the mark of the beast.

The second angel poured out his bowl and the sea became blood and every living thing in the sea died. Obviously, this symbolism is taken from Moses turning the water into blood. However, the main point is that God uses the sea as a means of bringing people to the point of final destruction. Note the difference between the trumpets and the bowls. The trumpets always pictured a partial judgment (a third), while the bowls indicate completeness and finality.

The third bowl turns rivers and springs into blood. Not only are the seas a means of death, but also now the very source of the waters are blood. Apart from repentance, man cannot escape his painful destiny. Everything that he turns to for life becomes a means of death for him. God is righteous in His judgments upon people of the world because they consistently shed the blood of Christians.

The fourth bowl is poured out upon the sun, causing it to scorch people with fire. Again we see that what man views as a source of life becomes a means of death. The wicked still refuse to repent and blaspheme God because of their misfortune.

The fifth bowl is poured out on the very throne of the beast and his kingdom is darkened. The agents of the beast gnaw their tongues in pain, but they still refuse to repent. Whenever world powers have problems or fall, the center of the universe for worldly man collapses. The wicked lose courage and despair because man's solutions for a better world never succeed. Once again, note that the bowls are a complete and final outpouring of wrath.

The sixth bowl brings about the great war of Har-Magedon. In order for us to properly understand the meaning of this great war, we must review the Old Testament setting in which this battle is rooted. In Judges chapters 4 and 5, Israel is in being oppressed by the Canaanites. King Jabin and General Sisera of the Canaanites lead a powerful army with nine hundred chariots of iron, while the Israelites don't even have a spear or shield. Things look bleak for the Israelites until Deborah motivates Barak the judge to rely upon Yahweh and wage war against the Canaanites. A battle is fought at Megiddo and the Lord helps Israel gain an overwhelming victory. Thus, Har-Magedon is the symbol of every great battle wherein God's people are oppressed and the Lord suddenly acts to rescue the saints. The great, final Har-Magedon occurs at the time when Satan is released for a short time at the end of the gospel age. When Satan gathers the world and surrounds the Church, then suddenly Christ brings forth a miraculous victory. Har-Magedon is the sixth bowl and precedes the judgment day. This sixth bowl occurs repetitively throughout history but reaches its final outpouring immediately before the judgment day. John sees that the sixth bowl is poured out on the great Euphrates river. This river represents Assyria and Babylon, the wicked world. As the water dries up, the way is prepared for the gathering of Satan's forces. Out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, come three unclean spirits. These demonic spirits perform signs in order to gather together the kings of the world against the Church. At this moment of great tribulation and persecution, Christ suddenly appears. He comes unexpectedly like a thief, so Christians must be faithful even in times of great oppression.

The section of the bowls, just like every other section of the book of Revelation, ends with a picture of the final judgment. The seventh bowl shows the final fall of Babylon and the utter ruin of those people who worship the beast. When this bowl is poured out upon the air, life on earth ceases to exist. John hears a loud voice from the temple (communicating that this is the very word of God), saying, "It is done." The final revealing of God's wrath is complete; judgment day has come. The great city Babylon is broken into three parts; it is ruined. The entire antichristian world, viewed as the center of seduction, falls apart and is destroyed. On the day of judgment, it is evident that God has not forgotten the sins of Babylon against His Church. The world receives the cup of the wine of God's fierce wrath. To complete the picture of terror, the islands are described as having fled away, and the mountains cannot be found.

Great hailstones come from heaven and crush the unrepentant men who continue to blaspheme God even at the time of their final sentencing. In God's ultimate judgment, the entire world of evil is destroyed.

Prepare for test #4

REVELATION 17-19: THE FALL OF THE DRAGON'S ALLIES

In total, five antagonists of Christ have been pictured in the book of Revelation: the dragon, the beast from the sea, the beast from the earth, Babylon, and the men having the mark of the beast. We have viewed the destruction of the men with the mark in chapters 15 and 16. In the vision of chapters 17-19, we get to see the fall of Babylon, the beast from the sea, and the false prophet (the beast from the earth). The final fall of the dragon will be shown in the last section of the book of Revelation. The current vision (chapters 17-19) can be broken down into the following divisions. Chapter 17 gives a description of Babylon, chapter 18 shows the absolute fall of Babylon, while chapter 19 pictures great rejoicing in heaven. Chapter 19 allows us to see the wedding of the Lamb as well as the conquering Christ executing final judgment on all of His enemies.

I. The Judgment of Babylon

1. The Woman and the Beast (17:1-6)

One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls appears to John. This angel speaks favorably to John, telling him that he will show the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters. John is then taken to the wilderness where he sees a woman sitting on a scarlet beast. This beast is the sea-born beast and symbolizes world power (especially world empires) as the center of persecution. John sees this beast in the wilderness for the radiant woman, the Church, had fled there. The woman sitting on the beast is not the glorious woman of chapter 12. This woman riding the beast is the great harlot. The harlot is beautifully clothed and richly adorned. She is clothed with purple and scarlet, because she is the queen of the world. Her clientele is the kings of the earth. As a matter of fact, the whole world has been made drunk with the wine of her immorality. On her forehead she has a mysterious name written: Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth. This harlot is drunk with the blood of the saints, the martyrs of Jesus.

The harlot is clearly called Babylon. The question that must be asked is: what does she represent? First of all, she is called the great harlot because she tempts, seduces, and draws people away from God. Secondly, we must realize that she is called Babylon, the name of a great city. It reminds us of the pleasure-driven Babylon of old. When we examine the list of goods found in Babylon, we see that this is a clear picture of a commercial center. Babylon therefore must represent the world as a center of industry, as the thorns that choke out the seed of the Word of God and cause it to become unfruitful. Luke 8:14 describes those thorns as the “worries and riches and pleasures of this life.” Babylon is a picture of all that the world has to offer: “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life.” (1 John 2:16) Thirdly, Babylon is shown as past, present, and future. The form may change, but the fundamental nature stays the same. The harlot is so closely associated with the sea-born beast that she is pictured as sitting on the beast. We have previously established that the beast from the sea exists throughout the whole church age. From this picture,

we can conclude that the harlot is a symbol of antichristian seduction at any time in history. Babylon was the Rome of John's day, and could be the New York City of our day. The harlot holds a golden cup enticing everyone to drink. Sex, drugs, art, sports, riches, fame, power, and all other illicit pleasures come from this cup. How many would-be Christians have sold their souls for what this world has to offer! True Christians that resist the pleasures of the world must expect to be martyred in this cause, for the harlot is drunk with the blood of the saints. The harlot works in close connection with the beast. First century Rome not only tried to entice Christians with its worldly allure but also killed with the sword those who exposed its sins. Since Babylon is the world of seduction throughout the church age, then the fall of Babylon not only refers to the final destruction of the world, but also to every prior economic crash. The final and ultimate fall of Babylon corresponds with Christ's return in judgment. Throughout history the beast and the harlot are always associated until the end ... when the beast turns against the woman.

2. The History of the Beast (17:7-18)

After describing the harlot, the angel now gives a history of the beast. It was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss to destruction. First, the beast was. It was Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, etc. Next, we see that the beast is not. Every single kingdom in which the beast had taken form was destroyed. Yet, this beast seems to be able to rise again after every defeat. People in the world are in awe when they see that the beast was, is not, and will come. People in the world do not focus on the continual destruction of these kingdoms, but they are amazed at the power that these kingdoms have in this realm. Every antichristian empire, including the last one, goes to destruction. The angel now begins to explain the meaning of the seven heads and ten horns. The seven heads have a twofold meaning. These heads symbolize both the present form of the beast and all its embodiments throughout history. First, these heads symbolize the seven mountains of Rome. In John's day, Rome was the center of antichristian persecution. But it was also the center of antichristian seduction as pictured by the woman sitting on these seven mountains. Secondly, these heads also symbolize seven kings, or kingdoms. As we have previously established from the seventh chapter of Daniel, these heads refer to world empires, not individual kings. At the time of the writing of the book of Revelation, five had already fallen (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Media-Persia, and Greece). One was in existence at that time – Rome. The seventh had not yet come, but would have to remain for a while. As we examined in chapters 12-14, the world empire whose roots spring from England is now in existence. The beast that “was and is not” is the eighth and final antichristian dominion. This eighth is “of the seven” which indicates that it has its basis in one of the prior world empires. (My opinion – something like the United Nations that continues to be financed and strengthened from the powers that were behind the English empire). The ten horns are spoken of as ten kings who had not yet received a kingdom. These ten horns receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour. These kings are the mighty ones of the earth who have the common goals of the beast. These worldly rulers only last a short time (one hour) before they go to their final reward. All of these horn-kings have one intent, to

strengthen the beast in its opposition to Christ and His Church. However, Christ and His followers are constantly victorious throughout the Church age, as Jesus continually defeats every form of antichristian rule. Jesus repeatedly reveals Himself as Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him prove that they are the called and chosen and faithful. In John's vision, he had seen the harlot sitting on many waters. We also know that she was sitting on the beast; this beast comes from the sea. In verse 15, we have confirmation that the waters signify the peoples of the world that continually wage war against the Church. For a while, there seems to be unity and joy in the world among all the enemies of Christ. Common people as well as worldly rulers carry the harlot as she gives them the luxuries of the world. But in the end, it is the beast and the horns who hate the harlot and destroy her. At some point, those world rulers who enjoy the life of luxury end up destroying the very means of that luxury. It appears that greed ends up destroying the whole system. The kings of the earth will in the end hate the world order financiers who reign over them. God's purpose will be fulfilled! He is sovereign and will use Satan's allies against each other. The Lord's people should take great comfort in the fact that this world is passing away along with its lusts. Christ is on the throne and rules over all!

3. The Fall of Babylon (18:1-24)

John sees another angel with great authority coming down out of heaven. This angel cries out, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!" Babylon's fall is announced as if it has already taken place; so imminent is its crash. The reason for Babylon's fall is that nations and kings and merchants have chosen to idolize her rather than worshipping God. The strong admonition of the Scripture is for God's people to come out of Babylon, to have no participation in her sins. This warning is for every Christian throughout the Church age. Christians are to set their mind on the things above and should not wrongly fix their hope on the pleasures of this life. Everyone who has a mindset on this world will take part of the plagues that Babylon receives. God has not forgotten her sins and He will judge all participants on that final day. In the spiritual harvest, the fruit is always a multiplied product of the seed. Those who have "sown the wind," will "reap the whirlwind." Babylon will be paid double for all her sins. All the pleasures of this life combined will not make hell worthwhile. This price will be paid in one day, for the Lord God who judges is strong.

Verses 9-20 list the mournings of kings, earth merchants, and sea merchants, followed by the rejoicings of heaven. First, the kings of the earth lament her fall because they had been partners with her. The rulers of this world had eaten the fruits of Babylon's immorality and are terrified when they view her torment. Previously they had been pleased to have association with her; now they stand back in fear of her judgment. Secondly, the merchants from the earth weep because their cargoes have become worthless. The cargoes of gold, silver, precious stones and pearls have no lasting value. The costly garments or fashionable clothes – fine linen, purple, silk, and scarlet – are no longer in demand. Luxurious materials of homes and furnishings have also lost their appeal. Spices and ointments along with the best foods – the extras of this life – are no longer purchased. Anything that can be used for labor –

horses, chariots, slaves, and human lives – no longer hold value. The great businessmen of this world find themselves ruined for Babylon herself has been destroyed. Economic chaos is complete, for all that the world hopes for has been shattered. The harlot has been an utter disappointment; there is no lasting joy. The third lamentation comes from the mouths of sea merchants who had become wealthy by means of the great city. They too cry out in despair as they view the fall of Babylon. As the pleasures of this life are snuffed out, they become aware of the total waste of their efforts and pursuits. However, the saints are encouraged to rejoice! God's people have stored up their treasures in heaven and have been persecuted by the world for doing so. God's punishment of Babylon is justice served on an evil, rebellious world.

The last paragraph communicates that this fall of Babylon is complete; there will be no rising out of the ashes. A great angel picks up a large millstone and hurls it into the sea where it can never be retrieved. Thus, the wicked world and its antichristian seduction will perish forever. Babylon will not be found "any longer." The sound of musicians will not be heard "any longer." No craftsman will exist "any longer." No sound of a mill will be heard "any longer." The light of a lamp will not shine "any longer." The voice of the bridegroom and bride will not be heard "any longer." All worldly joy and relationships and love are gone forever. This retribution is just because all the merchants were the great men of the earth. They put themselves in the place of God and stole worship from the Lord. The pleasures of the world deceived the wicked, the false prophet led away those who did not love the truth, and Babylon killed the saints. God is just when He brings about the final collapse. As Christians, we must recognize that this pleasure-driven, arrogant world is going down. Only those who worship God in spirit and truth will escape this eternal agony. Once again we see that Christ and His Church are overwhelming conquerors.

II. Rejoicings in Heaven

1. The Marriage of the Lamb (19:1-10)

We now hear the praises of heaven when Christ comes in glory to take the Church as His bride. All of heaven celebrates God's victory over the harlot. John hears the sound of a great multitude as the angels give glory to God. The angels declare that in judging the great harlot, God has revealed His righteousness, for the harlot had corrupted the whole world. God also has avenged the blood of His bondservants. The angels cry out, "Hallelujah!" or "Praise Yahweh!" as they view the smoke of Babylon rising up forever and ever. Never again will Babylon cause problems for God's people. Next, the twenty-four elders, symbolizing the entire Church, praise God. The four cherubim, representing this order of angels, join in the tribute. Together, they pronounce their worship of the sovereign God who is on the throne. Then John hears a single voice encouraging all who fear God to praise Him. John now hears the whole host of heaven, all angels and saints combined, bringing forth hallelujahs to the Almighty God. The reason for this outburst of joy is because the wedding of the Lamb has come, and the bride has made herself ready. In order to

understand the significance of this event, we need to remember the marriage custom of the Hebrews. First, the man and bride are betrothed. This betrothal is much more binding than present-day engagement. From the time of betrothal, man and woman are legally husband and wife. Next, comes the time period between the betrothal and the wedding feast. During this time the groom pays a dowry for the bride. At the close of this interval, the bride makes herself ready and adorns herself with her wedding dress. The groom, clothed in his best apparel and attended by his friends, comes to the home of the betrothed. He picks up the bride and then takes her to his home. Finally, there is the wedding feast, which usually lasts a period of seven days. Scripture often compares the relationship between Christ and the Church to that of the groom and bride. As we take the preceding information of marriage customs and apply it to Christ and the Church, we find that the betrothal has already taken place. Christ has paid the dowry; He bought the bride with His own blood. We are now in the interval between the betrothal and the wedding feast. During this time, the Church makes herself ready while Christ prepares us a place. The Church arrays herself in fine linen, the righteous acts of the saints. It is important to note that this ability to be righteous has been given to her by the Lord. At the end of the gospel age, Christ the Bridegroom will come with His angels to receive His bride, the Church. The wedding feast then begins, for the bride has made herself ready. This feast lasts all of eternity! It is the climax of the process by which Christ comes to the Church. Full intimacy between the Redeemer and the redeemed will finally be realized. The bride was chosen from eternity, before the foundation of the world. The whole Old Testament announced the future wedding. The appearance of God in the flesh brought about our betrothal. The dowry was paid on the cross. Now is the interval where Christ prepares a place for us. Next, Christ returns to consummate the marriage. This will be a holy and everlasting relationship; the fullness of the gospel forever. Even now, the saints who have been invited to the marriage supper are blessed, but these blessings are simply a foretaste of heaven. Upon this realization, John falls down at the feet of this messenger to worship him. However, he is told to worship God. The purpose of all prophecy; yes, the whole Bible, is to bear witness of Jesus. Through the complete revelation of Jesus, we understand who God really is, and who the Church is in Christ.

2. The Glorious Victor (19:11-21)

Now that Babylon has been forever destroyed, we now turn our attention to the beast and the false prophet. What is their fate? From the rejoicing in heaven, we return to the moments leading up to judgment day. John sees heaven opened and Christ seated on a white horse; the Christ is called "Faithful and True." This is a clear picture of Christ coming on the day of judgment; He is coming to judge and to wage war. This is the One whose eyes are a flame of fire, who righteously judges the secrets of men's hearts. On His head are many diadems. In other words, He is wearing the victor's crown. No one knows His name except Himself. The point is that no one can understand the character of God except those to whom Christ reveals Him. As Jesus said in Matthew 11:27, "All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the

Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. After making the point that no one knows His name, the next verse communicates that His name has been called the Word of God. Jesus is the “logoj” or the complete logical communication of God the Father. When Jesus comes in judgment, not only do the angels accompany Him, but the saints also play a part. (Hendriksen believes that the armies of heaven are the angels, but I believe that internal evidence from the book of Revelation as well as that of the whole Scripture clearly points to this army as Christians). First, we have a picture of the armies of heaven being clothed in fine linen, white and clean. We know from a few verses earlier that this description of clothing relates to the righteous acts of the saints. Secondly, we see from Revelation 17:14 that those who accompany the King when He wages war are the called and chosen and faithful (the Church). Thirdly, here the Christ is shown with a sharp sword coming from His mouth so that He may strike down the nations. Psalm 149:5-9 communicates that the saints also hold this two-edged sword and that it is an honor for the godly ones to join the Lord in this judgment. This is also consistent with Paul’s teaching in I Corinthians chapters 5 and 6, where the Church is told that we shall, in the future, judge the world. Lastly, the King is described here in the nineteenth chapter of Revelation as ruling the nations with a rod of iron. Revelation 2:26-27 tells us that he who overcomes will join the Christ in ruling the nations with this rod. Therefore, we conclude that the armies of heaven described in Revelation nineteen is a picture of the Church. Now back to the rider on the white horse. He has a name written on His robe and thigh declaring Him to be, “King of kings, and Lord of lords.” So certain is His victory over the beast and the false prophet and those that worship them, that an angel summons the birds to eat the flesh of all the wicked. The victory of Christ is truly a “shock and awe” attack and results in great slaughter of the wicked. This is another picture of the battle of Har-Magedon, where Christ brings about an awesome triumph over the armies of Satan. John views the beast and the kings of the earth assembled with their armies gathered against the King on the white horse and against His army. The battle is not described, for it is not a long process, but rather Christ quickly slays them all “with His breath at His coming.” All of the antichristian forces are routed. The beast and the false prophet are seized and thrown alive into the lake of fire. All of those who were deceived and followed them are killed with the sword of Christ’s mouth. The wicked will be judged from the Word of God. The main point is that Satan’s persecutions of the Church and his power to deceive are gone forever. Christ, the victor on the white horse, is the eternal Conqueror. The judgment day has once again been described. Revelation chapters 15 and 16 showed the end of those having the mark of the beast. Here we have seen the defeat of the beast and the false prophet. They all go down together, but their eternal fall has been described separately. We have not yet seen the ruin of the dragon, the leader of all these enemies of the Church. His destruction is pictured in the last section of the book of Revelation.

REVELATION 20-22: VICTORY THROUGH CHRIST

I. From the Binding of Satan to the Final Judgment

The end of Revelation chapter 19 brought us to the very end of history, to the judgment day. Just as every other section of the book of Revelation began with the start of the Church age, so chapter 20 takes us back to the beginning of the present dispensation. There is an obvious parallel between the information given in chapter 11, chapters 12-14, and chapter 20. History is broken into the same periods, but the descriptions or symbols are slightly different. Note the following similarities:

Revelation chapters 11-14

12: 5-12. In connection with Christ's first coming, particularly His ascension, Satan is cast out of heaven. He no longer can accuse the brethren.

11:2-6, 12:14 ff. A long period of power and evangelism for the Church. The Church is protected from the face of the serpent.

11:7 ff., 13:7. A brief period of intense persecution at the end of the Church age.

11:17-18, 14:14 ff. The only second coming of Christ in judgment.

Revelation chapter 20

20:1-3. Satan is bound and cast into the abyss. He no longer can deceive the nations. Instead the Church begins to evangelize the Gentiles.

20:2. A long period of power for the Church while Satan is bound. Satan remains bound for 1000 years, that is the entire Church age.

20:7 ff. A brief period of intense persecution. Satan rallies his armies against the Church.

20:11 ff. The only second coming of Christ in judgment.

Once this order of history is understood, Revelation chapter 20 is easy to understand. We simply need to keep in mind the overall sequence of events as portrayed throughout the book of Revelation. Christ's first coming is followed by a long period of power for the Church wherein Satan is bound. Next, Satan is loosed for a short time, after which Christ returns in judgment. It is clear from Revelation chapter 20 that the 1000 years precede the second coming of Christ in judgment. The doctrine of premillennialism doesn't make sense at all even in the direct context of the thousand years. Jesus' second coming in judgment isn't mentioned until verse 11 of chapter 20.

As stated earlier, Revelation chapter 20 covers the same ground as the six previous visions that we have viewed in the book of Revelation. However, there is a different point of emphasis here. The twelfth chapter of Revelation introduced five enemies of the Church. These enemies are all destroyed together. However, the account of their defeat is described over a period of three different visions. We have previously seen the fall of the men having the mark of the beast as well as the fall of the sea beast, the earth beast, and Babylon. The only information lacking is that concerning the dragon or Satan

himself. Satan's fall is the focus of the present vision. We are reminded of the theme of the entire book: the victory of Christ and His Church over Satan and his allies. When Satan is cast into the lake of fire, that final victory is secured forever.

1. The Binding of Satan (20:1-3)

We will first examine this vision where Satan is bound and cast into the abyss. John sees an angel coming down out of heaven. He is holding the key of the abyss so that he can lock it. The angel also is holding a chain so that he can bind someone and throw him into the abyss. While John is watching, he also sees the dragon (strong and ugly), the serpent of old (deceptive). The dragon is further described as the devil (slanderer) and Satan (adversary or accuser). John notes that the angel overpowers the dragon and binds him securely. The angel then hurls him into the abyss and locks it, so that the devil will remain locked up for a thousand years. Afterwards, Satan must be loosed for a short time. Now that we have viewed the scene, we ask, "What does this symbolism mean?" Let us first ask what this symbolism would have meant to those alive at the time of John's writing. In your thoughts, surround yourself with the paganism of the Roman Empire. Heathenism was everywhere dominant, but Christianity was beginning to make its mark through the spread of the gospel and the planting of local congregations. Now, move back further in time to the period before Christ's ascension. All the nations, except Israel, were totally without God and completely under the power of the devil. There was no hope for the Gentiles (nations) under the Old Covenant. However, God's plan to bless all the nations was underway. When God prophesied the event of Christ's ascension, He said, "You are My Son; today I have begotten You. Ask of Me and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession." (Psalm 2:7-8) That was the prophecy! The deception that Satan used to hold the nations in bondage would be broken by the truth that Jesus is Lord. God began to fulfill this prophecy through the incarnation of Christ. Jesus began His ministry, which included casting out demons. When accused by the Pharisees of casting out these demons by the power of Satan, Jesus gave a very telling answer. He said, "But no one can enter the strong man's house and plunder his property unless he first binds the strong man, and then he will plunder his house." (Mark 3:27) Jesus clearly indicates that Satan is the strong man who must be bound before he can be plundered. This same word of "binding" used here is also used in Revelation chapter 20 to describe the binding of Satan. Christ's earthly ministry was beginning to loose the power of Satan over the nations. Remember the return of the seventy who rejoiced saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." To this Jesus responded, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning." (Luke 10:17-18) Also note that when the good news of Jesus began to rock the Gentile world, Jesus knew that the time for His death, resurrection, and ascension was drawing near. Upon hearing that the Gentiles were asking for Him, He said, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified." Later in this same discussion, Jesus spoke, "Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out." (John 12:31) Again, we note that Jesus spoke of Satan being "cast out" in connection with His ascension. This corroborates what we have already determined from Revelation 20 about Satan being cast into the abyss. Colossians 2:15 relates the resurrection of Christ with His triumph over Satan and his armies. As we

studied earlier, Revelation 12 definitely shows that Satan was cast out of heaven as a result of Christ's coronation. Notice that in all of the previous passages, the casting out of Satan was in some way associated with the first coming of Christ and not with His second coming. There is no doubt that before Christ's coming, salvation was limited primarily to the Jews. But with Christ's incarnation and ultimately His coronation, the nations would have opportunity to receive the blessing of Abraham. Satan is bound so that he may deceive the nations no longer. Truth seekers from every nation will now be saved. In examining Revelation 20 in light of the whole of Scripture, we conclude that the binding of Satan indicates that his influence on earth in regards to the work of the Church is limited. The devil is prevented from causing the nations to destroy the evangelistic work of the Church. As the Church preaches the Word of God, men from every nation are transferred from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. The nations do not conquer the Church; rather, the Church is victorious over the world. Only those who are blind to history are unable to recognize the glories of the present millennial age. Do not misunderstand what is being said. The Scriptures are not speaking of an earthly utopia where everyone responds to the gospel. God is clear that many are called, but few are chosen. The road to heaven will always be narrow, and few will find it. However, now that Satan is bound, the Gentiles have the opportunity to be a part of God's chosen race. The Church exerts a tremendous amount of good upon the whole world. In that sense, the devil is bound. Satan is not bound in every sense; he rages furiously within his sphere of influence. Just as a chained dog can do no damage outside his circle of freedom, neither can Satan touch the true work of the Church. However, both the dog and the devil will cause great harm within their realms. Next, we will see that the binding of Satan and the reign of the saints both are closely related. The fact that Christ reigns in and from heaven is the basis for the interpretation of all the visions of Revelation. Understanding His present reign certainly is the key to understanding the thousand years.

2. The Reign of the Saints (20:4-6)

In order to properly understand the reign of the saints, we must first answer three questions. First, where does this reign take place? We are given three pieces of information concerning the location of this reign. 1) The thousand-year reign occurs where the thrones are (vs. 4). We know that the thrones are in heaven. 2) The reign occurs at the place of the souls of the martyrs (vs. 4). Again, we know that this is in the heavenly realm. 3) The millennial reign occurs where Jesus lives (vs. 4). Christ certainly reigns from heaven. Now that we recognize that this is a heavenly reign, we must ask of what this reign consists. The nature of this reign can be summarized in three ways. 1) It is judging with Christ. Here in verse four as well as throughout the book of Revelation, we see that the saints agree with the judgments of God. 2) It is living with Christ. Whether physically alive or dead, the abundant life is available only in Christ. Romans 6:11 tells Christians to consider themselves as "dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus." 3) It is the first resurrection. This is a description of those who have been immersed into Christ. Colossians 3:1 makes it clear that the true Christian has been raised with Christ. Upon recognizing the location and nature of this millennial reign, our final question is, who participates in this reign? This is pretty easy to identify after

answering the previous questions. Every Christian, both he who is physically alive and he who has left behind this physical body, is now reigning with Christ. Every single person who has been immersed into Christ has had a part in the first resurrection. The book of Ephesians reminds us that all Christians have been raised with Christ and seated with Him in the heavenly places (Ephesians 2:4-7). Philippians 3:20-21 reminds us that Christians are citizens of the heavenly realm. This reign of the saints does not end when our physical heart stops beating. As Jesus made clear in John 11, every Christian who physically dies shall continue to live through the power of Christ. Also note that those who reign with Christ are priests of God. The second chapter of Peter points out that every Christian throughout the Church age is a priest of God. What an awesome message of triumph for the Christian! We actually reign with Christ throughout the millennium, which is the entire Church age.

3. The Final Conflict (20:7-10)

When the thousand years are completed, Satan is released from the locked abyss. The final and most terrible persecution will then be directed by Satan himself against the Church. The devil gathers Gog and Magog for a final attack against the camp of the saints. The Biblical origin of Gog and Magog comes from Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39. Therein is communicated a great attack by Gog against God's people. However, that which looked like certain victory for Gog turned into the worst kind of defeat. A complete destruction of Gog was brought about by the forces of God. God's people enjoyed an overwhelming victory, not by their might but by the power of God. In the same way, the book of Revelation paints this attack by Gog and Magog as a symbol of Satan's final attack against the Church. The point of this symbolism is that the whole world is going to be joined together in battle against the Church of the living God. However, God will perform a miraculous work and crush the armies of Satan. This is the same battle that was described in chapter 16 and chapter 19. It is the battle of Har-Magedon in all three chapters. In each picture of this battle, there is sudden judgment from God upon the enemies of the Church. Suddenly, Christ will return and slay His adversaries. This is Christ's one and only coming in judgment. Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire where the beast and false prophet are also. The description of the fall of the beast and false prophet has already been described in Revelation 19. All three – the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet – go down together. However, the emphasis of chapter 20 is the fall of the dragon.

4. The Great White Throne (20:11-15)

Christ's return for judgment is intensely described. John views a great white throne upon which Christ is seated. Both heaven and earth flee from the face of Christ. The old heavens and earth will be dissolved on this final day. Next, John beholds the dead, great and small, standing before the throne. Every single individual who has ever lived will stand before the judgment seat of Christ. The books are opened for judgment (the recorded word of God – John 12:48, Hebrews 12:25-29). Another book, the book of life, is opened in order to reveal those who are in Christ. The dead are judged in accordance with their works. The sea gives up its dead (those that have died in Christ), and so do

death and Hades. Here is the one, general resurrection from the dead that takes place on the last day (John 5:28-29). Christians and non-Christians alike are raised at the same time. Everyone will receive a new body prepared for the eternal place of each soul. Death, separation of soul and body, and Hades, the place of separation, are both hurled into the lake of fire. Every single person whose name was not written in the book of life is also cast into that lake of fire. Fellow Christians, be ready for the judgment day. Look forward with confidence to that day so that you may not shrink back in shame. For those who overcome, this is a day of great expectation. Maranatha – Come Lord Jesus!

II. God's Final Triumph

We have reached the final and most beautiful theme of all Scripture. There is a tremendous tie between the first book of the Bible and the last. God is the perfect communicator, and He ends His communication to man by connecting back to the beginning of His message. Genesis speaks of heaven and earth, while Revelation speaks of a new heaven and a new earth. We learn of the light and the sun, moon, and stars in Genesis, and in Revelation we learn of the Lamb that is the true source of light. Genesis shows us the paradise that was lost; Revelation pictures a paradise that has been eternally restored. The first book tells us of the power of the devil, while the last book shows him being cast into the eternal lake of fire. Genesis shows the horrible consequence of sin, separation from and lost communication with God. Revelation pictures the most intimate communion between God and the redeemed. God's beginning message gave us a view of an angel guarding the tree of life of which no one could ever partake. God's last words show saints with everlasting access to the tree of life. The whole message of history is now complete. The theme of God's Word is fully spoken: Christ is victorious over the devil! By the power of Christ, we are more than conquerors and we receive the reward that goes to the victors. This having been understood, we may ask, "What is really pictured in chapters 21 and 22? Is it the Church as it is now, or the Church as it will be in heaven?" In one sense it is both – God gives us a picture of the ideal Church, the Church as it should be now and certainly will be in heaven. As an example, consider Revelation 21:3, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them." We recognize this verse as that which the New Testament Scriptures describe as being fulfilled already under the New Covenant (e.g. 2 Corinthians 6:16). However, that divine indwelling will be perfected in the future when our faith has become sight. In the same way, examine Revelation 21:5, "Behold, I am making all things new." Again, we understand that this promise has been fulfilled for every single Christian – 2 Corinthians 5:17. Yet, there is a sense in which the complete realization of this newness awaits us in heaven. Certainly, the Church is the bride now, and is currently contrasted with the harlot. But the bride in all of her glory will be completely revealed only at the return of Jesus Christ.

1. The New Heaven and the New Earth (21:1-8)

The first heaven and the first earth have passed away as they have been destroyed by fire. The old order of things has disappeared. The universe in which the dragon carried out his agenda has been forever destroyed. Thankfully, there is a new world order where peace

reigns. John views the holy city, New Jerusalem as coming down out of heaven. This city is clearly the Church of the living God, since she is also called the bride, the wife of the Lamb. The symbolism of a city communicates the ideas of permanent residence, a great population, security, and fellowship. This particular city is a heavenly city; it has been born from above. This is the city for which the faithful patriarchs longed, and the New Testament saints experienced in part on earth. The eternal Church is also described in terms of an everlasting wedding supper. This is the climax of the whole process wherein God comes to His people. He dwells with His people in close fellowship in one tabernacle. God wipes away every tear; there is joy eternal. God's people continually worship Him in the temple. They sit with Him on the throne, and eat with Him continually. In beautiful symbolism, God describes the eternal fellowship that He has with His people. As far as John's vision is concerned, these things have already been accomplished. He actually views the new heavens and the new earth. The life-giving fellowship of the Holy Spirit is pictured as springs of the water of life. The conqueror receives all of these blessings, and is forever a son of God. The promises of the gospel are perfectly realized in the new heaven and earth. To further emphasize the total joy of this eternal dwelling, there is given the contrast of sinners in the lake of fire. Christians, your place of dwelling in the eternal realm is worth the sacrifice of the old world.

2. The New Jerusalem (21:9-22:5)

Over the ruins of the harlot-city of verse eight appears the glorious vision of the bride-city coming down out of heaven from God. The New Jerusalem is the ideal Church of the future foreshadowed by the ideal Church of the present. The Spirit carries John to a high mountain where he sees the New Jerusalem. He was promised a glimpse of the bride and beholds a city. Obviously, the city is the bride and both symbolize the Church of Jesus Christ. For us to have a true appreciation of the glory and splendor of the Church, we also must view it from a high mountain – the mountain of faith.

a. This is a City, the Holy City, Jerusalem (21:10,16,18)

This city is the community of those souls who have fellowship with God. This communion is an everlasting and holy relationship enjoyed by a great multitude. The city belongs to the heavenly realm as is signified by its coming down out of heaven. New Jerusalem is pure gold, like pure glass. This communicates the pure and radiant character of the fellowship between God and His people. Finally, this city is a perfect cube – 12,000 stadia in every direction. We see that this is a picture of the perfect and complete Church of the living God – 12 x 10 x 10 x 10, length, width, and height. The perfect cube was foreshadowed by the Most Holy Place in the Temple. There the high priest entered into the presence of God. In the heavenly temple, every Christian is a priest and is continually in God's presence.

b. This Holy City is the Bride, the Wife of the Lamb (21:9)

We examined this symbol in detail in Revelation 19:7. The marriage symbolism communicates the intimacy and love of our eternal relationship with Christ.

c. The Holy City has a Source of Light, the Glory of God in the Lamb (21:11,23; 22:5)
The light-bearer is the glory of the One sitting upon the throne. In Christ, the glory of God becomes manifest in the Church. There is no night, nor a need for any other source of light. This is the message: “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all” – 1 John 1:5.

d. There is no Temple in this City, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb are its Temple (21:22)

No longer is there a need for the inhabitants to go to the Temple in order to worship. God tabernacles with His people; Christians are always in fellowship with Him. The prophecy of Jeremiah 3:16-17, which certainly has application in the present Church, is fully realized in the New Jerusalem.

e. New Jerusalem has a Wall, Great and High (21:12,17,18)

A city has a wall for safety and protection. This symbolism communicates that the Church remains secure in its relationship with God. The wall measures 144 cubits – 12 x 12 – a symbol of the Church, both Old and New Testaments. What is more glorious than the sense of total security with God?

f. The Wall has Twelve Foundation Stones (21:14,19,20)

On these twelve foundation stones appear the names of the twelve apostles. According to Ephesians 2:21, the apostles are the foundation of the Church, while Jesus Christ Himself is the chief cornerstone. Every stone of this city is incredibly precious and valuable, indicating the worth of each soul in the Church.

g. The City has Twelve Gates (21:12,13,21,25,27; 22:14,15)

On the gates are written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, for the city is the true Israel. There are three gates for each direction, symbolizing that the Church is gathered out of all the nations. Remember the words of Jesus on numerous occasions, “And they will come from east and west and from north and south, and will recline at the table in the kingdom of God.” (Luke 13:29) Anyone who is unclean cannot make it past the twelve angels standing at the gates.

h. The City has a Street of Pure Gold, Like Glass (21:21)

Inside each gate is the street of gold. This street is the means of communication with the throne, the river of life, and the tree of life.

i. The City has a River of the Water of Life, Clear as Crystal, Flowing from the Throne of God and of the Lamb (22:1)

This river is the river of life for it symbolizes the eternal life, which is granted to every Christian. This river comes from the throne of God and of the Lamb. We understand that it is God who is the source of life – Acts 3:19. Note the holy character of this life – the water is crystal clear. Again, we see a connection with the rest of Scripture wherein the Holy Spirit is described as the rivers of living water.

j. Between the River and the Street there is the Tree of Life (21:1-2)

The river flows through the middle of the street. On either side of the river is the tree of life. This tree bears fruit regularly every month. The point is that there is plenty for everyone forevermore. Here in the New Jerusalem, the garden is inside the city. There is an abundance of eternal life for all the citizens.

k. In this City is the Throne of God and of the Lamb (22:3,4)

The throne symbolizes sovereignty; God is over all and in all and through all. In the New Jerusalem, this sovereignty is displayed through love, not wrath. The citizens behold the face of God and worship Him joyfully.

l. Who are the Inhabitants of this City? (21:7,12,24,27; 22:3,14)

The citizens are the conquerors of true Israel. The inhabitants are those whose names have been recorded in the Lamb's book of life.

Note that all of the above symbols are realized through faith now in the present Church, and will be perfectly experienced in the eternal Kingdom.

3. Conclusion (22:6-21)

First, the angel who showed John these visions attests that the book of Revelation is of divine origin. The angel quotes Christ's own words, "Behold, I am coming quickly." Next, John bears witness that he has truly seen these visions. Then the angel tells John not to seal up the words of the prophecy for the time is near. The prophecies begin to be fulfilled at once. We are exhorted to let the man alone who has not heeded the words of the good message, nor appropriately responded to the warnings of judgments. We are also told not to hinder those who are practicing righteousness. The angel again quotes Jesus, "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me." The promises and threats of Christ Jesus have eternal significance for He is the Alpha and the Omega. Finally, we are told that there is a blessing for those who wash their robes. The Christian needs to be continually developing the character of Christ. We know that we first receive our clean robe when we are immersed into Christ. At that point, the blood of Jesus cleanses us and we are clothed with Christ. However, we need to continue to be made new by the sanctifying work of the Spirit in our lives.

In this final section of the book there are three witnesses. The angel is the first witness, John is the second, and Christ Himself is the last. Jesus tells us that He sent His angel to give John this message. The Apocalypse is intended for all the Churches throughout the Church age. The glorified Christ is the Author of this book, and He expects all who have ears to listen intently. Christ has promised to come quickly, and the Bride responds by saying, "Come." In other words, we pray for God to carry out His plan in history in order that Jesus may come soon. We have seen that God's plan of history includes principles of moral government revealed under the symbolism of lampstands, seals, trumpets, conflict with the dragon and his allies, bowls of wrath, the wedding of the Lamb, etc. By all these means, Christ's coming is being fulfilled. Whoever reads and understands this book should add his amen and cry out, "Come, Lord Jesus." There is a final invitation

from the voice of the throne: “Let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.” Christ paid the price; come and drink freely.

Since the book of Revelation is such a great summary book of the Bible, there is a special warning given that no one add to or subtract from this book. If a person refuses to heed this warning, the plagues written in the book will be added to him

Christ answers the fervent prayer of the Church for His coming by saying, “Yes, I am coming quickly.” Let us, therefore, heed His warnings. John’s soul is consumed with longing. May we join him as he says, “Amen, come, Lord Jesus.”

Prepare for test #5

REVELATION TEST #1 REVIEW

- 1) Be familiar with who wrote the book of Revelation as well as the approximate time of the writing.
- 2) Know the author and title of the book from which notes were taken for this class.
- 3) Know the theme and purpose of the book of Revelation.
- 4) Know the two main divisions of the book of Revelation (the main view of each) and the chapters that cover each of those main sections.
- 5) Be able to match up the seven sections of the book of Revelation under the two main divisions as well as matching them with the chapters covered by each section.
- 6) The book of Revelation is a beautiful summary of the whole Bible. Be able to match each of the seven sections with a Scripture verse communicating the main point of the section.
- 7) Know the five enemies of the church pictured in chapters 12-14.
- 8) In general terms, explain what each of these enemies represent.
- 9) In the Apocalypse, there is a progressive teaching concerning the final judgment. In Proposition IV, Hendriksen has a phrase to describe this. Be familiar with this phrase.
- 10) Understand the difference between trumpets and bowls.
- 11) The book of Revelation consists of moving pictures. There is always a central theme as well as details. Know two questions that should always be asked in reference to these pictures.
- 12) Understand the two types of symbols in the book of Revelation and what these refer to.
- 13) Know the two main points that need to be kept in mind when interpreting the book of Revelation and the whole Bible.

REVELATION TEST #1 (overview of the book)

(5 points each unless otherwise stated)

- 1) Who wrote the book of Revelation? Who is the author?
- 2) What is the title of the book from which notes have been taken for this class?
Who is the author?
- 3) Which of the following statements are true? (Underline all correct answers).
 - a) The book of Revelation was written before the destruction of Jerusalem.
 - b) The book of Revelation was written after the destruction of Jerusalem.
 - c) The book of Revelation was written from Ephesus.
 - d) The book of Revelation was written around 70 A.D.
- 4) The purpose of the book of Revelation is: (Hint: only one correct answer).
 - a) To tell the future so that we know when Christ will return.
 - b) To comfort the Church in its battle against the forces of evil.
 - c) To prepare the true Church for the rapture.
 - d) To enable us to link certain prophecies with exact dates of history.
- 5) What is the theme of the book of Revelation?
- 6) Match the following Scripture references with the corresponding verse. (6 points)

_____ Romans 8:37	a. "Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword."
_____ Matthew 10:34	b. "For we walk by faith, not by sight."
_____ 2 Corinthians 5:7	c. "But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us."
- 7) List the two main divisions of the book of Revelation (the main view of each) and the chapters that correspond with those divisions.
- 8) Match the following chapter divisions with the pictures they show. (7 points)

_____ Chapters 1-3	a. The seven trumpets of judgment.
_____ Chapters 4-7	b. New Jerusalem and judgment upon the dragon.
_____ Chapters 8-11	c. Christ in the midst of the seven lampstands.
_____ Chapters 12-14	d. The book with the seven seals.
_____ Chapters 15-16	e. The seven bowls of wrath.
_____ Chapters 17-19	f. The woman and the Man-child persecuted by the dragon.
_____ Chapters 20-22	g. The fall of the great harlot and the beasts.

- 9) What is the difference between trumpets of judgment and bowls of wrath?
- 10) Fill in the blank. Always allow _____ to interpret Scripture.
- 11) List the five enemies of the Church pictured in chapters 12-14.
- 12) Hendriksen makes the point that in the book of Revelation, the final judgment is first _____, then _____, and finally _____.
- 13) Give a brief explanation of the beast from the sea, the beast from the earth, and Babylon.
- 14) The book of Revelation consists of moving pictures, each of which has a central theme in the midst of the details. What two questions should always be asked in reference to these pictures?
- 15) The book of Revelation is a beautiful summary of the whole Bible. Match each of these sections with a Scripture verse communicating the main point. (7 points)
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| _____ Chapters 1-3 | a. 1 John 2:17 “And the world is passing away, and also its lusts...” |
| _____ Chapters 4-7 | b. Romans 8:37 “But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer...” |
| _____ Chapters 8-11 | c. Matthew 5:14 “You are the light of the world.” |
| _____ Chapters 12-14 | d. Romans 2:5 “But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath...” |
| _____ Chapters 15-16 | e. John 16:33 “In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.” |
| _____ Chapters 17-19 | f. Genesis 3:15 “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed...” |
| _____ Chapters 20-22 | g. Luke 18:7 “Now shall not God bring about justice for His elect, who cry to Him day and night...?” |
- 16) What two main points need to be kept in mind when interpreting the book of Revelation and the whole Bible?

- 17) Who do the men with the mark of the beast represent?
- 18) In the book of Revelation there are two types of symbols. The first type of symbols deal with the beginning and end of the church age, while the other type covers the time between Christ's first and second coming. To what do the first symbols refer? To what do the second symbols generally refer?
- 19) Give a paragraph explaining why you are excited to study the book of Revelation.

REVELATION TEST #1 (overview of the book) KEY

(5 points each unless otherwise stated)

- 1) Who wrote the book of Revelation? Who is the author?
The apostle John, God
- 2) What is the title of the book from which notes have been taken for this class?
Who is the author? ***“More than Conquerors,” William Hendriksen***
- 3) Which of the following statements are true? (Underline all correct answers).
- a. The book of Revelation was written before the destruction of Jerusalem.
 - b. *The book of Revelation was written after the destruction of Jerusalem.***
 - c. The book of Revelation was written from Ephesus.
 - d. The book of Revelation was written around 70 A.D.
- 4) The purpose of the book of Revelation is: (Hint: only one correct answer).
- a. To tell the future so that we know when Christ will return.
 - b. *To comfort the Church in its battle against the forces of evil.***
 - c. To prepare the true Church for the rapture.
 - d. To enable us to link certain prophecies with exact dates of history.
- 5) What is the theme of the book of Revelation?
The victory of Christ and His Church over the dragon (Satan) and his helpers
- 6) Match the following Scripture references with the corresponding verse. (6 points)
- | | |
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| <u> c </u> Romans 8:37 | a. “Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.” |
| <u> a </u> Matthew 10:34 | b. “For we walk by faith, not by sight.” |
| <u> b </u> 2 Corinthians 5:7 | c. “But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.” |
- 7) List the two main divisions of the book of Revelation (the main view of each) and the chapters that correspond with those divisions.
- 1) Struggle on earth, the Church vs. the world, the Church is victorious. (1-11)***
 - 2) The spiritual background. Christ and His Church vs. Satan and his helpers. Christ and His Church are victorious. (Chapters 12-22)***
- 8) Match the following chapter divisions with the pictures they show. (7 points)
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|-----------------------------|--|
| <u> c </u> Chapters 1-3 | a. The seven trumpets of judgment. |
| <u> d </u> Chapters 4-7 | b. New Jerusalem and judgment upon the dragon. |
| <u> a </u> Chapters 8-11 | c. Christ in the midst of the seven lampstands. |
| <u> f </u> Chapters 12-14 | d. The book with the seven seals. |
| <u> e </u> Chapters 15-16 | e. The seven bowls of wrath. |
| <u> g </u> Chapters 17-19 | f. The woman and the Man-child persecuted by the dragon. |
| <u> b </u> Chapters 20-22 | g. The fall of the great harlot and the beasts. |

- 9) What is the difference between trumpets of judgment and bowls of wrath?
Trumpets warn, bowls are poured out.
- 10) Fill in the blank. Always allow **Scripture** to interpret Scripture.
- 11) List the five enemies of the Church pictured in chapters 12-14.
***1) the dragon 2) the beast from the sea 3) the beast from the earth
4) Babylon, the great harlot 5) men having the mark of the beast***
- 12) Hendriksen makes the point that in the book of Revelation, the final judgment is first **announced**, then **introduced**, and finally **described**.
- 13) Give a brief explanation of the beast from the sea, the beast from the earth, and Babylon.
***Sea-born beast – antichristian government
Earth-born beast – antichristian religion
Babylon – antichristian seduction***
- 14) The book of Revelation consists of moving pictures, each of which has a central theme in the midst of the details. What two questions should always be asked in reference to these pictures?
***1) What is the entire picture?
2) What is the predominant idea?***
- 15) The book of Revelation is a beautiful summary of the whole Bible. Match each of these sections with a Scripture verse communicating the main point. (7 points)
- | | |
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| <u>c</u> Chapters 1-3 | a. 1 John 2:17 “And the world is passing away, and also its lusts...” |
| <u>e</u> Chapters 4-7 | b. Romans 8:37 “But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer...” |
| <u>g</u> Chapters 8-11 | c. Matthew 5:14 “You are the light of the world.” |
| <u>f</u> Chapters 12-14 | d. Romans 2:5 “But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath...” |
| <u>d</u> Chapters 15-16 | e. John 16:33 “In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.” |
| <u>a</u> Chapters 17-19 | f. Genesis 3:15 “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed...” |
| <u>b</u> Chapters 20-22 | g. Luke 18:7 “Now shall not God bring about justice for His elect, who cry to Him day and night...?” |
- 16) What two main points need to be kept in mind when interpreting the book of Revelation and the whole Bible?
1) The contemporary background 2) The whole context of Scripture

17) Who do the men with the mark of the beast represent?

Those who refuse to heed the warnings of the trumpets

18) In the book of Revelation there are two types of symbols. The first type of symbols deal with the beginning and end of the church age, while the other type covers the time between Christ's first and second coming. To what do the first symbols refer? To what do the second symbols generally refer?

The first type of symbols refer to specific events, while the second type refer to constant principles of human conduct and divine moral government.

19) Give a paragraph explaining why you are excited to study the book of Revelation.

Answers may vary.

REVELATION TEST #2 REVIEW

- 1) Be familiar with main points from Test #1
- 2) Know the six links of the revelation of God's plan for the world.
- 3) Know the seven churches of Asia.
- 4) Be able to give a description of the glorified Son of Man.
- 5) Be able to establish from Revelation chapter 1 that Jesus is Yahweh.
- 6) Know some facts about the return of Christ.
- 7) Understand the composition of God's kingdom. Know a N.T. passage making this point.
- 8) Know the phrase in chapter 1 that fills us with confidence concerning the issue of death.
- 9) Be aware of the two churches that Christ praised but did not rebuke.
- 10) Be familiar with the church that received no praise from our Lord.
- 11) Understand what "first love" means when speaking to the Church.
- 12) Be familiar with 3 false doctrines specifically mentioned in the letters to the churches and know the main justification of these teachings.
- 13) Understand Christ's admonition as to what we are to do with our ears.
- 14) Know who, in every case, will receive the promised reward from Christ.
- 15) Understand the three areas from which temptation to become worldly sprang up in John's day.
- 16) Be able to explain how you are sure that you are being a light in the world.
- 17) Know general information about each of the churches.
- 18) Be familiar with the description of what Jesus has done with our sins.

REVELATION TEST #2 (Chapters 1-3)
(5 points each unless otherwise stated)

- 1) What two churches received only praise from our Lord?

- 2) Match the following chapter divisions with the pictures they show. (7 points)

_____ Chapters 1-3	a. The seven trumpets of judgment.
_____ Chapters 4-7	b. New Jerusalem and judgment upon the dragon.
_____ Chapters 8-11	c. Christ in the midst of the seven lampstands.
_____ Chapters 12-14	d. The book with the seven seals.
_____ Chapters 15-16	e. The seven bowls of wrath.
_____ Chapters 17-19	f. The woman and the Man-child persecuted by the dragon.
_____ Chapters 20-22	g. The fall of the great harlot and the beasts.

- 3) Jesus created us with one mouth and two ears. What are we to do if we have an ear according to the messages to the churches?

- 4) How would you establish from the first chapter of Revelation that Jesus is Yahweh?

- 5) According to Revelation chapter 1, what has Jesus done concerning our sins?

- 6) One of the churches is admonished for losing its first love. Explain what this means in light of the letter to the church.

- 7) Give information about the following picture of the glorified Christ. (6 points)
1) Like a son of _____. 2) Head and hair _____.
3) Feet like _____. 4) Eyes like _____.
5) Voice like _____. 6) His face _____.

- 8) List the six links of the revelation of God's plan for the world.

- 9) What church received no praise from the Lord?

- 10) From Revelation chapter 1, list two facts about Christ's return.

- 11) What is the theme of the book of Revelation?
- 12) Jesus has a kingdom that is not of this world, but has influence in the world. According to Revelation chapter 1, of what is this kingdom composed? Also, give a corresponding N.T. passage that makes the same point (book and chapter).
- 13) Three false doctrines are called by name in the letters to the churches. List these along with the main theme of these false teachings.

- 14) Give the name of the church that corresponds with the given information. (7 pts.)

- | | |
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| _____ | “First City of Asia in beauty and size.”
Reminded to be “faithful until death.” |
| _____ | Jesus threatens to vomit them out of His mouth.
Jesus stands at the door and knocks. |
| _____ | Dead church that will be surprised at Jesus’ coming.
A few names that had clean garments. |
| _____ | Praised for testing false apostles.
Warned that the lampstand would be removed. |
| _____ | Praised for having a little power.
A door would be opened that no one could shut. |
| _____ | Known as a city of trade.
Christ searches the minds and the hearts. |
| _____ | Known as a center of emperor-worship.
Jesus will make war with the sword of His mouth. |

- 15) A reward is promised at the end of each letter. In every single case, there is one type of person who receives the reward. What does it take to be rewarded?
- 16) What two main points need to be kept in mind when interpreting the book of Revelation and the whole Bible.

- 17) Temptation for those in the early church to become worldly came from three main sources. List these areas of temptation.

- 18) Give the quote from Jesus in chapter 1 that fills us with confidence concerning the issue of death.

- 19) Write a paragraph explaining how you are being a light in the world.

REVELATION TEST #2 (Chapters 1-3)

(5 points each unless otherwise stated)

- 1) What two churches received only praise from our Lord? ***Smyrna and Philadelphia***

- 2) Match the following chapter divisions with the pictures they show. (7 points)

<u>c</u>	Chapters 1-3	a. The seven trumpets of judgment.
<u>d</u>	Chapters 4-7	b. New Jerusalem and judgment upon the dragon.
<u>a</u>	Chapters 8-11	c. Christ in the midst of the seven lampstands.
<u>f</u>	Chapters 12-14	d. The book with the seven seals.
<u>e</u>	Chapters 15-16	e. The seven bowls of wrath.
<u>g</u>	Chapters 17-19	f. The woman and the Man-child persecuted by the dragon.
<u>b</u>	Chapters 20-22	g. The fall of the great harlot and the beasts.

- 3) Jesus created us with one mouth and two ears. What are we to do if we have an ear according to the messages to the churches?
He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

- 4) How would you establish from the first chapter of Revelation that Jesus is Yahweh? ***God the Father is described as He who is and who was and who is to come. Later in the same chapter, Jesus takes this title for Himself.***

- 5) According to Revelation chapter 1, what has Jesus done concerning our sins?
He has released us from our sins by His blood.

- 6) One of the churches is admonished for losing its first love. Explain what this means in light of the letter to the church. ***Ephesus had lost its first love. This love of Christ apparently had to do with the expression of love for the lost through seeking and saving the lost.***

- 7) Give information about the following picture of the glorified Christ. (6 points)
 - 1) Like a son of man.
 - 2) Head and hair white like white wool, like snow.
 - 3) Feet like burnished bronze.
 - 4) Eyes like a flame of fire.
 - 5) Voice like the sound of many waters.
 - 6) His face like the sun shining in its strength.

- 8) List the six links of the revelation of God's plan for the world.
God, Christ, the angel, John, the reader, and the hearer

- 9) What church received no praise from the Lord? ***Laodicea***

- 10) From Revelation chapter 1, list two facts about Christ's return.
Jesus is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him.

- 11) What is the theme of the book of Revelation?
The victory of Christ and His church over the dragon (Satan) and his helpers
- 12) Jesus has a kingdom that is not of this world, but has influence in the world.
 According to Revelation chapter 1, of what is this kingdom composed? Also, give a corresponding N.T. passage that makes the same point.
He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father. 1 Peter 2:4-10
- 13) Three false doctrines are called by name in the letters to the churches. List these along with the main theme of these false teachings. *The teaching of the Nicolaitans, the teaching of Balaam, and the teaching of Jezebel – each of these doctrines attempted to justify idolatrous and immoral practices.*
- 14) Give the name of the church that corresponds with the given information. (7 pts.)
- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| <u><i>Smyrna</i></u> | “First City of Asia in beauty and size.”
Reminded to be “faithful until death.” |
| <u><i>Laodicea</i></u> | Jesus threatens to vomit them out of His mouth.
Jesus stands at the door and knocks. |
| <u><i>Sardis</i></u> | Dead church that will be surprised at Jesus’ coming.
A few names that had clean garments. |
| <u><i>Ephesus</i></u> | Praised for testing false apostles.
Warned that the lampstand would be removed. |
| <u><i>Philadelphia</i></u> | Praised for having a little power.
A door would be opened that no one could shut. |
| <u><i>Thyatira</i></u> | Known as a city of trade.
Christ searches the minds and the hearts. |
| <u><i>Pergamum</i></u> | Known as a center of emperor-worship.
Jesus will make war with the sword of His mouth. |
- 15) A reward is promised at the end of each letter. In every single case, there is one type of person who receives the reward. What does it take to be rewarded?
He who overcomes or conquers will be rewarded.
- 16) What two main points need to be kept in mind when interpreting the book of Revelation and the whole Bible.
 1) *The contemporary background* 2) *The whole context of Scripture*

- 17) Temptation for those in the early church to become worldly came from three main sources. List these areas of temptation. **1) antichristian persecution at the hands of the Jews and the Romans 2) antichristian religion or emperor worship 3) antichristian seduction; indulgence of the flesh in immoral feasts to ensure economic prosperity**
- 18) Give the quote from Jesus in chapter 1 that fills us with confidence concerning the issue of death. **“Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.”**
- 19) Write a paragraph explaining how you are being a light in the world.
Answers will vary.

REVELATION TEST #3 REVIEW

- 1) Be familiar with main points from test #1.
- 2) Know the main point of the vision of the throne in chapter 4.
- 3) Be able to explain the symbolism of the twenty-four elders.
- 4) Understand the significance of the sealed scroll being opened.
- 5) Know the groups that make up the kingdom of priests.
- 6) Be able to give an explanation of the first four seals – the four horses and their riders.
- 7) Know why the souls of the martyrs are shown underneath the bronze altar and be able to give at least one N.T. scripture that makes the same point.
- 8) Be able to give a one-word description of the seven seals.
- 9) Know which seal gives a picture of the judgment day.
- 10) Understand why the saints are shown as being sealed on their foreheads.
- 11) Know what comes out of the seventh seal.
- 12) Understand the significance of incense being added to the prayers of the saints.
- 13) Know the main point of the first four trumpets.
- 14) Be able to explain from chapter 9 what lets you know that God allows Satan to work in limited fashion upon the earth. Be able to give a supporting Scripture.
- 15) Understand the significance of Christ pictured as a Lion and as a Lamb.
- 16) Understand the significance of the seven thunders.
- 17) Know why there is a pause between the sixth and seventh seals as well as the sixth and seventh trumpets.
- 18) Understand why the book tastes sweet, but is bitter in the belly.
- 19) Know why the temple is measured and the court rejected.
- 20) Know the period of time that Jerusalem will be trampled under foot and that the two witnesses will prophecy.

- 21) Know the means by which the Church bears witness and supporting Scriptures.
- 22) Know the two other Scriptural pictures for the two witnesses.
- 23) Understand the meaning of the 3 ½ days of death for the two witnesses.
- 24) Know how the world responds to the trumpets of judgment.
- 25) Know the terminology used to describe Christ under the seventh trumpet and understand why that phrase is used.

REVELATION TEST #3 (Chapters 4-11)

(4 points each unless otherwise stated)

- 1) In Revelation chapter 4, a door to heaven was opened and John was given a view of the throne. What is the main point of the vision of the throne in chapter 4?

- 2) In chapter 10, John eats a little book that was held by an angel. What is the result of his eating, and what does this signify?

- 3) The seven seals represent _____.
a. judgments b. persecutions c. wrath d. woes

- 4) Match the following chapter divisions with the pictures they show. (7 points)

_____ Chapters 1-3	a. The seven trumpets of judgment.
_____ Chapters 4-7	b. New Jerusalem and judgment upon the dragon.
_____ Chapters 8-11	c. Christ in the midst of the seven lampstands.
_____ Chapters 12-14	d. The book with the seven seals.
_____ Chapters 15-16	e. The seven bowls of wrath.
_____ Chapters 17-19	f. The woman and the Man-child persecuted by the dragon.
_____ Chapters 20-22	g. The fall of the great harlot and the beasts.

- 5) List the four horses of chapter 6 in order and briefly explain each.

- 6) In Revelation chapter 11, John is told to measure the temple, but to leave out the court. What is the message of this symbolism?

- 7) What is the overall response of the world to the trumpets of judgment?

- 8) What is symbolized by the death of the two witnesses for 3 ½ days?

- 9) Under which of the seven seals is the final judgment day pictured?
- 10) List the two main divisions of the book of Revelation (the main view of each) and the chapters that correspond with those divisions.
- 11) What symbolism from Revelation chapter 9 communicates that God allows Satan to work in limited fashion on this earth? Please briefly explain your answer with a supporting Scripture.
- 12) From the seven thunders, we learn that _____.
- a. God will judge the world.
 - b. God's voice will once more shake the heavens and the earth.
 - c. We will never know all the factors that determine the future.
 - d. Satan fell like lightning from heaven.
- 13) Why was it so important that One be found who was worthy to open the sealed book?
- 14) The description of Jesus the Christ is different under the seventh trumpet than it was earlier in the book. Give the exact phrase describing Christ according to Revelation 11:17. Explain why there is a revised description.
- 15) The Church is pictured as two witnesses in chapter 11 of Revelation. In what two ways does the Church bear witness? List a Scripture verse in support of both witnesses.
- 16) There is an interlude between the sixth and the seventh seal in which the saints of God are sealed on their foreheads. Briefly explain this seal and tell why it is on the forehead.

- 17) Christians are described in the book of Revelation as well as throughout the Scriptures as a kingdom of priests. According to chapter 5:9-10, this kingdom is made up of what people?
- 18) Jerusalem is trampled underfoot by the Gentiles for a certain period of time that is equivalent to the period of prophesying of the two witnesses. Give the appropriate description of this period of time for each of these cases.
- 19) Twenty-four elders are first mentioned in chapter 4 of Revelation. Briefly explain what they represent and how you reached that conclusion.
- 20) The Church is pictured as two witnesses in chapter 11. Two other synonymous pictures are also briefly mentioned in chapter 11. What are they?
- 21) Explain why Revelation chapter 5 shows Jesus both as a Lion and as a Lamb.
- 22) Briefly explain why, under the fifth seal, the souls of those slain for the word of God are pictured underneath the bronze altar? List at least one corresponding N.T. Scripture.
- 23) What arises out of the seventh seal?
- 24) Why was the angel at the golden altar given incense to add to the prayers of the saints?
- 25) Explain why there is a pause between the sixth and seventh trumpets.

REVELATION TEST #3 KEY (Chapters 4-11)

(4 points each unless otherwise stated)

- 1) In Revelation chapter 4, a door to heaven was opened and John was given a view of the throne. What is the main point of the vision of the throne in chapter 4?
The throne rules over all; history can only be properly understood from the perspective of the throne.

- 2) In chapter 10, John eats a little book that was held by an angel. What is the result of his eating, and what does this signify?
The book is sweet in his mouth and bitter in his stomach. This communicates that persecution always follows the proclamation of the sweet gospel.

- 3) The seven seals represent **b. persecutions**.
a. judgments b. persecutions c. wrath d. woes

- 4) Match the following chapter divisions with the pictures they show. (7 points)

<u>c</u> Chapters 1-3	a. The seven trumpets of judgment.
<u>d</u> Chapters 4-7	b. New Jerusalem and judgment upon the dragon.
<u>a</u> Chapters 8-11	c. Christ in the midst of the seven lampstands.
<u>f</u> Chapters 12-14	d. The book with the seven seals.
<u>e</u> Chapters 15-16	e. The seven bowls of wrath.
<u>g</u> Chapters 17-19	f. The woman and the Man-child persecuted by the dragon.
<u>b</u> Chapters 20-22	g. The fall of the great harlot and the beasts.

- 5) List the four horses of chapter 6 in order and briefly explain each.
1) the white horse – Jesus Christ the conqueror 2) the red horse – persecutions that follow Christ 3) the black horse – economic hardship 4) the pale horse – death

- 6) In Revelation chapter 11, John is told to measure the temple, but to leave out the court. What is the message of this symbolism?
Those who worship in Spirit and truth are set apart as holy and protected, while pseudo Christians are not protected by God.

- 7) What is the overall response of the world to the trumpets of judgment?
The world refuses to heed the trumpets and will not repent

- 8) What is symbolized by the death of the two witnesses for 3 ½ days?
The smothering of public proclamation of the gospel

- 9) Under which of the seven seals is the final judgment day pictured?
The sixth seal

- 10) List the two main divisions of the book of Revelation (the main view of each) and the chapters that correspond with those divisions.
- 1) *The struggle on earth. The Church vs. the world. The Church is victorious. (Chapters 1-11)***
- 2) *The spiritual background. Christ and His Church vs. Satan and his helpers. Christ and His Church are victorious (Chapters 12-22)***
- 11) What symbolism from Revelation chapter 9 communicates that God allows Satan to work in limited fashion on this earth? Please briefly explain your answer with a supporting Scripture.
- In chapter 9, an angel opens the shaft of the abyss and lets out locusts that sting like scorpions. These locusts have a king named Apollyon or Abaddon. Satanic influence is allowed by God to bring judgments upon the world. (2 Thessalonians 2:11-12)***
- 12) From the seven thunders, we learn that **c. we will never know all the factors that determine the future.**
- a. God will judge the world. b. God's voice will once more shake the heavens and the earth. c. We will never know all the factors that determine the future.
- a. Satan fell like lightning from heaven.
- 13) Why was it so important that One be found who was worthy to open the sealed book?
- When the book is sealed, God's plan remains hidden and unexecuted. When the book is opened, God's plan is revealed and carried out.***
- 14) The description of Jesus the Christ is different under the seventh trumpet than it was earlier in the book. Give the exact phrase describing Christ according to Revelation 11:17. Explain why there is a revised description.
- Jesus is now described as "the Almighty, who are and were." No longer is Christ the One Who is to come, because He now has come. Also, the plural shows that now Christ and the Father reign together.***
- 15) The Church is pictured as two witnesses in chapter 11 of Revelation. In what two ways does the Church bear witness? List a Scripture verse in support of both witnesses.
- The Church bears witness by means of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit. (John 5:39, Acts 5:32)***
- 16) There is an interlude between the sixth and the seventh seal in which the saints of God are sealed on their foreheads. Briefly explain this seal and tell why it is on the forehead.
- The seal is the mark of Christ upon all saints. It is on our foreheads because we have been given the mind of Christ. The seal shows that true Christians are protected from the judgments of God.***

- 17) Christians are described in the book of Revelation as well as throughout the Scriptures as a kingdom of priests. According to chapter 5:9-10, this kingdom is made up of what people?
Men from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation.
- 18) Jerusalem is trampled underfoot by the Gentiles for a certain period of time that is equivalent to the period of prophesying of the two witnesses. Give the appropriate description of this period of time for each of these cases.
Jerusalem is overrun for 42 months. The witnesses prophesy for 1260 days.
- 19) Twenty-four elders are first mentioned in chapter 4 of Revelation. Briefly explain what they represent and how you reached that conclusion.
The twenty-four elders are representative of God's people (the saved), both Old and New Testament. Twelve patriarchs symbolize the faithful of the Old Testament, while twelve apostles symbolize the faithful of spiritual Israel.
- 20) The Church is pictured as two witnesses in chapter 11. Two other synonymous pictures are also briefly mentioned in chapter 11. What are they?
Two olive trees, two lampstands.
- 21) Explain why Revelation chapter 5 shows Jesus both as a Lion and as a Lamb.
The Lion symbolizes that Christ is the great Conqueror, while the Lamb shows that He is the perfect sacrifice.
- 22) Briefly explain why, under the fifth seal, the souls of those slain for the word of God are pictured underneath the bronze altar? List at least one corresponding N.T. Scripture.
Just as the blood of animals was poured out on the altar of burnt offering in the Old Testament, so here the saints are shown as those who have offered their very lives in sacrifice to the Lord. (Romans 12:1, Colossians 1:24)
- 23) What arise out of the seventh seal?
The seven trumpets
- 24) Why was the angel at the golden altar given incense to add to the prayers of the saints?
To communicate the intercession of Christ (the Holy Spirit) in our prayer life
- 25) Explain why there is a pause between the sixth and seventh trumpets.
The rejection and sufferings of the Church at the hand of the world are shown before the final trumpet of judgment in order that Christians can rejoice when the world finally gets what it deserves.

REVELATION TEST #4 REVIEW

- 1) Be familiar with main points from test #1.
- 2) Understand the meaning of the woman, the child, and the dragon.
- 3) Be able to give a description of the dragon in chapter 12.
- 4) Know whom the dragon has chosen to fight and in what order he has taken on his foes.
- 5) Know the time when Satan was cast down from heaven.
- 6) Understand the significance of Satan being cast out of heaven. Know a N.T. Scripture that stresses the importance of this and ties it in with Christ's ascension.
- 7) Understand the time frame wherein the woman is protected from the dragon.
- 8) Know an Old Testament passage with an important period of 3 ½ years.
- 9) Understand the symbolism of the beast from the sea and the beast from the earth.
- 10) Be able to describe both the sea beast and the earth beast.
- 11) Know the time frame in which the sea beast wields his power.
- 12) Know a noteworthy fact about one of the heads of the sea beast and be able to give a reasonable explanation for the meaning.
- 13) Recognize the cooperation of the earth beast and the sea beast.
- 14) Understand what the earth beast requires of everyone.
- 15) Understand the number 666.
- 16) Be able to explain the 144,000 of chapter 14.
- 17) Understand the symbolism of Babylon.
- 18) Be able to give a brief picture of the Son of Man in chapter 14.
- 19) Understand the difference between trumpets and bowls.
- 20) Know at least one Scripture reference that communicates a point of no repentance.

- 21) Be able to explain why the sea of glass is mixed with fire.
- 22) Understand the significance of the seven angels of chapters 15 and 16 coming from the tabernacle of testimony.
- 23) Know the main point of the vision of the bowls.
- 24) Know what great war comes out of the sixth bowl.
- 25) Know which bowl gives a picture of the final judgment.

REVELATION TEST #4 (Chapters 12-16)

(5 points each unless otherwise stated)

- 1) In Revelation chapter 12, John views a couple of signs in heaven. He beholds both a dragon and a woman about to give birth to a child. Give a simple explanation of the dragon, the woman, and the child.

- 2) In chapter 14 of Revelation, John sees a multitude of 144,000 who have never defiled themselves with women. This group is described as first fruits to God. Who do these 144,000 symbolize?

- 3) Babylon is first mentioned in the book of Revelation in chapter 14. (Please underline the correct answer, worth 3 points). Babylon symbolizes which of the following:
a. The Roman Catholic Church b. Oppressive government
c. the world of seduction d. the false prophet

- 4) At what point in time was Satan cast out of heaven? Give a New Testament Scripture reference that communicates the significance of this event.

- 5) List 3 details of the dragon of Revelation chapter 12. (3 points)

- 6) Trumpets _____ while bowls _____.

- 7) In chapter 14, one like a Son of Man appears. What is he wearing and what is he holding?

- 8) Under which bowl is the final judgment described?

- 9) A sea of glass is pictured in chapter 15. Why is the sea of glass mixed with fire?

- 10) Everyone knows that the number of the beast is 666, but only those who have understanding can calculate its meaning. What does this number symbolize?

- 11) What comes out of the sixth bowl?

12) List the two main divisions of the book of Revelation (the main view of each) and the chapters that correspond with those divisions.

13) Match the appropriate details and meanings with each beast. (7 points)

_____ Beast from the sea	a. antichristian government
_____ Beast from the earth	b. two horns
	c. seven heads
	d. ten horns
	e. speaks like a dragon
	f. antichristian religion
	g. leopard's body, lion's mouth, bear's feet

14) How long does the beast from the sea have authority?

15) Bowls are poured out on individuals when they have crossed a "point of no return." Give a Scripture reference that establishes there is such a point.

16) The earth beast does have some economic pull. What does he require from everyone who wants his spot in the marketplace?

17) The seven bowls represent _____.
a. judgments b. persecutions c. wrath d. woes

18) Match the following chapter divisions with the pictures they show. (7 points)

_____ Chapters 1-3	a. The seven trumpets of judgment.
_____ Chapters 4-7	b. New Jerusalem and judgment upon the dragon.
_____ Chapters 8-11	c. Christ in the midst of the seven lampstands.
_____ Chapters 12-14	d. The book with the seven seals.
_____ Chapters 15-16	e. The seven bowls of wrath.
_____ Chapters 17-19	f. The woman and the Man-child persecuted by the dragon.
_____ Chapters 20-22	g. The fall of the great harlot and the beasts.

19) The dragon is angry and wants to fight. Against whom, and in what order, does he turn his fury?

20) Why do the seven angels with their seven bowls come from the tabernacle of testimony?

21) (Bonus Question: 5 extra points) Turn this page over and relate your understanding of the head of the beast that received a wound but was healed.

REVELATION TEST #4 KEY (Chapters 12-16)

(5 points each unless otherwise stated)

- 1) In Revelation chapter 12, John views a couple of signs in heaven. He beholds both a dragon and a woman about to give birth to a child. Give a simple explanation of the dragon, the woman, and the child.
The dragon – Satan, the woman – the bride (Israel and the Church), the child -- Christ

- 2) In chapter 14 of Revelation, John sees a multitude of 144,000 who have never defiled themselves with women. This group is described as first fruits to God. Who do these 144,000 symbolize?
The saints – those that have been purchased and separated from the world

- 3) Babylon is first mentioned in the book of Revelation in chapter 14. (Please underline the correct answer, worth 3 points). Babylon symbolizes which of the following:
a. The Roman Catholic Church b. Oppressive government
c. the world of seduction d. the false prophet

- 4) At what point in time was Satan cast out of heaven? Give a New Testament Scripture reference that communicates the significance of this event.
At Christ's ascension – Romans 8:33-34

- 5) List 3 details of the dragon of Revelation chapter 12. (3 points)
Red, seven heads, ten horns, diadems on his heads

- 6) Trumpets warn while bowls are poured out.

- 7) In chapter 14, one like a Son of Man appears. What is he wearing and what is he holding? ***He is wearing a crown and holding a sharp sickle in His hand***

- 8) Under which bowl is the final judgment described? ***The seventh bowl***

- 9) A sea of glass is pictured in chapter 15. Why is the sea of glass mixed with fire?
God both saves and judges. The message that saves also condemns.

- 10) Everyone knows that the number of the beast is 666, but only those who have understanding can calculate its meaning. What does this number symbolize?
The number of man – sin, sin, sin – failure, failure, failure

- 11) What comes out of the sixth bowl?
The great war of Har-Magedon

- 12) List the two main divisions of the book of Revelation (the main view of each) and the chapters that correspond with those divisions.
1) The struggle on earth. The Church vs. the world. The Church is victorious. (Chapters 1-11)
2) The spiritual background. Christ and His Church vs. Satan and his helpers. Christ and His Church are victorious. (Chapters 12-22)
- 13) Match the appropriate details and meanings with each beast. (7 points)

<u>a,c,d,g</u>	Beast from the sea	a. antichristian government
<u>b,e,f</u>	Beast from the earth	b. two horns
		c. seven heads
		d. ten horns
		e. speaks like a dragon
		f. antichristian religion
		g. leopard's body, lion's mouth, bear's feet

- 14) How long does the beast from the sea have authority? **42 months**
- 15) Bowls are poured out on individuals when they have crossed a "point of no return." Give a Scripture reference that establishes there is such a point.
Exodus 10:27, Matthew 12:32, Proverbs 1:23-29, Isaiah 55:6, Hebrews 12:17
- 16) The earth beast does have some economic pull. What does he require from everyone who wants his spot in the marketplace? **A mark on their right hand or on their forehead.**
- 17) The seven bowls represent c. wrath.
 a. judgments b. persecutions c. wrath d. woes

- 18) Match the following chapter divisions with the pictures they show. (7 points)
- | | | |
|----------|----------------|--|
| <u>c</u> | Chapters 1-3 | a. The seven trumpets of judgment. |
| <u>d</u> | Chapters 4-7 | b. New Jerusalem and judgment upon the dragon. |
| <u>a</u> | Chapters 8-11 | c. Christ in the midst of the seven lampstands. |
| <u>f</u> | Chapters 12-14 | d. The book with the seven seals. |
| <u>e</u> | Chapters 15-16 | e. The seven bowls of wrath. |
| <u>g</u> | Chapters 17-19 | f. The woman and the Man-child persecuted by the dragon. |
| <u>b</u> | Chapters 20-22 | g. The fall of the great harlot and the beasts. |

- 22) The dragon is angry and wants to fight. Against whom, and in what order, does he turn his fury? **The Christ (child), the Church (woman), the rest of the woman's seed (individual Christians)**
- 23) Why do the seven angels with their seven bowls come from the tabernacle of testimony? **The day of God's wrath will be in exact accordance with His word**

(Bonus Question: 5 extra points) Turn this page over and relate your understanding of the head of the beast that received a wound but was healed. **Answers may vary.**

REVELATION TEST #5 REVIEW

- 1) Be familiar with the main points from test #1.
- 2) Know the name of the woman pictured in chapter 17.
- 3) Understand the significance of where we find the woman sitting.
- 4) Know what the symbolism of Babylon communicates.
- 5) Understand the meaning of the seven heads and ten horns of the sea beast.
- 6) Know from chapter 17 who ends up destroying the harlot.
- 7) Know the Scriptural warning in reference to Babylon for all the people of God.
- 8) Know the three groups of chapter 18 that mourn over the downfall of Babylon.
- 9) Understand the symbolism that communicates that the final fall of Babylon is complete.
- 10) Know the meaning of the fine linen of the bride.
- 11) Understand the purpose of all prophecy.
- 12) Understand who the armies are following Christ in chapter 19. Be able to support your answer with two good reasons.
- 13) Understand the overall sequence of history as described throughout Revelation and apply to meaning of Revelation chapter 20.
- 14) Know the theme of the book of Revelation.
- 15) Understand the significance of the binding of Satan particularly with reference to the phrase “so that he would not deceive the nations any longer.”
- 16) Know what the thousand years represents.
- 17) Know the key fact that is the basis for the interpretation of all visions of Revelation.
- 18) Understand the meaning of the first resurrection mentioned in chapter 20.
- 19) Know who is included in those who reign with Christ for the millennium.
- 20) Know what is the second death.

- 21) Know a few of the similarities between the first few chapters of Genesis and the last few chapters of Revelation.
- 22) Know what chapter 22 tells us about the return of Christ.
- 23) Know the words of the Spirit and the Bride.
- 24) Know what will happen to the person who adds to or takes away from the book.

REVELATION TEST #5 (Chapters 17-22)

(5 points unless otherwise stated)

- 1) In chapter 17 of Revelation, there is a woman pictured. However, this is not the glorious woman of chapter 12. What is the mysterious name of the woman of chapter 17?

- 2) What is the main point of the symbolism of Babylon?
 - a. The Roman Catholic Church
 - b. Oppressive government
 - c. the false prophet
 - d. the world of seduction

- 3) What is the meaning of the fine linen in which the bride is clothed?

- 4) What is the theme of the book of Revelation?

- 5) According to Revelation 19:10, what is the purpose of prophecy?

- 6) What is the meaning of “the first resurrection” of Revelation 20? Give a N.T. passage to support your conclusion.

- 7) Where does the millennial reign take place? Who reigns with Christ during this period?

- 8) What do the Spirit and the Bride say in Revelation chapter 22?

- 9) Revelation 20 tells us the meaning of the second death. What is it?

- 10) Where is the woman of chapter 17 sitting? Why is she pictured as sitting there?

- 11) Match the corresponding events of history with the symbolism of Revelation.

_____ Christ’s first coming.	a. Satan is loosed for a short time.
_____ Period of power and evangelism.	b. Final judgment.
_____ Period of intense persecution.	c. 1000 years or 42 months.
_____ Christ’s second coming.	d. Satan is first bound.

12) Match the following chapter divisions with the pictures they show. (7 points)

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| _____ Chapters 1-3 | a. The seven trumpets of judgment. |
| _____ Chapters 4-7 | b. New Jerusalem and judgment upon the dragon. |
| _____ Chapters 8-11 | c. Christ in the midst of the seven lampstands. |
| _____ Chapters 12-14 | d. The book with the seven seals. |
| _____ Chapters 15-16 | e. The seven bowls of wrath. |
| _____ Chapters 17-19 | f. The woman and the Man-child persecuted by the dragon. |
| _____ Chapters 20-22 | g. The fall of the great harlot and the beasts. |

13) Compare and contrast two pictures of the beginning of Genesis and the end of Revelation.

14) What symbolism of Revelation chapter 18 shows the complete nature of the final fall of Babylon?

15) Who are the armies following Christ in chapter 19? Give two good reasons for your answer.

- a. the angels b. the saints

16) There is one key point that most of the so-called Christian world misses. What is this key fact that is the basis for interpretation of all the visions of Revelation?

17) Revelation chapter 20 shows an angel binding Satan and locking him in the abyss. What is the relevance of the binding of Satan “so that he would not deceive the nations any longer?”

18) The Scripture clearly communicates that Babylon is going to crash. What is the specific warning concerning Babylon that is given to Christians?

19) What will happen to the person who adds to or takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy?

20) While the book of Revelation does not tell us the day or hour of Christ’s return, what does the 22nd chapter say concerning Christ’s second coming?

REVELATION TEST #5 KEY (Chapters 17-22)

(5 points unless otherwise stated)

- 1) In chapter 17 of Revelation, there is a woman pictured. However, this is not the glorious woman of chapter 12. What is the mysterious name of the woman of chapter 17? ***Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth***

- 2) What is the main point of the symbolism of Babylon?
 - a. The Roman Catholic Church
 - b. Oppressive government
 - c. the false prophet
 - d. the world of seduction**

- 3) What is the meaning of the fine linen in which the bride is clothed?
The righteous acts of the saints

- 4) What is the theme of the book of Revelation?
The victory of Christ and His Church over Satan

- 5) According to Revelation 19:10, what is the purpose of prophecy?
To give testimony of Jesus

- 6) What is the meaning of “the first resurrection” of Revelation 20? Give a N.T. passage to support your conclusion. ***Immersion into Christ – Romans 6:1-11***

- 7) Where does the millennial reign take place? Who reigns with Christ during this period? ***The millennial reign takes place in heaven. Every Christian, both those physically living as well as those who have passed on, reign with Christ.***

- 8) What do the Spirit and the Bride say in Revelation chapter 22? ***“Come”***

- 9) Revelation 20 tells us the meaning of the second death. What is it?
The lake of fire

- 10) Where is the woman of chapter 17 sitting? Why is she pictured as sitting there?
The harlot is sitting on the beast from the sea. She rides the beast because she reigns over the kings of the earth.

- 11) Match the corresponding events of history with the symbolism of Revelation.

<u> d </u> Christ’s first coming.	a. Satan is loosed for a short time.
<u> c </u> Period of power and evangelism.	b. Final judgment.
<u> a </u> Period of intense persecution.	c. 1000 years or 42 months.
<u> b </u> Christ’s second coming.	d. Satan is first bound.

12) Match the following chapter divisions with the pictures they show. (7 points)

<u>c</u> Chapters 1-3	a. The seven trumpets of judgment.
<u>d</u> Chapters 4-7	b. New Jerusalem and judgment upon the dragon.
<u>a</u> Chapters 8-11	c. Christ in the midst of the seven lampstands.
<u>f</u> Chapters 12-14	d. The book with the seven seals.
<u>e</u> Chapters 15-16	e. The seven bowls of wrath.
<u>g</u> Chapters 17-19	f. The woman and the Man-child persecuted by the dragon.
<u>b</u> Chapters 20-22	g. The fall of the great harlot and the beasts.

13) Compare and contrast two pictures of the beginning of Genesis and the end of Revelation. *Answers may vary. Possible answers include: heaven and earth, new heaven and new earth; light and sun, moon, stars, the Lamb as the source of light; paradise lost, paradise regained; power of the devil, devil in the lake of fire*

14) What symbolism of Revelation chapter 18 shows the complete nature of the final fall of Babylon? *The millstone being cast into the sea*

15) Who are the armies following Christ in chapter 19? Give two good reasons for your answer.

a. the angels ***b. the saints – reasons may vary – fine linen; the called, chosen, and faithful; saints will judge the world; saints join Christ in ruling the nations with a rod of iron***

16) There is one key point that most of the so-called Christian world misses. What is this key fact that is the basis for interpretation of all the visions of Revelation?
The fact that Christ presently reigns in and from heaven

17) Revelation chapter 20 shows an angel binding Satan and locking him in the abyss. What is the relevance of the binding of Satan “so that he would not deceive the nations any longer?” ***The Gentiles have opportunity to receive the blessing of Abraham***

18) The Scripture clearly communicates that Babylon is going to crash. What is the specific warning concerning Babylon that is given to Christians?
“Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues”

19) What will happen to the person who adds to or takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy? ***Adds to – all the plagues of the book will be added to them; takes away from – God will take away his part from the tree of life and the holy city***

20) While the book of Revelation does not tell us the day or hour of Christ’s return, what does the 22nd chapter say concerning Christ’s second coming?
He is coming quickly