

**Revelation**  
(a study from Steve Gregg's lectures)

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# 1) Introduction

## a) *About the book*

- i) Date and authorship are disputed issues
- ii) Was last book to be Canonized
- iii) Book has 3 hats
  - (1) Epistle (little appreciated)
    - (a) Addressed to 7 churches in Asia
    - (b) Ch1:11 Jesus tells John to write and send to churches (specific)

*Rev 1:11-12*

*"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."  
NKJV*

(c) Ends like an epistle: Ch22:20

*Rev 22:18-20*

*18 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*

*20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!  
NKJV*

- (d) Dictated verbatim by Jesus (only book)
- (e) Had specific instruction or situation to be addressed that was relevant to those specific churches.
- (f) Has principles that churches of all ages can apply
- (2) Apocalypse (literally unveiling)
  - (a) Genre of literature that was popular in Jewish writing from 200BC to 100AD.
  - (b) Style named after this book. Not named by Jews, but Historians.
  - (c) Examples: Book of Enoch, Assumption of Moses, Apoc of Bereuch, Psalms of Solomon, Book of Jubilees, The testaments of the 12 Patriarchs...etc.
    - (i) Similar style
  - (d) Written during persecution (typical) to encourage (see Ch1:9)
  - (e) Uses vivid images and symbols to portray the struggle of good and evil.
    - (i) Animals, Dragons, etc.
    - (ii) Numbers, Names, etc.
  - (f) Angel directs author and interprets visions
  - (g) Many OT prophet books have apocalyptic style (Isaiah, Daniel, Zechariah, etc.)
  - (h) Usually wanted to convey message in code.
  - (i) Olivet discourse uses this type of language also.
  - (j) Some feel that this is the same subject matter as Olivet discourse (Johns gospel is only one that does not include Olivet disc.)
  - (k) Not like other Apocalyptic books in that:
    - (i) Not retelling past but predicting future. Most would take historical writings and write as if they were future.
    - (ii) Strong emphasis on moral issues and command for repentance.
- (3) Prophecy

(a) Foretells future, Forth-tell God's message to His people.

b) *Authorship*

- i) ID's himself as simply John
- ii) Is believed John wrote in Ephesus after his release
- iii) Justin Martyr, Iraneaus, Tertullian, Clement, etc. think it was apostle
- iv) Papias suggested it was another John
  - (1) Quoted by Eusebius in 4<sup>th</sup> cent
- v) Some suggest grammar differences mean a different writer than the gospel and epistles. (very inferior to others)
  - (1) John was unschooled
  - (2) Others may have been written by emmanuenzes? (hired secretaries) dictated by John
  - (3) Writing while watching visions, in a hurry
- vi) No other "John" would have been able to simply call himself simply by that name than apostle
- vii) Large number of expressions and thoughts are similar to other writings, and unique to John
  - (1) Logos, lamb, living water, etc. (many others, hear tape)

c) *Written in Symbolic language:*

- i) Nations, people, angels, etc. depicted as animals
- ii) Contrast between 2 women and 2 cities (2 entities)
  - (1) Bride and Harlot
  - (2) Babylon and New Jerusalem
- iii) Symbolic names: Jezebel, Sodom and Egypt (of Jerusalem), Babylon
- iv) Repeated cosmic disruptions
  - (1) Stars falling to earth
  - (2) Sun made black
  - (3) Moon turned to Blood
  - (4) Hailstones that weigh 100 lbs.
- v) Numbers:
  - (1) 7 = completeness, perfection.
  - (2) 1/3 represents significant minority (see Zech. 13:8-9)
  - (3) 12, 24 represent God's people (# of apostles and tribes of Israel)
  - (4) 144,000 probably symbolic
  - (5) 1000 years = long time (1000 always used symbolically in the bible)
  - (6) 10 days probably a short time
- vi) Interplays with rest of scripture. Never quotes but has hundreds of allusions to O.T.
  - (1) Isaiah = 79
  - (2) Daniel = 53
  - (3) Ezekiel = 48
  - (4) Psalms = 43
  - (5) Exodus = 27
  - (6) Jeremiah = 22
  - (7) Zechariah = 15
    - (a) 2 witness – two olive trees (Zech 4)
  - (8) Amos = 9
  - (9) Joel = 8
- vii) Beasts: (Imagery from Daniel)
- viii) Symbols not talking about same events, but used to depict similar spiritual truths or events.
- ix) 3 recurring themes or images
  - (1) Exodus
    - (a) Dragon ref to Egypt (Ezek, Ps 74:13)
    - (b) Plagues repetition of exodus plagues
    - (c) Song of Moses and the lamb
    - (d) Woman escapes into wilderness and is nourished (42 months)

- (e) Furniture in tabernacle
- (2) Babylonian exile
  - (a) Euphrates river dried up
- (3) Ministry of Christ
  - (a) 2 Witnesses
    - (i) dead 3 days
    - (ii) 3 ½ yr ministry

d) *Interpretive approaches*

- i) 5 main approaches
  - (1) Historicist
  - (2) Preterist
  - (3) Futurist
  - (4) Idealist
  - (5) Progressive parallelism
- ii) Historicist view
  - (1) Running account of church history
  - (2) A.B. Simpson, All reformers
  - (3) Advantages: Company it keeps (scholars)
- iii) Futurist view
  - (1) Mostly dispensationalist
  - (2) Believe church is destined to be a failure
  - (3) Ch4:1 sees rapture of church
  - (4) Everything after Ch4 is great trib
  - (5) Ch20 Millennial kingdom
  - (6) Advantages:
    - (a) Luxury of taking literal approach (since it sees as future)
    - (b) Most widely held and taught
    - (c) Appeals to westerners tendency to read everything in a literal way.
    - (d) Can harmonize with current events
  - (7) Disadvantages:
    - (a) Same as advantages
    - (b) Majority is seldom right
    - (c) Book wasn't intended to be taken literally, full of symbolism
    - (d) Historically, comparing prophesy with current events has been disastrous
    - (e) If true, book is 90% irrelevant to the church
    - (f) Fails to recognize or appreciate significance of apocalyptic writing and symbolism
    - (g) Struggles to explain imminent time references. (shortly or about to take place)
      - (i) Not written to God, but to man.
    - (h) The book has obvious lack of chronological progression. (strike against both futurist and historicist view)
      - (i) Seemingly end of world Ch6, 11.
      - (ii) Beast coming up out of sea after the beast is already seen.
      - (iii) Ch14:8 Babylon fallen, seen again in ch18.
    - (i) Origin questionable.
      - (i) Originated in 1585 by Spanish Jesuit Priest, Francisco Rebera. Done to counteract reformers claim that Pope or Papacy was the beast or Antichrist.
- iv) Preterist View: Opposite of futurism
  - (a) 2 major views
    - (i) Book is all about fall of Jerusalem
    - (ii) Book is about both fall of Jerusalem and the fall of Rome
  - (b) Advantages
    - (i) Makes sense of imminent time references
    - (ii) Impressive parallels with Olivet discourse
    - (iii) Impressive parallels with Historical accounts of 70AD (Josephus)
    - (iv) Renders intelligible explanations of otherwise unintelligible verses.

1. 13:18 Number of Beast (Nero's name = 666 in Hebrew)
  2. 17:10 7 Kings
    - a. 1<sup>st</sup> emperor was Julius Caesar, 6<sup>th</sup> is Nero.
- (c) Disadvantages
- (i) Requires date to be prior to AD70
  - (ii) Origin is questionable
    1. Said by some to be started by Jesuits also (Louis De Alcazar popularized it in 16<sup>th</sup> century). Also as a response to Reformers.
    2. But...Arethus wrote about Preterist view in 6<sup>th</sup> century
  - (d) 2<sup>nd</sup> coming usually refers to Jesus' "coming in judgement", not his second coming to settle all things.
- v) Progressive Parallelism:
- (1) William Hendrickson commentary "More than conquerors"
  - (2) 7 parallel segments
    - (a) Each segment represents entire church age from 1<sup>st</sup> coming to 2<sup>nd</sup>
      - (i) Ch 1-3, 4-7, 8-11, 12-14,15-16,17-19, 20-22
  - (3) Advantages:
    - (a) Resembles how Daniel is written (parallel telling)
    - (b) Repeated phenomenon in each of the segments.
    - (c) Repeated battles.
    - (d) Repeated judgments.
    - (e) Ref to 2<sup>nd</sup> coming in each segment.
  - (4) Disadvantages:
    - (a) Refs to 2<sup>nd</sup> coming, are probably not really ref to 2<sup>nd</sup> coming
    - (b) Material that seems to be parallel is only so in style, not the events
- vi) Idealist view
- (1) Depicting universal timeless Christian principles
    - (a) Sovereignty of God
    - (b) Vindication of martyrs
    - (c) Spiritual warfare.
    - (d) Etc.
  - (2) Advantages:
    - (a) Avoids having to relate specific events in prophecy to actual events
  - (3) Disadvantages:
    - (a) Book itself claims to be a prophesy about specific events.
- e) *Dating and Historical Setting*
- i) Two schools of thought in dating:
    - (1) Written in Nero's reign (preterist)
    - (2) Written in Domitians's reign (futurist)
  - ii) Preterist must believe in earlier writing (Nero)
    - (1) Internal evidence
      - (a) Tribulation of saints, persecution of church
        - (i) 1:9 "companion in (or "the") tribulation"
        - (ii) 2:10 to church in Smyrna "Jesus says they are about to suffer 10 days" (probably not literal 10 days)
        - (iii) 2:13 church of Pergamus has a martyr – Antipas
        - (iv) 3:10 Philidelphia "hour of trial" to be kept from
        - (v) 6:9 John sees vision of souls martyrs (but not necessarily recent martyrs)
        - (vi) Ch13 Beast makes war with saints
        - (vii) Ch17 Harlot is drunk with blood of saints
      - (b) Theme statement of book Ch1:7 "Behold He is coming with the clouds"
        - (i) At 1<sup>st</sup> glance, refers to 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ
        - (ii) Other hand John combines two OT statements (Dan 7:13 and Zech 12:10)
          1. Neither about 2<sup>nd</sup> coming
          2. Dan 7:13 – Son of Man came to the Ancient of Days

- a. Not about descension but ascension
  - b. Daniel's vision from vantage point of Heaven, Christ receiving His kingdom
  - 3. Zech 12:10 –
    - a. Locale is Jerusalem, Inhabitants of the House of David
    - b. They who have pierced Him will look upon Him
    - c. 1:7 All tribes of the earth (or land) *ge* in greek.
      - i. Context dictates translation of word.
      - ii. Tribes seem to suggest land instead of earth (tribes speaking of Israel)
    - d. Mourn (Luke 23:27)
      - i. Referred to what would happen to these
      - ii. women and their children
      - iii. All people of land mourned in AD70
    - e. “Coming in clouds” and “every eye seeing him” is seen elsewhere in scripture.
      - i. Isa 19:1 – Lord coming on swift cloud
      - ii. Matt 16:28 – Jesus tells disciples they will see Him coming in His kingdom
      - iii. Matt 26:63-64 - Jesus tells Caiphus that he shall see Him coming on the clouds of heaven
      - iv. Unless Jesus missed his prediction, this neatly fits into the destruction of Jerusalem in AD70
  - (c) Ch 17:9-10 Seven kings
    - (i) Seems to fit the emperors of Rome (starting from Julius). Nero was 6<sup>th</sup>. Galba (who was next) was only there a few months.
  - (d) Ch 11:1 John told to measure the temple of God.
    - (i) Gives impression temple was standing at time book was written
  - (e) Situation of relations between Church and Jews
    - (i) Jews main problem to church until fall of Jerusalem
      - 1. Arrogance deflated when they lost their religious system
    - (ii) Ch 2:9 Church of Smyrna persecuted by Jews. (synagogue of Satan)
      - 1. Suggests church was troubled by Jews
      - 2. Smyrna Largest Jewish population in all 7 churches
    - (iii) Ch 3:9 Church of Phil
      - 1. Jesus says they'll be vindicated, that Jews will know He loves the church
  - (f) Book full of Jewish flavor (symbolism, etc.)
    - (i) Prior to AD70, Jews made up majority of church
    - (ii) Jewish converts would have understood this book much better than Gentile believers
    - (iii) Abaddon is Hebrew
    - (iv) 666 (could be understood by Nero's name in Hebrew.)
  - (g) Ch 13:18 Calculate the number of beast
    - (i) Most of church history believed this translated “Caesar Nero” (Ksr Nwrn) = 666 numerically. (Strong evidence, not proof)
      - 1. Coded to be inconspicuous
  - (h) Scholars that hold to early date view
    - (i) Jay Adams
    - (ii) FF Bruce (not a preterist)
    - (iii) Adam Clarke (Methodist)
    - (iv) Alfred Aidersheim (sp)
    - (v) J.B. Lightfoot. (early translator of church fathers writings from greek to English)
    - (vi) John A.T. Robinson (Redating the NT)
    - (vii) Phillip Schaff
    - (viii) Many others – not all Preterists
- (2) External evidence

- (a) Up until 70AD persecution was at the hands of the Jews (primarily)
  - (b) Nero began persecuting Christians in AD64 (but probably in Rome only) until AD68.
  - (c) Neither Nero nor Domitian had global persecution of Christians
- iii) Later date: Period of Domitian
- (1) Majority of modern writers
  - (2) 95 and 96AD Domitian persecuted church
  - (3) Iraneaus testimony is main reason for this date
  - (4) Many say that all church fathers held to this view (not true)
    - (a) Only Iraneaus was clear on this
    - (b) Later church fathers based their opinion on Iraneaus statement
    - (c) Many earlier
    - (d) Original writings of Ira. no longer extant
      - (i) Ancient latin version except majority of 1<sup>st</sup> book which comes to us in Greek by Hippolitus and Epiphaneaus. The text is often most uncertain.
    - (e) Many scholars believe there is a problem with the text “that was seen in the reign of Domitian”. They claim it should read “who” or “he” was seen (meaning John).
      - (i) How late was John seen?
      - (ii) Might be saying something like, “It must not be necessary to know the name of the beast, otherwise John himself would have told us long ago. (if saying the vision was seen at the end of Domitian’s reign, it makes no contribution to the argument he’s making in context).”
      - (iii) He makes reference to “all the good and ancient copies”
        - 1. Speaks of Domitians reign as being almost in our own day
        - 2. Speaks of copies of Revelation as being ancient, suggesting that it’s older than Domitian’s reign. And those weren’t even the originals which would be even older than the copies
      - (iv) It’s not as easy as it sounds
    - (f) Ira. Credibility as a historian is not completely accurate
      - (i) Said elsewhere in his writings that Jesus’ ministry ended when he was 50 years old
    - (g) Ira.’s statement is questionable and we can’t hinge everything on it
  - (5) Internal evidence should be weighed more heavily than external since it is inspired by the Holy Spirit
    - (a) Hint of emperor worship (Ch13)
      - (i) Some believe Domitian was the first to do this
      - (ii) However, we don’t have a complete history of everything all the emperors did
      - (iii) We know that others at least accepted worship as God.
        - 1. Claudius ordered an image of himself be put in the holy of holies in the Jewish temple (died before his orders could be carried out.)
        - 2. We don’t know that Nero didn’t
      - (iv) We don’t really know how far Domitian pressed this
      - (v) Even if it were true, it doesn’t dictate the date at Domitian’s reign. The book is a prophesy, not a newspaper
  - (6) Wide spread Persecution of the church
    - (a) Some believe Domitian was the 1<sup>st</sup> to do this throughout the Roman empire
      - (i) Historians don’t know how far persecution extended during Nero’s reign
      - (ii) Possible that Imperial cities of other districts would take advantage of Nero’s actions and do likewise
      - (iii) Assumption that Domitian persecuted throughout his empire is based on sketchy historical evidence at best. Based on late Christian sources
      - (iv) Tacitus (1<sup>st</sup> century Roman historian) praises Nero for persecuting the church, but makes no mention of Domitian’s persecution
      - (v) No ancient historical documents that say that Domitian did
      - (vi) Claim is apparently inflated beyond proportion

- (7) Nero redidivous myth (myth that Nero wasn't really dead, or that he came back to life).  
Some feel that John bought into this and put it into the book
  - (a) Ch13:3 One of his heads as mortally wounded
    - (i) Falls very short in teaching this myth
    - (ii) We'd have to say that John (being under influence of myth)
    - (iii) wrote these words that weren't true.
    - (iv) Preterists have no problem with this verse. When Nero died, Rome almost fell to civil wars. 3 emperors were between Nero and Vespasian in 1 year.
- (8) Condition of churches may suggest later date.
  - (a) Ch3:17 Laodicea very wealthy
  - (b) However, had an earthquake that almost destroyed city
  - (c) Some say, city would not have been able to regain wealth.
  - (d) But, by no means certain that physical riches are what is intended in this verse. (could be that they considered themselves spiritually rich)
  - (e) Even if it did mean material riches, Laodicea did not apply to Rome for relief since they were so rich, though most cities had this option.
- (9) Existence of church of Smyrna. Said not to exist until after Paul died.
  - (a) Based on statement of Polycarp "we had not yet known Him"
    - (i) Not saying during lifetime of Paul, but that church didn't exist at time of epistle to Philippi. If so, they would have been around a few years.
- (10) Spiritual decline in churches.
  - (a) Ephesus lost it's first love
  - (b) Sardis name that they were alive but they were dead.
  - (c) Laodicea lukewarm
  - (d) Late daters say this is too soon for churches to have spiritually deteriorated so much.
    - (i) How long does it take for a church to backslide?
    - (ii) Paul rebukes Galatians for backsliding so soon. He wrote that letter just a few years after founding it, possibly the same year.
- (11) Many scholars in favor of late date
  - (a) Robert Mounce
  - (b) Albert Barnes
  - (c) Benjamin B. Warfield
  - (d) Donald Guthrie
  - (e) John Walvoord
  - (f) Merrill Tenney
  - (g) Most other commentators since early 1900's
- iv) Bottom line is that there is no conclusive evidence for either a late date or an early date
  - (a) Early date has more specific evidence.
    - (i) 5 kings that have fallen, ....(very important)
    - (ii) Internal evidence pointing to Jerusalem still standing.

f) *Outline of the Book*

- i) **7 major sections** (after short prologue) and 7 sub-units in each section (most of the time)
  - (1) Ch 1 thru 3 – **7 Letters from Christ**
    - (a) Preceded by opening visions in ch 1
  - (2) Ch 4 thru 7 + 8:1 – **Opening of Seven sealed scroll**
    - (a) John sees throne in heaven
    - (b) Lamb is only one worthy to break the seals
  - (3) Ch 8:2 thru 11 - **Seven Trumpet judgements**
    - (a) Coal cast down on earth
    - (b) Prayers of saints answered in this vision
    - (c) Each case 1/3 of things are affected negatively
  - (4) Ch 12 thru 14 - **Seven visions**
    - (a) Woman and dragon and her seed
    - (b) Two beasts

- (c) Lamb and his followers
- (d) Gospel preached to all nations
- (e) Babylon fallen
- (f) Calling people to endure
- (g) Harvest of the (earth or the land)
- (5) Ch 15 thru 16 – **Seven last plagues**
  - (a) Each represented by a bowl
  - (b) At the end is the announcement that “it is done.”
- (6) Ch 17 thru 19 – **Fall of Bablyon (7 voices)**
  - (a) Babylon is fallen
  - (b) Reward her double for her sins
  - (c) She shall be thrown down
  - (d) Alleluia God is just
  - (e) Praise God all His servants
  - (f) Marriage of the Lamb
  - (g) Invitation to the fowls of the air to feast on the kings
- (7) Ch 20 – 22 **New Creation (7 characteristics)**
  - (a) Heavenly Jerusalem
  - (b) Habitation of God
  - (c) Renewal of the world
  - (d) Affirmation of God’s word
  - (e) God’s work is completed
  - (f) Final blessing and final curse
  - (g) Final prayer
- ii) All Segments (of the 7 major sections) except first and last segment have an interlude, usually between 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> sub-unit of section.
  - (1) Section 2 after 6<sup>th</sup> seal is broken, there’s an interruption
  - (2) Section 3 after the 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet, there’s an interruption
  - (3) Section 4 after 6<sup>th</sup> vision, there’s a beatitude on the martyrs.
  - (4) Section 5 after 6<sup>th</sup> plague, there’s a beatitude for those who are prepared.
  - (5) Section 6 after 6<sup>th</sup> proclamation of woes, there’s a picture of Christ conquering the world with sword out of His mouth.

## 2) Chapter 1: Opening vision

a) *Prologue to the book Vs. 1-8*

*Rev 1:1-8*

*1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants--things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, 2 who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. 3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.*

*4 John, to the seven churches which are in Asia:*

*Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, 5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, 6 and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. 7 Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. 8 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."*

*NKJV*

- i) Revelation or Apocalypse (means unveiling)
  - (1) Could mean Christ is being unveiled or that Christ is doing the unveiling. (probably these "things" that are being unveiled)
  - (2) Seems to have gone through many hands (Father – Jesus – Angel – John – servants)
- ii) Angel is mysterious character
  - (1) Sometimes depicting an actual Angel and sometime Jesus himself.
  - (2) At end of book Jesus says he gave it to His angel.
  - (3) Throughout Ch 1 through 3 it clearly appears to be Jesus delivering the message.
  - (4) Very mysterious relationship. All we know is Jesus gives the revelation to John and sometimes through the angel.
  - (5) Interesting point: Description of appearance of being is identical in most points with the person who appears to Daniel in Daniel 10-12.
- iii) "Must shortly take place" (or soon)
  - (1) Preterist view makes most sense of this statement.
  - (2) Also in vs.3 time is near
- iv) Testimony of Jesus Christ
  - (1) Could mean "from" or "about" Jesus
  - (2) Rest of book (1:9, 6:9, 11:7, 12:11, 12:17, 19:10) suggests this means "about".
- v) First three verses could be added by elders in Ephesus (where he was an elder)
  - (1) John spoken of in 3<sup>rd</sup> person
  - (2) John speaks in 1<sup>st</sup> person in beg. Vs. 4
  - (3) Just like in closing verses of John's gospel (who is "we")
  - (4) Like Ezekiel's 1<sup>st</sup> 3 verses
- vi) In Vs. 3 first of 7 Beatitudes (blessed is he ...)
  - (1) Others at 14:13, 16:15, 19:9, 20:6, 22:7, 22:14.
  - (2) Lots of 7's in this book.
  - (3) Blessing on those who read and hear and keep (obey) the words.
- vii) To the angels of 7 churches (word simply means messenger)
  - (1) Often thought to be the person who would stand in front of the congregation and read the letter.
- viii) Vs 4. John to the The 7 churches of Asia.
  - (1) This gives it form of Epistle (opens and closes like one).
  - (2) Grace and peace from...Some people think this refers to Trinity.

- (a) Problem with that is who is to come not likely to be the Father. Jesus is mentioned distinctly in next verse.
  - (b) Relationship between father, son, and holy ghost is mysterious at best.
  - (c) 7 “spirits” of God is often said to be Isa. 11:2 seven-fold spirit of God (questionable interpretation).
    - (i) Mentioned several times in book. The other cases are not that helpful
    - (ii) 3:1 Has the 7 spirits and the 7 stars???
    - (iii) 4:5 7 spirits said to be 7 lamps before the throne.
    - (iv) 5:6 7 spirits said to be 7 eyes of the Lamb. (probably symbolic that he sees all, omniscient, and the 7 horns probably symbolic of his being all-powerful, omnipotent)
    - (v) might refer to the spiritual character of each of the 7 churches.
    - (vi) Bottom-line...it’s a mystery and nobody really knows.
- ix) Vs. 5 & 6 And from Jesus who is....
- (1) Faithful witness
  - (2) First begotten of the dead
  - (3) Prince of kings of the earth.
  - (4) These designations are significant for pastoral purpose of the letter.
    - (a) Written to suffering church, some to face death.
  - (5) Faithful witness is same expression used of Antipas in 2:13 (Martus in greek, same word as martyr)
    - (a) 2:10 Smyrna told to be faithful even to death.
    - (b) Only kind of faithfulness that book focuses on.
  - (6) Firstborn from the dead
    - (a) Same expression as Col 1:18 and similar in 1Cor 15:20
  - (7) Prince of kings of the world
    - (a) Tape cut off before this
    - (b) But point is, Even though it doesn’t seem like it sometimes, God is able to put kings under His feet, He is the ruler of the kings of this world.
    - (c) Kings of the earth occurs many times throughout book. Sometime Global, sometimes local (depending on how “ge” is translated, land or earth).
    - (d) “Kings of the earth”, could easily be interpreted as “rulers of the land” in most parts of the book (but not all.)
  - (8) Him who loved us, freed us
    - (a) Probable term reminiscent of the Exodus
  - (9) Kings and Priests
    - (a) Most other translations say “kingdom of priests” which is more logical.
    - (b) Nowhere in Bible are we to think of ourselves as Kings. (see 1Cor4:8)
    - (c) Christ is our king, we are priests to offer spiritual sacrifices according to 1Pet 2.
- x) Vs. 7 “Coming with the clouds”...
- (1) Uniting of imagery in two OT passages
    - (a) Daniel 7:13
    - (b) Zecharia 12:10
  - (2) Context of these passages does not suggest 2<sup>nd</sup> coming.
  - (3) Tribes of the “ge” land is probably better interpretation than tribes of the earth in this context.
  - (4) Clouds are a symbol of judgement as also in the OT.
  - (5) Every eye will see Him...
    - (a) Hyperbole. All people saw results of His coming.
    - (b) Doesn’t have to be literal seeing.
- xi) Vs. 8 Alpha, Omega, Almighty.
- (1) Isa 9:6 – The Mighty God.
  - (2) This text proves JW’s wrong, Jesus refers to Himself as the Almighty God.
    - (a) In NWT bible, they change “the Lord” to Jehovah, because of the word Almighty. This is simply a violent twisting of the text.
    - (b) Ch1:17-18 I am 1<sup>st</sup> and last....I was dead (Jesus).

- (c) See Ch22:13 – Includes all references together.
- (d) These verses destroy arguments of JW's
- (e) Isa. 44:6 is where language is coming from.
  - (i) Speaker is Jehovah.
  - (ii) I am 1<sup>st</sup> and last.
  - (iii) Is there 2 firsts and lasts????

*b) Beginning of Epistle (vs. 9)*

**Rev 1:9-10**

***9 I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. 10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, NKJV***

- i) Vs. 9 Brother and companion
  - (1) Companion in 3 respects
    - (a) Tribulation
    - (b) Kingdom of God
    - (c) Patience or patient endurance
    - (d) All 3 of these found elsewhere in NT
      - (i) 2Thess. Ch1:4-5 “We ourselves...”
      - (ii) 1Peter (somewhere)
      - (iii) Acts 14:22 “much trib...we enter..”
  - (2) On the Island of Patmos.
    - (a) Known to be west/sw of Maletis in the Aegean sea
    - (b) Asia in 1<sup>st</sup> cent. Was name of Roman province, not a continent. Now known as Turkey.
    - (c) Off coast about 37miles (about 8mi. by 4mi.) is this crescent shaped rocky island.
    - (d) Said to be used by Nero and other Roman emperors as prison colony.
    - (e) Banishing to island was tactic used by emperors to rid themselves of high ranking people of harmful influence.
      - (i) Tradition says John was dipped in boiling oil and was unscalded, so he banished him to Island instead.
- ii) Vs. 10 “In the Spirit...voice, as of trumpet”
  - (1) Prominence of Trumpet sounds may be fulfillment of the significance of the feast of trumpets.
  - (2) In the Spirit – What does that mean?
    - (a) Ch4:2 John was also “In the Spirit”
    - (b) Ch17:3, 21:10 are other refs to this being “In the Spirit”
    - (c) Paul says he wasn't sure if he was in the body or out of the body (2Cor 12) when he saw visions.
    - (d) Could simply mean that the Spirit overwhelmed his consciousness and was only aware of spiritual dimension, like Peter on the rooftop in Acts.
    - (e) Ezekiel had similar experience (Ch3) Spirit grabbed him by hair of his head.
    - (f) Seems like his awareness of his scene changed.
    - (g) May mean that we need to take these visions as spiritual, may not be appropriate to take a natural approach to interpreting his visions.
  - (3) On the Lord's day
    - (a) Didache said Sunday came to be known as the Lord's day (early 2<sup>nd</sup> century).
    - (b) Some think this means the “unto the Day of the Lord”.
      - (i) No translator has favored this translation.
      - (ii) Ch1 thru 3 don't even deal with the day of the Lord.
      - (iii) Context dictates Sunday morning.

c) *Jesus Speaks (vs. 11)*

*Rev 1:11-12*

*11 saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."*

*NKJV*

- i) 7 churches are not only churches that existed at this time. At least.
  - (1) Acts 19:10 Paul says that the gospel was preached in all of Asia.
  - (2) Ephesus to Laodicea makes shape of horseshoe
    - (a) Logical way that the letter would have been passed. Practical reasons.
    - (b) Some think this refers to 7 church ages. (dispensationalists).

d) *Vision of Churches and Jesus (vs 12-20)*

*Rev 1:12-20*

*12 Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. 14 His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; 15 His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; 16 He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. 17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. 18 I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death. 19 Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. 20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.*

*NKJV*

- i) Seven angels of the seven churches (seven stars)
  - (1) Unclear what is meant by "angels" here.
    - (a) Some say Guardian angels
    - (b) But there are problems with this:
      - (i) Each letter in Ch 2 and 3 are addressed to the angel of the individual church
        - 1. Why the angel be accused of the things described in the letter?
        - 2. How was message supposed to be conveyed from the angel to the church.
        - 3. Seems strange to address letters to supernatural, angelic, heavenly, angels.
    - (c) Some say "angels" is simply referring to what the word means "messenger"
      - (i) **aggelos** (ang'-el-os); from **aggello** [probably derived from NT:71; compare NT:34] (to bring tidings); a **messenger**; especially an "angel"; by implication, a pastor: KJV - angel, messenger.
      - (ii) Human beings are often referred to by this word.
    - (d) Some say "angels" is referring to a pastor.
      - (i) Not likely to have developed that position in the church that early.
      - (ii) Bishops as heads of churches didn't develop until the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.
        - 1. Bishop and elder were interchangeable terms until that point.
      - (iii) Churches in 1<sup>st</sup> century were governed by a group of elders rather than 1 person.
    - (e) However, one of the elders could have been the main spokesman of the group of elders.
      - 1. James in Jerusalem
      - 2. Peter with the apostles.
      - 3. etc.
    - (ii) It's most likely to be this explanation.

(iii) Support for stars as people found in Daniel.

*Dan 8:10-11*

*10 And it grew up to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and some of the stars to the ground, and trampled them.*

*NKJV*

1. Talking about little horn (Antiochus Epiphanes in 180 BC)
2. Could only mean that he cast down many righteous people knowing his history.

*Dan 11:32-33*

*32 Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits. 33 And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet for many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering.*

*NKJV*

3. Also talking about Antiochus Epiphanes
4. Referencing the godly people he killed.
5. Chapter 8, their stars. Chapter 11 describes them as people.

*Dan 12:3*

*3 Those who are wise shall shine  
Like the brightness of the firmament,  
And those who turn many to righteousness  
Like the stars forever and ever.*

*NKJV*

6. Again, righteous people are like the stars.

(iv) Same language later in Revelation

*Rev 12:3-4*

*3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. 4 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth.*

*NKJV*

1. Probably referencing Satan persecuting and killing off many of the saints
  - a. A significant minority is what is meant by 1/3.
- (f) An elder of the church would be the most logical person to bring the letter to the church.
  - (i) If Jesus had something to say to the church, this would be the sensible person to give that message to.
- (2) What did John see when he first turned?
  - (a) Turned to see the person speaking but instead saw the golden lampstands
    - (i) He saw the churches before he saw the Person.
    - (ii) Could be suggested that this is where we generally find Christ and hear him speaking, the church.
    - (iii) Jesus manifests himself in and through His people
      1. corporate expression of Christ.

*Matt 18:20*

*20 For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."*  
NKJV

- (b) John wishing to hear Jesus' voice, sees the church
  - (i) Among the church he sees Jesus.
- (3) Lamp stand in OT tabernacle had 7 branches (including main shaft)

*Ex 25:31-32*

*31 "You shall also make a lampstand of pure gold; the lampstand shall be of hammered work. Its shaft, its branches, its bowls, its ornamental knobs, and flowers shall be of one piece. 32 And six branches shall come out of its sides: three branches of the lampstand out of one side, and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side.*  
NKJV

- (a) Imagery most likely meant to turn our attention back to the tabernacle
  - (i) Representing church...light of the world.
  - (ii) Compare with stars
    - 1. stars and lamp stands have same function, to bear light.
      - a. stars are in heaven

*Gen 1:16-18*

*He made the stars also. 17 God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, 18 and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness.*  
NKJV

- b. lamp stands are on earth.

*Matt 5:14-15*

*14 You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.*  
NKJV

- c. Both made to give light on the earth
  - i. Church exists both in heaven (deceased believers)
  - ii. And on earth (living saints)
- d. In one sense, both have seat in heaven.

*Eph 2:5-7*

*6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,*  
NKJV

- i. But in either case, the church is a light to the world.

- ii) Next we see Jesus "One like the Son of Man" (vs 13)
  - (1) Expression taken directly for Daniel 7:13

*Dan 7:13*

*13 "I was watching in the night visions,  
And behold, One like the Son of Man,  
Coming with the clouds of heaven!  
He came to the Ancient of Days,  
And they brought Him near before Him.*  
NKJV

- (a) Usually a different meaning in OT: One like a human being
  - (i) This particular verse does happen to depict Christ.
  - (ii) In OT, usually what the term meant is simply a human.
  - (iii) Psalms of Proverbs – used in the parallel form as a man.

*Ps 8:4*

*4 What is man that You are mindful of him,  
And the son of man that You visit him?  
NKJV*

- (b) Daniel contrasting with earlier beasts listed in chapter.
    - (i) Like a lion
    - (ii) Like a bear
    - (iii) Like a leopard
    - (iv) Etc.
  - (c) Revelation using same expression.
    - (i) I saw one like a human.
    - (ii) John would have known far more than Daniel about this term
      - 1. In OT we never see the term “Son of Man” as a technical term for the Messiah.
      - 2. Even Dan 7:13 is not a technical term for Jesus (or title), but a description.
      - 3. By the time John wrote this, it had become a technical term for Him
        - a. Jesus’ favorite term for Himself in the gospels.
          - i. He used it over 70 times in speaking of Himself.
      - 4. This was a far more significant term in John’s writing than in Daniel’s.
- (2) Description of Jesus
- (a) Not literal, but figurative or symbolic description.
    - (i) Sword coming out of His mouth?
      - 1. Speaking of the sharpness of His word.

*Heb 4:12*

*12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,  
NKJV*

- 2. Later says he’s going to make war with the church of Pergamus with the sword...

*Rev 2:16*

*16 Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.  
NKJV*

- a. His word, like a weapon is used to defeat His enemies.
- 3. Later with sword of His mouth He smites the nations..

*Rev 19:15*

*15 Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations.  
NKJV*

- a. Suggests His conquering the nations with the Word.
- (ii) More often, He’s described in Rev as a lamb with 7 eyes and 7 horns.
- (iii) John saw this vision while he was in a trance.
  - 1. Just like Daniel saw visions of bears, leopards, and lions.
    - a. symbolic of empires
- (b) Clothed with Garment down to feet?
  - (i) Not normal way for a man to dress

1. Would be a hindrance for a man to wear skirts this long in ordinary everyday life.
2. Probably only two knee level and bound up for serious work.
- (ii) Probably in priestly robe to indicate His priesthood.
  1. Later 24 elders shown to be wearing these kinds of priestly robes.

*Rev 4:4-5*

*4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.*

*NKJV*

- a. Probably a mixture of royalty and priesthood
  - i. Crowns represent royalty
  - ii. Robes represent priesthood. (They also offer incense a little later like priests did.)
- (c) Girded about the chest with a golden band
  - (i) Usually used to take up excess material in the robe to make it possible to move.
  - (ii) However, it's not around His waist (where most would wear it) but around His chest.
    1. Leads some commentators to think that it signifies that His work is complete.
      - a. If at work, it would be around His waist to bind up His garment.
      - b. Image of letting garment down since His work is finished.
      - c. Corresponds with some of what the book of Hebrews says about Him finishing His priestly work.
- (d) Hair white as wool.
  - (i) Age is implied here
    1. Ancient of Days
    2. Wisdom
    3. Honor
    4. Experience, etc.
- (e) Eyes like fire
  - (i) Penetrating gaze.
  - (ii) Burns through masks and false fronts
- (f) Feet like fine brass.
  - (i) Treading the winepress is used as a picture of a function of feet elsewhere

*Isa 63:1-6*

*Who is this who comes from Edom, With dyed garments from Bozrah, This One who is glorious in His apparel, Traveling in the greatness of His strength?--*

*"I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save."*

*2 Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like one who treads in the winepress?*

*3 "I have trodden the winepress alone, And from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, And trampled them in My fury; Their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, And I have stained all My robes. 4 For the day of vengeance is in My heart, And the year of My redeemed has come. 5 I looked, but there was no one to help, And I wondered That there was no one to uphold; Therefore My own arm brought salvation for Me; And My own fury, it sustained Me. 6 I have trodden down the peoples in My anger, Made them drunk in My fury, And brought down their strength to the earth."*

*NKJV*

1. Christ is doing the treading.
2. Garments stained with blood instead of wine.
3. Exact image is used later in Rev.

*Rev 14:19-20*

*19 So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. 20 And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs.*

*NKJV*

4. Again, producing blood not wine
5. Not specified who's doing the treading here
- (ii) Brass or Bronze would have been one of the strongest metals they knew in those times.
  1. Strong, Irresistable
  2. For judgment
  3. This book forewarns of judgment
  4. When He comes to trample, it will be certain.
- (iii) Voice like many waters
  1. Difficult to determine what is meant here.
  2. Imagery taken from Daniel and Ezekiel
  3. Later in book

*Rev 17:15*

*15 Then he said to me, "The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.*

*NKJV*

- a. Gentiles are often symbolized by water or sea
- b. Could be that His voice is heard through many peoples, the church.
4. May simply mean that His voice is majestic and overwhelming
  - a. Can be unnerving
- (iv) Right hand 7 stars
  1. Already determined that is 7 angels to 7 churches
- (v) Countenance like sun shining in it's strength
  1. Same language to describe him on mount of transfiguration

*Matt 17:2*

*2 and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun,*

*NKJV*

2. Probably a reference to His glory or diety
- (3) John falls on his face as though dead (vs 17)
  - (a) Same thing that happened to Daniel

*Dan 10:9*

*9 Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.*

*NKJV*

- (b) Apparently, seeing the glory of God has this effect.
  - (i) Contrasts with certain modern teachers who claim to have regular meetings with Christ.
  - (ii) Jesus has to tell John, not to be afraid.
    1. Also very common in these types of spiritual appearances.
- iii) Hades and Death (vs. 18)
  - (1) Hades is greek for grave (or Hell in KJV).
    - (a) Reference also seen later

*Rev 20:14*

*14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire.*  
*NKJV*

- (b) Hades Seems to be place where dead went prior to time Jesus rose from the dead.
  - (i) Not much description or teaching on this place.
  - (ii) Most graphic illustration is in a parable from Jesus about Lazarus and the rich man (Luke 16)
    - 1. Many believe both rich man and Lazarus were in two different compartments of Hades.
  - (iii) Standard Evangelical teaching is that those who died in faith went to a place symbolically described as Abraham's bosom. Those who died without faith went to a place of flames.
    - 1. Also in this view, when Jesus died and was resurrected, he brought those who died in faith with Him to Heaven.

*Eph 4:8*  
*"When He ascended on high,*  
*He led captivity captive,*  
*And gave gifts to men."*  
*NKJV*

- 2. If true, then since the cross the scenario is as follows:
  - a. Sinner dies, he goes to Hades still.
    - i. Presumably the occupants of Hades are cast into the lake of fire with it.
  - b. Believer dies, he doesn't go to Abraham's bosom, but go straight to heaven to be with the Lord.
- 3. This is not clearly taught in the Bible, but has scripture the hints at it.
- (iv) In any case, Hades is associated with death.
- (c) Keys to death and Hades suggests that He has power to let people in and out.
  - (i) Earlier told Peter

*Matt 16:19*  
*19 And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven,*  
*NKJV*

- (ii) He just got through saying He was dead and now He's alive.
  - 1. He defeated death, He broke out of Hades.
  - 2. Therefore He has the ability to release other people from death also.
  - 3. Be faithful unto death and do not fear because He has the keys.
  - 4. Didn't get the keys from the Devil, this is symbolic of power.
- iv) Jesus instructs John to write things
  - (1) Futurist believes this is the 3-fold division of the book
    - (a) "Things seen" are things you've just seen (Ch1)
    - (b) "Things that are" mean the things that are now the church age. (Ch2-3)
    - (c) "Things that shall be **after these things**" (Ch4 and on)
      - (i) Meta tauta = after these things.
      - (ii) NT:3326 *meta* (met-ah'); a primary preposition (often used adverbially); properly, denoting accompaniment; "amid" (local or causal); modified variously according to the case (genitive case association, or accusative case succession) with which it is joined; occupying an intermediate position between NT:575 or NT:1537 and NT:1519 or NT:4314; less intimate than NT:1722 and less close than NT:4862); KJV - **after** (-ward), X that he again, against, among, X and, + follow, hence, hereafter, in, of, (up-) on, + our, X and setting, since, (un-) to, +

together, when, with (+-out). Often used in composition, in substantially the same relations of participation or proximity, and transfer or sequence.

(iii) NT:5023 *tauta* (tow'-tah); nominative or accusative case neuter plural of NT:3778; **these things**: KJV - + afterward, follow, + hereafter, X him, the same, so, such, that, then, these, they, this, those, thus.

(iv) Same term in Ch 4:1 (twice).

*Rev 4:1*

*4:1 **After these things** I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place **after this**."*

*NKJV*

1. Dispensational theology believes that "come up here" is talking about the rapture, John representing the church.
  - a. Problem is we see John on earth again a few times after this.
    - i. Chapter 11 and 17
    - ii. If this is the rapture, and John here represents the church, then we have to conclude that the church is going to go up and down like a yo-yo.
  - b. The reason it is argued this way is because of the phrase "after these things".
  - c. Believed to mean, after the things of the church (represented by 7 letters).
    - i. Ephesus representing 1<sup>st</sup> church prior to the writing of this letter.
    - ii. Smyrna representing 100 AD to 302AD (persecuted church)
    - iii. Pergamos representing imperial church (Under Caesars, Holy roman empire beginning with Constantine). 303AD – 500 AD
    - iv. Thyatira representing Papal church (corrupt church). 500 AD – 1500 AD.
    - v. Sardis representing Reformation 1500 AD – 1700 AD
    - vi. Philidelphia representing Evangelical church (nothing bad said) from about 1700 AD to 1950 AD.
    - vii. Laodicea representing apostate church at end of world.
  - d. Problem with seeing it this way is that 6 of 7 of the churches are told that Christ is going to come to them (threat or promise).
    - i. Several imply 2<sup>nd</sup> coming, but not certain.
- e) *What are some different uses of Christ's "coming" in this book?*
  - i) Tendency is to always look at it as 2<sup>nd</sup> coming
  - ii) 6 of the churches are told something about Christ coming to them.
  - iii) Example: Ephesus

*Rev 2:5*

*5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you **quickly** and remove your lampstand from its place--unless you repent.*

*NKJV*

- iv) Doesn't appear to be talking about 2<sup>nd</sup> coming, coming to remove their lampstand.
- v) Church of Ephesus is no longer in existence. Lampstand apparently removed.
- vi) Another example: Pergamos

*Rev 2:16-17*

*16 Repent, or else I will come to you **quickly** and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.*

*NKJV*

- vii) Not a reference to 2<sup>nd</sup> coming.
- viii) Fight against the false doctrine with the word (sword out of His mouth).
- ix) Pergamos also does not exist today.
- x) Another example:

*Rev 2:25-26*  
*25 But hold fast what you have till I come.*  
*NKJV*

- xi) Could be 2<sup>nd</sup> coming, but doesn't need to be.
- xii) Previous 2 were not, so this may not be either.
- xiii) Another example: Sardis

*Rev 3:3*  
*3 Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.*  
*NKJV*

- xiv) Sounds like 2<sup>nd</sup> coming because of the "thief" reference.
- xv) But this church doesn't exist anymore either.
- xvi) Another example: Church of Philidelphia

*Rev 3:11*  
*11 Behold, **I am coming quickly!** Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.*  
*NKJV*

- xvii) Sounds very much like what He told the church of Thyatira (Hold fast until I come).
- xviii) Another example: Laodicea

*Rev 3:20-21*  
*20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.*  
*NKJV*

- xix) Obviously not a reference to 2<sup>nd</sup> coming.
- xx) Only 3 of these cases could be reference to 2<sup>nd</sup> coming.
  - (1) We have to conclude that the coming of the Lord in this book doesn't necessarily mean the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming. Sometimes it does, sometimes not.
  - (2) Judge by context
- xxi) Of all the churches listed, 2 may still remain
  - (1) Philidelphia
  - (2) Smyrna (only city remaining)
  - (3) Some commentators say none of them remain.
  - (4) These are the only two churches that weren't told to repent.

### **3) Chapter 2 and 3: Seven letters to seven churches**

#### a) *7 letters to the churches*

##### i) Letters follow a certain pattern

##### (1) 7 features in each of the letters.

- (a) Addressee is named (angel of church of..)
- (b) Christ describes Himself as sender. (borrows imagery from Ch1 in most)
- (c) Commendation. 5 of the 7 He has something good to say before He says something bad.
  - (i) Sardis and Laodicea are the exceptions. Nothing good to say.
- (d) Complaint (I have this against you).
  - (i) Smyrna and Philidelphia are exceptions.
- (e) Call to repentance.
  - (i) Also except Smyrna and Philidelphia
- (f) Call to hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
- (g) To him that overcomes....

#### b) *Church at Ephesus*

#### **Rev 2:1-7**

#### **2:1 “To the angel of the church of Ephesus write,**

*‘These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: 2 “I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; 3 and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name’s sake and have not become weary. 4 Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. 5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent. 6 But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.” ‘*

**NKJV**

- (1) Not political capital of region, but the largest.
  - (a) Most important city in many way.
  - (b) Had temple of Diana (Artemus)
    - (i) Idol of this goddess that was one of the 7 wonders of the world.
      - 1. Alleged that this idol fell down from heaven. Possibly a meteor that had been carved into an idol.
    - (ii) See Acts 19 for more info about this temple and idol.
- (2) Paul founded church of Ephesus
  - (a) Others that ministered there were:
    - (i) Priscilla and Aquilla
    - (ii) Apollos
    - (iii) John spent final years there (according to tradition)
    - (iv) Timothy (after Paul was no longer there)
- (3) In their favor
  - (a) Labor
  - (b) Patience
  - (c) Intolerant of evil
  - (d) Tested/rejected false apostles
    - (i) Paul admonished them to do so in Acts 20
    - (ii) Apparently they took that to heart.
    - (iii) A century later, Ignatius wrote letter to Ephesus (still exists) commending them on their zeal for the truth also.

- (e) Perseverance
- (f) Hate deeds of Nicolaitans
- (4) Against them.
  - (a) Left first love.
    - (i) What love?
      1. For God
      2. For others.
      3. If you love God, you'll love His kids
        - a. Compare Mary and Martha.
          - i. Can get so busy doing the things of God, that we forget to love Him and His people.
          - ii. Religious machinery of church set in motion.
      4. Jesus said in Olivet discourse

*Matt 24:12*

*12 And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.*

*NKJV*

- a. Apparently this happened to this church.
- b. Not because of the their lawlessness, but lawlessness in general.
- c. Not restricted to God, but also to people.
- (ii) Easy for us to do.
  1. New believers tend to have spontaneous works of love.
  2. over time can lapse into a religious routine.
    - a. Tithing
    - b. Certain amount of time in outreaches.
    - c. Good things, but for different reasons than before.
    - d. Desire to convince yourself that your spiritual can replace love as motivation.
  3. Common but not good.
- (b) Zeal for truth teaching can easily slip into an uncharitable attitude toward others
  - (i) Continuously sniffing out heresy can make you unloving.
  - (ii) People believing heresy can simply be deceived.
- (5) Told to repent and do first works
  - (a) They didn't have a shortage of works.
    - (i) Works are without love (which accompanied their first works)
      1. it's a matter of the heart...motivation from love.
- (6) Threatened to have lampstand removed.
  - (a) Where Christ is dwelling, in the midst of the churches.
  - (b) He will leave their midst and no longer dwell within them.
- (7) Love and Hate can co-exist
  - (a) Jesus telling them to exhibit love in what they do
  - (b) Also, commending them for hating deeds of Nicolaitans (which He also hates).
    - (i) 2 theories on who were Nicolaitans
      1. some say it's a combination of two words:
        - a. Nicos – domination or dominion
        - b. Laos – people; lay people
        - c. In other words, a division of the church into clergy and laity where the former lords over the latter.
        - d. Probably not correct.
          - i. Can't prove that this word is derived from these other two words.
      2. Some believe it's talking about an apostate deacon (Nicolás)
        - a. Some Early church fathers said it was a cult originated by a man named Nicolás.
          - i. one of the 7 deacons in Acts 6, according to tradition.

*Acts 6:4-7*

*5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, 6 whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.*

*NKJV*

- ii. He had become a Gnostic type cult heretic later.
- iii. Anti-nomian – You can do whatever you want to and still be saved.
- iv. Proselyte from Antioch, may not have been favorable towards Jewish laws.
- v. Not sure what the Nicolaitan doctrine was, but we may have a hint in the following verses:

*Rev 2:14-15*

*14 But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. 15 Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.*

*NKJV*

- vi. This was stuff that the Gnostics also taught.

- (8) Let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
  - (a) Churches is plural here. All churches take heed, not just Ephesus.
    - (i) No room for a introverted church
    - (ii) Need to know what God is saying to other churches
  - (b) Jesus said this same thing during earthly ministry as well.
- (9) To him who overcomes...
  - (a) promises to overcomers are images taken from the last chapters of book.
    - (i) New heavens, earth, paradise, tree of life.
      - 1. Word paradise is from a Persian word meaning “pleasure park”. Came to mean heaven.
      - 2. tree of life not to be taken literally in this book (represents eternal life)
    - (ii) Like Images of Christ at beginning of letters taken from vision of Ch1.
  - (b) Suggests that not everyone in the church will overcome
    - (i) Probably meaning to overcome the world.

*John 16:32-33*

*33 These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”*

*NKJV*

*1 John 5:5*

*5 Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?*

*NKJV*

- (ii) However, later it speaks of believers overcoming Satan.

*Rev 12:11*

*11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.*

*NKJV*

- (iii) Could simply mean sin (lovelessness)
- (iv) If not , He will remove their lampstand

1. Turkey today has very few churches
2. some of these were major churches in that region
3. It appears lampstands were removed.

c) *Church of Smyrna*

**Rev 2:8-11**

**8 “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write,**

***“These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: 9 “I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 10 Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. 11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.” ‘***

**NKJV**

- (1) Ancient city
  - (a) One of the oldest in Asia
  - (b) Still exists today
  - (c) Still has a congregation of believers there
  - (d) Most of area is now Islamic
  - (e) Modern Ismier?
- (2) 1 of 2 of the 7 churches not told to repent of something
  - (a) Philadelphia is the other
- (3) One of the shortest letters
  - (a) Jesus doesn't have much bad to say about them.
- (4) Suffering church
  - (a) Largest Jewish population of the 7 cities.
  - (b) Apparently Jews were creating problems for the church here.
- (5) Later, Polycarp was the bishop of this church.
  - (a) Polycarp was a disciple of John.
    - (i) Probably during early 2<sup>nd</sup> century
- (6) Jesus introduces Himself as He “who was dead, and came to life”
  - (a) Could correspond with His instruction to them in vs 10. “Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”
  - (b) Hint that church was facing real persecution and would face even greater persecution in the near future (vs 10).
- (7) Tribulation for ten days.
  - (a) Only place in bible that any specific length of time is affixed to a period of tribulation.
  - (b) Dispensationalists identify this time to be referring to the church right after age of the apostles (100AD – 303AD)
    - (i) Persecuted by 10 emperors. (10 days referring to the 10 emperors).
      1. Interesting that this interpretation comes from those that insist on a “literal” interpretation of this book.
  - (c) The ten days could refer to a unspecified period of time;
    - (i) Long enough to be annoying
    - (ii) Short enough to be tolerable.
    - (iii) It would be very unpleasant to spend 10 days in a 3<sup>rd</sup> world jail, but something that could be endured.
- (8) Synagogue of Satan is said to be their persecutors.
  - (a) Jewish population of the city.
  - (b) Agents of Satan “Devil is about throw...”

- (c) We know from other sources that the Jewish leaders were frequently instigators in stirring up the Roman officials to persecute Christians (Acts, etc).
- (9) Jesus knows their poverty, but says their “rich”
  - (a) Physically poor, spiritually rich
  - (b) Contrast with the church of Laodicea.
    - (i) Physically rich, but spiritually poor.
  - (c) This makes it clear that financial prosperity is not a sign of God’s approval on a church or person.

*James 2:5*

*Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?*

*NKJV*

- (10) The second death
  - (a) Not yet been explained
  - (b) Lake of fire (Ch20:5-6, 15)
- (11) Faithful until death
  - (a) Physical death
  - (b) Not promising them deliverance from death
  - (c) Is promising that if they remain faithful, they will escape the 2<sup>nd</sup> death.
    - (i) Persecutors will live longer in this world, but won’t escape the 2<sup>nd</sup> death.
  - (d) Physical death is not to be avoided by compromising the faith
    - (i) More important to avoid sin.

*Matt 16:25*

*25 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.*

*NKJV*

d) *Church of Pergamos*

***Rev 2:12-17***

***12 “And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write,***

***‘These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword: 13 “I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. 14 But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. 15 Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. 16 Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth. 17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.” ‘***

***NKJV***

- (1) Provincial capital of Asia (Roman province)
  - (a) Military unit
  - (b) Appointee of emperor
- (2) Renowned for its buildings
- (3) Library with over 200,000 volumes
  - (a) In days without printing presses (very expensive)
  - (b) Largest in world except Alexandria Egypt.
- (4) Temple of Esclassias
  - (a) Pagan god of healing

- (b) Lourdes of ancient world.
- (c) Associated with miraculous healings.
- (d) Occultic activity apparently.
- (e) “Where Satan’s throne is” (vs 13) could be referring to this.
- (5) 1<sup>st</sup> city to erect temple to Caesar Augustus
  - (a) Emperor worship had some of it’s beginnings here.
    - (i) Also may be a reference to “Satan’s throne”
- (6) Culturally a hostile environment to Christianity.
  - (a) Political power
  - (b) Military power
  - (c) Temple to Esclassias
  - (d) Temple to Caesar
  - (e) Demonic power manifested there
  - (f) Library suggests a lot of intellectual emphasis
- (7) Antipas
  - (a) Only reference to him
  - (b) Apparently put to death by authorities for some reason.
  - (c) Church was unshaken
  - (d) Compare with Stephen’s stoning in Acts.
    - (i) Spurred a great persecution of the church, led by Saul
    - (ii) May have done similar thing in Pergamos.
    - (iii) This would be virtuous to the church there.
- (8) A few things against this church.
  - (a) Those that held to the teaching of Balaam
    - (i) Eat food sacrificed to idols
    - (ii) Sexual immorality
    - (iii) Sought to curse Israel, but was not permitted by God to do that.
      - 1. Balaam then tried to get Balaak (king of Moab) to entice Israel into sexual immorality to get God to curse them.
  - (b) Those that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans
    - (i) Could be anti-nomianism.
  - (c) The church hasn’t drifted away, but some had and the church apparently tolerated the intolerable.
  - (d) I will come to you quickly and will fight against them
    - (i) Not against His own people, but the ones who drifted.
    - (ii) Every church is mixture of true and false believers
    - (iii) Not our duty to decide who is and isn’t
    - (iv) But is churches duty to recognize sin and heresy and deal with it.
  - (e) All these churches, are still called churches with lampstands, even those He had nothing good to say about.
    - (i) Even the bad ones had a few overcomers.
    - (ii) Wherever there are two or more true believers, there is a church.
      - 1. even when the church as a whole has become apostate or carnal.
    - (iii) Some of them were even told that their lampstands would be removed.
  - (f) The sword of Jesus’ mouth
    - (i) Presumably His word.
    - (ii) Ministry of His word will weed out the bad.
  - (g) What does the church have to repent of?
    - (i) They tolerated these heresies and didn’t deal with it apparently.
      - 1. Same as Pergamos
    - (ii) Paul spoke of a similar situation in 1 Cor 5 and instructed them to put the person out of the church for gross sexual immorality.
    - (iii) If they don’t handle it, Jesus says he’ll handle it Himself.
      - 1. Not clear what form that would take.
    - (iv) Don’t fear the Roman sword, but the sword of Jesus.
  - (h) 2 promises to overcomers

- (i) Hidden manna to eat
  1. Probably an allusion to the manna hidden in the ark of the covenant in the golden pot.
  2. tradition among Jews that Jeremiah would appear at the beginning of the Messianic age and bring out the manna from the golden pot to distribute among the people for a Messianic feast.
    - a. Jesus not confirming tradition to be true.
    - b. Saying if you avoid the idol feasts, you'll participate in the Messianic feast.

*John 6:33-41*

*33 For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." 34 Then they said to Him, "Lord, give us this bread always." 35 And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. 36 But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. 37 All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. 38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. 39 This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. 40 And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."*

*41 The Jews then complained about Him, because He said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven."*

*NKJV*

- 3. Jesus is the manna.
  - a. Gives them choice, idol feasts or Him.
- (ii) White stone with a new name on it.
  1. Different opinions on what this meant in those days.
  2. Some say that it is like the key to a city, like a backstage pass.
  3. Pass to certain functions in the city.
  4. Possibly a pass to an idol's feast.
  5. Jesus could be saying that I'll give you the stone that admits you into my feast if you obtain from the idol's feast.
  6. Another possibility is that it is a comparison to the Olympic games
    - a. A runner in would receive white stone upon winning a race.
    - b. He would later trade it in for a crown wreath.
    - c. Jesus could be saying if you run the race until the finish, I'll give you a white stone that you can trade in later for a crown.
  7. Another possibility is that it is a comparison to a Roman court of law
    - a. Roman judges would (according to some commentators)
      - i. Hand defendant black stone for conviction.
      - ii. White stone would mean acquittal or pardon.
      - iii. Possible that Antipas was handed a black stone and put to death.
      - iv. Roman courts may give you a black stone, but I'll give you a white stone.

*e) Church at Thyatira*

***Rev 2:18-29***

***18 "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write,***

***'These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass: 19 "I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than***

*the first. 20 Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. 21 And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. 22 Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. 23 I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works. 24 Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden. 25 But hold fast what you have till I come. 26 And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—*

*27 He shall rule them with a rod of iron;  
They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels'—*

*as I also have received from My Father; 28 and I will give him the morning star.*

*29 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." ' NKJV*

- (1) Longest letter of the 7
- (2) Although He has mostly good things to say about the church, the thing He hates about them is their tolerance of Jezebel and her teaching.
  - (a) Not everyone followers of hers, but they tolerated it.
- (3) Jezebel seems to be a reference to some woman in the church teaching the same Antinomianism that was taught in Pergamos.
  - (a) These were the great temptations for early Christians
    - (i) Roman world was full of idolatrous temples and worship.
    - (ii) The great social events were conducted as feasts to certain idols.
    - (iii) Christians were being asked to give up much of their social lives.
    - (iv) Fornication was often a part of idol worship.
      1. Temple prostitutes.
      2. Also just a way of life for that time, just as it is becoming now in our own Pagan culture.
        - a. Only Judeo-Christianized cultures frown upon fornication.
      3. Roman world had no stigma attached to fornication.
        - a. People have same desires as now, but no reason not to do it.
  - (b) Gave her a chance to repent.
    - (i) She doesn't take advantage of it.
    - (ii) Jesus doesn't just throw you away when you sin
      1. Gives you space to repent first.
      2. Brings conviction.
      3. Don't wait for judgment to come and then repent.
    - (iii) Threatens to kill her and her children (vs 23)
  - (c) This church obviously did not have the correct idea of grace.
    - (i) They probably thought that tolerating this teaching was showing a superior notion of God's grace.
    - (ii) Not licentiousness
    - (iii) Church of Corinth had this same problem.

*1 Cor 5:1-2*

*5:1 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—that a man has his father's wife! 2 And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you.*

*NKJV*

- (iv) One of the ploys of Satan to get people to do what is immoral is to suggest that it's more spiritual. That you understand Grace better.
- (v) R.B. Theme of modern day is like this.
  - 1. Considered a Christian by most.
    - a. Hal Lindsay even dedicated a book to him as his "spiritual father".
  - 2. Followers of this guy typically sin a great deal as a way to demonstrate grace.
    - a. Smoke, drink, party, blaspheme, swear.
    - b. Seem to go out of their way to be carnal to show that their not caught up in any religious legalism.
  - 3. Calls it "super-grace"
    - a. When you really understand the grace of God, you realize that nothing you do matters.
    - b. Trying to live a holy life or avoid sin is merely a demonstration that you don't know what grace is.
    - c. This is identical to anti-nomianism in ancient times.
    - d. This to their minds is a superior grasp of Christianity.
- (d) She was apparently calling these things the "deep things of God".
  - (i) Jesus calls them the "depths of Satan" in vs. 24.
- (e) Woman's name was probably not really "Jezebel" but symbolic of OT Jezebel.
  - (i) Unlikely that anyone would name their child Jezebel after the historic Jezebel.
  - (ii) Jezebel re-introduced Baal worship to Israel.

*1 Kings 16:31*

*31 And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him.*

*NKJV*

- 1. Baal worship itself brought immorality.
- 2. There wasn't an outright statement of her immorality, but there were hints of it.
- (4) Eyes like fire and feet like fine brass.
  - (a) He can see right through anyone and their heart.
  - (b) Is capable of bringing judgment upon anyone.
    - (i) "Trample" them like grapes in the winepress of the wrath of God.
- (5) Those that teach that this is a church age in history believe:
  - (a) Pergamos was the Imperial church flirting with the world
  - (b) Thyatira was the papal church living in outright immorality.
    - (i) There was a great deal of immorality at this time
      - 1. In dark ages in was called the "reign of the harlots"
      - 2. One pope was a woman in disguise
      - 3. Many involved in homosexual relationships.
      - 4. One pope was killed in bed by a jealous husband who found him with his wife.
  - (c) The problem with this theory is that you can find this example at any time in church history.
    - (i) Church has always had immoral leaders in it.
    - (ii) Artificial likenesses.
      - 1. All characteristics of these churches have existed in the church at every age in history.
      - 2. At what point in time was there not persecution, immorality, compromise, etc.?
- (6) Jesus says that those who have not known this doctrine, He puts upon them no other burden.
  - (a) Church in general is doing pretty good.

- (b) But don't tolerate this woman anymore.
- (7) To those that overcome...
  - (a) Give nations to rule with rod of iron.
  - (b) This is what was given to Jesus by the Father.

*Ps 2:8-9*

*8 Ask of Me, and I will give You  
The nations for Your inheritance,  
And the ends of the earth for Your possession.  
9 You shall break them with a rod of iron;  
You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.' "*  
NKJV

- (i) Jesus is allowing overcomers to reign with Him.
- (c) Give them the morning star.
  - (i) Jesus called the morning star later.

*Rev 22:16-17*

*16 I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."*  
NKJV

- (ii) Give the believer Himself
- (iii) Peter said:

*2 Peter 1:19*

*19 And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts;*  
NKJV

1. Christ's own likeness or image coming forth in us.

f) *Church of Sardis*

**Rev 3:1-6**

**3:1 "And to the angel of the church in Sardis write,**

***'These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. 2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. 3 Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. 4 You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. 5 He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. 6 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." "***  
NKJV

- (1) Only good thing He has to say about the church is that they have a reputation for being alive
  - (a) But He says they're really dead. (name is undeserved)
  - (b) Probably had full calendar of programs and events, but they were spiritually dead.
    - (i) Most churches are marked as alive by these types of things, but Jesus marks them differently.

- (2) A few names that have not defiled their garments.
  - (a) Almost every church has a believing remnant in it, even the worst of them.
  - (b)
- (3) Sardis was the capital of an old country that had been called Lydia.
  - (a) Famous for production of red dye and woolen goods.
    - (i) Main industry of Sardis
  - (b) Could be why he makes reference to overcomers walking before Him in white garments
    - (i) His people will be different.

*Isa 1:18*

*“Though your sins are like scarlet,  
They shall be as white as snow;  
Though they are red like crimson,  
They shall be as wool.*

*NKJV*

- (ii) Sin stains, cannot wash it out.
- (iii) Jesus can make it white.
- (4) Twice in this city’s history, it had fallen to conquerors simply because someone had fallen asleep on their watch.
  - (a) Cyrus – 549BC
  - (b) Antiochus the great – 218BC (not Antiochus Epiphanes)
  - (c) Jesus says “watch” or I will come on to you like a thief.
    - (i) Remain spiritually alive.
    - (ii)
- (5) Promise to overcomers
  - (a) Will not blot name out of book of life (vs. 5)
    - (i) Name not in book of life gets you thrown into Lake of Fire (Rev 20:15)
    - (ii) Jesus told disciples to rejoice that their names are written in heaven.

*Luke 10:19-20*

*19 Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. 20 Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.”*

*NKJV*

(iii) Daniel also prophesied:

*Dan 12:1*

*And at that time your people shall be delivered,  
Every one who is found written in the book.*

*NKJV*

- (iv) Book is figurative of God’s knowledge of those who are saved (God doesn’t need books of course).
- (v) This statement strongly implies that your name can be blotted out and will be if you don’t overcome.
  1. Calvinists (who hold to the Perseverance of the saints doctrine) will refute this by saying that the text doesn’t say that anyone will be blotted out, only that it won’t be. Doesn’t imply that it would be otherwise.
  2. However, what would be the point of the promise if that were true?
    - a. Name can’t be blotted out unless it’s already in.
    - b. Hard verse for those who teach eternal security.
  3. Some have thought that this simply means that Jesus won’t kill them physically (book of life meaning natural life)

- a. Would be possible if Rev 20:15 didn't say that those who were not in it would be cast into lake of fire.
- 4. Some suggest that at birth, everyone's name is in the book of life. Born innocent, ignorant, and in book of life
  - a. Age of moral accountability is the time their name is removed if they make the wrong choices (virtually everyone does).
  - b. However, Jesus is not talking to infants here, he's talking to adult believers.

g) *Church of Philadelphia*

**Rev 3:7-13**

**7 "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write,**

*'These things says He who is holy, He who is true, "He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens": 8 "I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. 9 Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. 10 Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. 11 Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. 12 He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name. 13 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."* ‘

**NKJV**

- (1) This was a city that had a great number of earthquakes
  - (a) Completely destroyed by one in 17AD.
  - (b) Many were afraid to live in this city.
  - (c) When He says they shall "go out no more" may be alluding to their fear that they may have to evacuate and not come back home after an earthquake.
    - (i) City of My God will give them assurance that they'll never have to go out. (if they are an overcome)
    - (ii) Unshakable kingdom or city.
- (2) Another city with a large Jewish population (other being Smyrna)
- (3) No complaints against this church (other also Smyrna).
- (4) Small church (probably because of earthquakes again giving town small population relatively)
- (5) Describes Himself as He who holds the key of David
  - (a) Reference to Eliakim in the book of Isaiah:

*Isa 22:22-23*

*22 The key of the house of David*

*I will lay on his shoulder;*

*So he shall open, and no one shall shut;*

*And he shall shut, and no one shall open.*

*23 I will fasten him as a peg in a secure place,*

*And he will become a glorious throne to his father's house.*

**NKJV**

- (b) He had great authority in the House of David.
  - (i) Given the key
  - (ii) Trusted official in the kingdom (at time of Hezekiah's rule)

- (iii) If he opened doors, no one could shut them
- (iv) If he shut them, no one could open them.
- (v) He had ultimate final say.
- (c) Jesus says that He had that authority in His kingdom (the real House of David)
  - (i) Access to God is decided by him alone.
  - (ii) Probability is that the Jews in that town were making the Christians feel that they had no access to God.
    - 1. Jesus says He's the one who makes that decision, not them.
    - 2. They can't open or shut that door of relationship to God.
- (6) I have set before you an open door...
  - (a) Those who teach that these are phases in church history say this is the evangelical church.
    - (i) 1700 – 1950AD or so.
    - (ii) Open door to missionaries and evangelism
    - (iii) Paul referred to these opportunities as open door.
  - (b) However, in context, He seems to be talking about the door in relationship to the key of David He mentioned.
    - (i) Not missions.
    - (ii) Door to the kingdom.
    - (iii) He opened the way to the kingdom to them and no one can exclude them. (meaning the Jews who said they could)
      - 1. In fact, they'll have to acknowledge that He loved them (vs 9)
      - 2. Doesn't mean that they will worship us, but as they acknowledge Christ and bow before his throne, they'll be at our feet as well since we'll be there on the same throne.
- (7) Promise made to those who persevere.
  - (a) Kept from hour of temptation.
    - (i) Many believe this is the Great Tribulation because of the language used.
      - 1. Whole world
      - 2. Test those who dwell on earth
    - (ii) Same people believe this means that the church will be raptured during this time.
      - 1. Since this is considered to be a church during our time.
    - (iii) However, as already demonstrated:
      - 1. Those who dwell on earth could be translated those who dwell in the land (ge).
      - 2. World is often used in bible to refer to Roman empire only (Luke 2)

*Luke 2:1*

*2:1 And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.*

*NKJV*

- a. Caesar certainly didn't register the Incas and Aztecs for taxation.
- 3. Daniel also talks about the 4<sup>th</sup> beast (Roman empire) shall trample down the whole world.

*Dan 7:23*

*The fourth beast shall be  
A fourth kingdom on earth,  
Which shall be different from all other kingdoms,  
And shall devour the whole earth,  
Trample it and break it in pieces.*

*NKJV*

- 4. This could be a reference to the horrendous times that came upon the Roman Empire as a result of Nero's death in 68AD.

- a. Great upheavals and civil wars in the empire that almost destroyed Rome in the year that followed.
- 5. Keeping from the hour of temptation doesn't mean that He's going to take them out of the world.
  - a. Jesus prayed that:

*John 17:15*

*15 I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.*

*NKJV*

- b. Keep from is the greek *ek tereo*
    - i. NT:1537 *ek* (ek) or ex (ex); a primary preposition denoting origin (the point whence action or motion proceeds), from, out (of place, time, or cause; literal or figurative; direct or remote): KJV - after, among, X are, at, betwixt (-yond), by (the means of), exceedingly, (+abundantly above), for (-th), from (among, forth, up), + grudgingly, + heartily, X heavenly, X hereby, + very highly, in, ...ly, (because, by reason) of, off (from), on, out among (from, of), over, since, X thenceforth, through, X unto, X vehemently, with (-out). Often used in composition, with the same general import; often of completion.
    - ii. NT:5083 *tereo* (tay-reh'-o); from teros (a watch; perhaps akin to NT:2334); to guard (from loss or injury, properly, by keeping the eye upon; and thus differing from NT:5442, which is properly to prevent escaping; and from NT:2892, which implies a fortress or full military lines of apparatus), i.e. to note (a prophecy; figuratively, to fulfil a command); by implication, to detain (in custody; figuratively, to maintain); by extension, to withhold (for personal ends; figuratively, to keep unmarried); by extension, to withhold (for personal ends; figuratively, to keep unmarried): KJV - hold fast, keep (-er), (pre-, re-) serve, watch.
  - c. Doesn't mean He has to take them out of the world, only keep them from the evil that is to come (from the perspective of that time period)
- (8) A little strength
- (a) Used by dispensationalists to prove that the church is going to be weak in the last days.
    - (i) This is the church that will be raptured.
    - (ii) So don't think that the church will have great strength in the last days.
- (9) Pillars in the temple of My God (the church)
- (a) Not 1<sup>st</sup> time this idea has come up.

*Gal 2:8-9*

*9 and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars,*

*NKJV*

- (b) We're all members of the church (stones), but a pillar seems to be one of particular responsibility or honor in the church.
- (c) Those who overcome will have this particular place in the church.

*h) Church of Laodicea*

***Rev 3:14-22***

***14 "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write,***

***'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: 15 "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. 16 So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. 17 Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'--and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked-- 18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. 19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. 20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. 21 To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. 22 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." ' ' ' NKJV***

- (1) Center of banking for the region
  - (a) Prosperous city for the region
  - (b) Business and banking city
  - (c) High standard of living
- (2) Churches tend to follow the demographic of the area.
  - (a) Where there are rich people, there are generally rich Christians and vice versa.
  - (b) Laodicea made up of cross-section of people, but generally prosperous.
  - (c) However, when gospel is preached the way Jesus preached it, it usually has more appeal to the poor than to the rich.
    - (i) Rich often called to give up more than they are comfortable.
    - (ii) Poor have less to lose.
    - (iii) Jerusalem actually a good example of a rich city that had a church living below the current standard of living (Acts 2)
      1. They sold all they had and gave it to each other as needed.
  - (d) Jesus tells this church that though they are rich, they are really poor.
    - (i) This church was not rich in this world, but rich towards God.
- (3) City known for producing black wool clothing and carpet
  - (a) Significant because Jesus tells them they are really naked.
  - (b) Jesus also counseled them to buy “white” garments in contrast to their famous black clothing.
    - (i) Harkens back to the letter to Sardis where He told them that there are a few that have kept their garments white.
- (4) City also had a famous medical school there.
  - (a) Known for producing a powdery substance from Phrygia used for an eye salve.
  - (b) Jesus tells them they are “blind” and to “anoint” their eyes with eye salve so they could see.
- (5) Water supply was supplied by a hot springs from Dinessley (check spelling).
  - (a) Brought in by Aquaduct
    - (i) Water would cool somewhat, but not completely (luke warm)
    - (ii) Had minerals and chemicals in it that they couldn’t get out of it.
      1. Made in unpalatable for drinking.
  - (b) Jesus used this as an analogy to describe the church
    - (i) Lukewarm and sickening
    - (ii) Said He would vomit them out of His mouth.
    - (iii) Like the Christian with one foot in the world and one foot in the Kingdom.
      1. Fails to get enjoyment out of either.
      2. Not faithful and true witnesses to the world around them.
- (6) Is Jesus including Himself among created things ? (v 14)
  - (a) JW’s and other cults like to quote this verse.
    - (i) Idea that Jesus is the first created being.
    - (ii) God is uncreated and original. If Jesus is created, then He is not God.
  - (b) Christians believe that Jesus is God (uncreated and eternal)

- (c) Greek word for beginning in this verse is: NT:746 **arche** (ar-khay'); from NT:756; (properly abstract) a commencement, or (concretely) chief (in various applications of order, time, place, or rank): KJV - beginning, corner, (at the, the) first (estate), magistrate, power, principality, principle, rule.
  - (i) Could be interpreted “the active cause” or “the one who began it”. Initiator is another way.
  - (ii) This would harmonize with the rest of Scripture and even the rest of John’s writings.

*John 1:1*

*1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*  
NKJV

- (7) This is one of the churches that Jesus has nothing good to say about.
  - (a) Lukewarm. What constitutes Hot or Cold?
    - (i) Hot could be characterized by zeal.
      - 1. Jesus said “be zealous and repent” (v19)
      - 2. Zeal for God is out of love for Him.
        - a. Ephesus had left their first love.
    - (ii) Cold then would mean that absolutely no Christian profession at all presumably.
      - 1. They have just enough Christian in them to make them an embarrassing spectacle of Christianity to the world.
      - 2. They have so many of the worlds values, they bring a reproach to Christ.
  - (b) Say they are rich but are really poor (v17)
    - (i) When people are well off, they commonly don’t really think they are in need of anything.
    - (ii) Maybe why when Jesus taught to pray He said “give us *this day* our *daily* bread”
      - 1. If we have too much stored up, we don’t have to pray for it again until we run out.
      - 2. Daily supply keeps us close to God in on-going prayer for provision.
  - (c) They don’t know that their wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.
    - (i) Many people don’t even realize just how desperate for God they are.
      - 1. because they are not physically miserable
      - 2. but they are spiritually poor and miserable.
    - (ii) Jesus uses these ironic metaphors (blind, naked, poor) to contrast their spiritual condition with their physical.
  - (d) Buy from Me ...gold, white garments ...and anoint your eyes (v18)
    - (i) Gold refined in fire (biblically)
      - 1. Purity of character

*1 Peter 1:7*

*7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,*

NKJV

- 2. Our trials are the fire, which purify our character.
- 3. People often avoid trials by their compromise.
  - a. An uncompromised preaching of the gospel will bring plenty of trials, rejection, and persecution.
- 4. Gospel doesn’t affirm a pagan lifestyle, it offers an alternative to it.
  - a. This alternative will attract those with a true heart for God.
  - b. Those not willing to give up what they have for Jesus, their faith is in question.
  - c. The contrast convicts.
- (ii) White garments

1. told later that this is the righteous deeds of the saints.

*Rev 19:8-9*

*8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.*

*NKJV*

- a. Start being rich in good works.

(iii) Eye salve

1. Blind to their spiritual condition
2. Jesus is saying “wake up”, see it through My eyes.
3. could also mean they should be praying for a spiritual vision to follow.

(e) As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten (v19)

- (i) Loves them even though there’s nothing good to say about them.
- (ii) Shouldn’t think that Jesus has rejected them
  1. The reason for the letter is that He loves them and wants them to change.

(f) Behold, I stand at the door and knock (v20)

- (i) Famous verse used in evangelism
- (ii) What door is this?
  1. Not all that clear.
  2. Often thought of as door of the heart. (not probable)
  3. Could actually refer to the door of the church.
    - a. Writing to a church.
    - b. I’m outside, not inside this church.
    - c. I’m knocking and I want in.
    - d. Church not only blind but deaf. (don’t hear knocking)

(g) If anyone hear My voice...

- (i) Not necessarily talking about coming into someone’s heart (indwelling) as often thought.
- (ii) Rather, Jesus will come and sup with the one who allows Him into the church.
  1. 1<sup>st</sup> century church often came together weekly for communion, a love feast.
  2. Jesus could be making reference to that.
    - a. While people engaged in their love feast, they don’t realize that He’s not really there with them.
    - b. If anyone is interested in hearing Him, He’ll eat with them (spiritually).
    - c. May be a few that can still hear Him.

(h) To him who overcomes...grant to sit with Me on my throne...

- (i) Reigning with Christ when He returns (or when we die) is a promise that is given to the believer.

*Rev 20:4-5*

*4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.*

*NKJV*

- 1.

## 4) Chapter 4-7: The seven seal scroll

### a) *New Segment of book*

- i) Ch 4 -8 is next segment
  - (1) 4 and 5 have opening vision
    - (a) John caught up into heaven
      - (i) Seeing throne of God
      - (ii) Seeing Lamb ready to break seven seals on a scroll.
- ii) Ch 6 begins action
  - (1) Lamb breaks the seals

### b) *Opening vision Ch4*

#### **Rev 4:1-3**

**4:1** After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this." **2** Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne.

#### **NKJV**

- i) Dispensationalists view this as a prediction (or picture) of the rapture.
  - (1) However, John said he was in the Spirit, rapture to take place physically.
  - (2) In favor of this view, is the reference to the trumpet (like in 1 Thess 4, & 1 Cor 15).

#### *1 Thess 4:16*

*16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God.*

#### **NKJV**

#### *1 Cor 15:50-53*

*51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

#### **NKJV**

- (3) However, we cannot insist on this being so because voices like trumpets are mentioned in different settings elsewhere.

#### *Rev 1:10-11*

*10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, 11 saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,"*

#### **NKJV**

- (a) Nobody has ever suggested that we view this as the rapture.
- (b) There are many trumpets in the book of Revelation.
- (c) It's not possible to identify any of them, with any degree of certainty, as the last trumpet Paul describes in his writings.
  - (i) Some have tried to identify Paul's trumpet with the last of the 7 trumpets later in this book.
  - (ii) However, Paul had not seen this book when he wrote 1 Corinthians.
- (d) Trumpets are just symbols that are used for a number of things in the OT. Main purpose is to get attention.
  - (i) Announce beginning of festivals
  - (ii) Call armies to battle
  - (iii) Mention that the cloud is moving

- (4) Dispensationalists also use the “come up here” portion of this to suggest that John’s movements are a type of the movements of the church.
  - (a) However, John’s visions are sometimes seen from heavenly perspective, and sometimes from an earthly one throughout the book (see Ch 11, 17) , and we don’t expect that that the church will be going up and coming down constantly.
    - (i) Artificial, and problematic, to make John a type of the church in this sense.
- (5) Not clear what “in the Spirit” is suggesting
  - (a) Could be that He was full of the Spirit
  - (b) Could be that He was having some sort of “out of body” experience of sorts.
- (6) “these things”
  - (a) Could be these experiences John was going through at the time
  - (b) Or the “things” he’s just predicted about the churches.
  - (c) Hard to know.
  - (d) King James simply interprets it as “after this”
  - (e) In greek is two words: *meta tauta*
    - (i) NT:3326 *meta* (met-ah’); a primary preposition (often used adverbially); properly, denoting accompaniment; "amid" (local or causal); modified variously according to the case (genitive case association, or accusative case succession) with which it is joined; occupying an intermediate position between NT:575 or NT:1537 and NT:1519 or NT:4314; less intimate than NT:1722 and less close than NT:4862): KJV - after (-ward), X that he again, against, among, X and, + follow, hence, hereafter, in, of, (up-) on, + our, X and setting, since, (un-) to, + together, when, with (+-out). Often used in composition, in substantially the same relations of participation or proximity, and transfer or sequence.
    - (ii) NT:5023 *tauta* (tow'-tah); nominative or accusative case neuter plural of NT:3778; these things: KJV - + afterward, follow, + hereafter, X him, the same, so, such, that, then, these, they, this, those, thus.
    - (iii) Just means later, or the next thing.
      - 1. Could be, moving on to the next vision, or item of interest.
  - (f) Nowhere does it state what “these things” are.
    - (i) That gives any interpreter license to suggest any number of possibilities.
      - 1. i.e the things of the church (dispensationalism).
- (7) One who sat on the throne.

\*\*\*\*\* 46:33 through 1:00:00 on the tape is missing \*\*\*\*\*

**Rev 4:3**

**3 And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.**

**NKJV**

- ii) Rainbow signifies grace.
  - (1) Go back to Genesis for assistance.

*Gen 9:13-16*

*13 I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. 14 It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud; 15 and I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth."*

**NKJV**

- (a) The word for “rainbow” in the Genesis passage is the same as a warriors bow.

- (i) God was making war with the inhabitants of the earth by sending the flood and now signifies with the rainbow that He's not going to do that anymore.
  - 1. With the flood, that is.
- (b) As a gun slinger hangs up his guns to kill no more, so God hangs his rainbow to make war with the inhabitants of the earth no more by flood.

**Rev 4:4-8**

**4** Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. **5** And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. **6** Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. **7** The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. **8** The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within.

NKJV

c) 24 elders

- (1) Great deal of curiosity and conjecture surrounding these guys
  - (a) Several scholars believe these to be associated in some way to the 12 patriarchs of OT and the 12 apostles of the NT.
    - (i) In support, this passage is used.

**Rev 21:12-14**

**12** Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the **twelve tribes of the children of Israel**: **13** three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. **14** Now the wall of the city had **twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.**

NKJV

- (ii) Though we're not told it is supposed to divide this way (12 and 12).
- (b) Others feel that these represent the church of all time.
  - (i) OT and NT saints combined.
    - 1. Dispensationalists very strong on this point. They say this shows the church in heaven.
      - a. Not seen on earth after 4:1, but seen here in heaven.
    - 2. However, even if this is the church it does not necessitate it being a raptured church in heaven.
      - a. There are saints on the earth later in Revelation being persecuted by the beast.
        - i. In NT, the saints are the church. Even in Revelation this is so.

**Rev 19:8-9**

**8** And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of **the saints**.

NKJV

- 3. Could simply mean the church that stands before God, whether on heaven or on earth. (God fills heaven and earth.)
  - a. Church is always before Him.
- (c) Others feel this conveys idea of Priesthood.
  - (i) Seen burning incense in chapter 5.
  - (ii) Dressed in white robes, like priests.
  - (iii) Wearing crowns like kings. (royalty)
- (d) Others feel this represents the 24 courses of priests that was divided by David.

- (i) Too many in David's day to serve in temple all at once.
- (ii) Divided into 24 and took turns.
- (e) Jay Adams has suggested they convey nothing in particular but scenery.
  - (i) Kind of like a chorus in a greek play
    - 1. someone pipes in to make suggestions, carry story forward.
    - 2. like the daughters of Jerusalem in Song of Solomon.
  - (ii) Heavenly court
  - (iii) Majesty of court is enhanced by the picture of these attendants, etc.
  - (iv) Later on, we also see thousands upon thousands of angels there.
- (2) Any of these views are possible, but it is probable that we are looking at a court scene here.
- d) *4 living creatures.*
  - (1) Similar to creature in Ezekiel 1 and 10
    - (a) 4 creatures, 1 at each wheel of God's chariot.
    - (b) Similar animals
      - (i) Lion
      - (ii) Calf
      - (iii) Man
      - (iv) Eagle
    - (c) Differences
      - (i) Ezekiel's creatures each had 4 faces, these only have 1 each.
      - (ii) These creatures have 6 wings each,
        - 1. Ezekiel 6 lists Seraphim that have 6 wings
          - a. Maybe these are them, who knows?
          - b. Maybe the symbolism of Cherubim and Seraphim are combined in these creatures.
  - (2) Some (the rabbi's) believed that these creatures represent creation.
    - (a) 4 being the number of the earth (4 compass points)
    - (b) Creatures:
      - (i) Lion – chief of wild beasts.
      - (ii) Ox - chief of domestic beasts.
      - (iii) Eagle – chief of birds.
      - (iv) Man – chief of all creation.
    - (c) This was from a commentary on Ezekiel.
    - (d) Main function is to worship God.
      - (i) Speak praises.
      - (ii) Sing praises.
      - (iii) Throne attendants in a heavenly court.
    - (e) Under this view, it the creatures are simply symbolizing all of creation giving glory to God.
    - (f) This is at least one view that makes sense.

***Rev 4:8-11***

***And they do not rest day or night, saying:***

***"Holy, holy, holy,  
Lord God Almighty,  
Who was and is and is to come!"***

***9 Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying:***

***11 "You are worthy, O Lord,  
To receive glory and honor and power;  
For You created all things,***

***And by Your will they exist and were created."***  
**NKJV**

- ii) This declaration makes Jesus out to be the Lord God almighty
  - (1) This repeats what Seraphim were saying in Isaiah 6.

*Isa 6:2-3*

*2 Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one cried to another and said:*

*"Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;  
The whole earth is full of His glory!"*

**NKJV**

- (a) In this passage, the word for Lord is Jehovah God or Yahweh (YHWH).
- iii) 3 Holy's?
  - (1) Hebrew literature often did this kind of repeating of something that was emphasized.
  - (2) Some have suggested that it refers to the Trinity.
    - (a) Holy is the Father, Holy is the Son, Holy is the Holy Spirit.
    - (b) This is only a guess of course.
- iv) Creatures praising God for Holiness, Elders praising Him for His creation (vs 10-11\_).
  - (1) Later in Ch 5, a whole bunch of people praise Him for His redemption
  - (2) So we have three types of praises to God:
    - (a) His Holiness
    - (b) His Creation
    - (c) His Redemption
  - (3) They do not cease to praise Him?
    - (a) However, it seems to be intermittent or occasional as evidenced by the elders responding every time the creature do that.
    - (b) Therefore, this must be a symbolic thing rather than something that is literally taking place.

***Rev 5:1***

***5:1 And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals.***

**NKJV**

- e) *Scroll with 7 seals*
  - i) How are seals to be understood?
    - (1) Some have said with each seal broken, the scroll can be opened partially. Each subsequent seal allows the scroll to be opened a little further.
    - (2) Others have said that all seven seals are along the same rim of the scroll and all seven have to be broken in order to see any of it.
      - (a) Need to change punctuation of verse 1.
        - (i) Put comma after "inside" instead of "back".
      - (b) May not be proper punctuation however because it resembles a scroll that Ezekiel saw:

*Ezek 2:9-10*

*9 Now when I looked, there was a hand stretched out to me; and behold, a scroll of a book was in it. 10 Then He spread it before me; and there was writing on the **inside and on the outside**, and written on it were lamentations and mourning and woe.*

**NKJV**

- (3) We do know that something happens after each seal is broken.
  - (a) Either the scroll contains only the things listed after the 7<sup>th</sup> seal is broken

- (i) 7 trumpets
- (b) Or each seal reveals a little part of the scroll.
- (c) Hard to tell for sure. Not too important.
- (4) One view says this book is the title deed to the earth.
  - (a) Vision is in last days of history.
  - (b) Lamb comes up and takes the book.
    - (i) Jesus re-claiming the book.
- (5) Not too easy to interpret the things that are in the book.
- (6) Others believe the scroll represents a sentence or a verdict being handed down from the throne (judge)
  - (a) Courtroom scene.
  - (b) Sentence is given in sealed book.
  - (c) John getting there just in time to see the sentence passed down.
  - (d) But who is the plaintiff and who is on trial?
    - (i) The saints who have been martyred could be seen as the plaintiffs.

*Rev 6:9-11*

*9 When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar **the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God** and for the testimony which they held. 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"*

*NKJV*

1. Jesus said something very similar to this in the parable of the widow and the judge.

*Luke 18:7-8*

*7 And shall God not avenge His own elect **who cry out day and night to Him**, though He bears long with them? 8 I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"*

*NKJV*

- a. Reference to Son of Man coming
- b. Reference to His people crying out to Him day and night.
2. This vision could be the sentence handed down to those who have slain these martyrs.
  - (ii) The defendants could be seen as those who "dwell upon the earth" (or land)
    1. Whether we see the word as "earth" or "land" makes big difference.
      - a. Futurists would favor earth. All martyrs throughout history.
      - b. Preterists would favor land. Martyrs in the land of Israel prior to AD70.
    2. Defendants could be seen as the Jews (non-Christian) living before AD70.
      - a. Main persecutors of Christians prior to that time.

*1 Thess 2:14-16*

*14 For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, **just as they did from the Judeans, 15 who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us**; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men, 16 forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always **to fill up the measure of their sins**; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.*

*NKJV*

- (e) This could be seen as a judgment passed down upon Jerusalem.
  - (i) Fulfillment is seen in 70AD.

**Rev 5:2-4**

**2 Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" 3 And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.**

**NKJV**

- ii) Who is worthy to break the seals
  - (1) If judgment upon Jerusalem, than nobody is more worthy than Jesus.
    - (a) Avenging His own death.
    - (b) He is without sin.
    - (c) He can cast the stone others are not worthy to (John 8)

**Rev 5:3-5**

**3 And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. 4 So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it.**

**NKJV**

- iii) Nobody else was found worthy.
  - (1) John was upset because here is a righteous judgment of God that couldn't be executed.
    - (a) Justice couldn't be done.
    - (b) Martyrs couldn't be avenged.

**Rev 5:4-7**

**5 But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals." 6 And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.**

**NKJV**

- iv) Lion of the tribe of Judah
  - (1) Harkens back to blessing Jacob pronounced on his sons.

*Gen 49:9-10*

*9 Judah is a lion's whelp;  
From the prey, my son, you have gone up.  
He bows down, he lies down as a lion;  
And as a lion, who shall rouse him?  
10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah,  
Nor a lawgiver from between his feet,  
Until Shiloh comes;  
And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.*

**NKJV**

- (a) According to Rabinic tradition, the banner of the tribe of Judah had on it a Lion's head.

- v) The Root of David

*Isa 11:1*

*There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse,  
And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.*

**NKJV**

- (1) Jesse is David's father
- (2) Not exact quote, but same concept.

- vi) Said to have prevailed over something.
  - (1) Conflict not identified, but we can assume.
    - (a) Jesus said to His disciples in upper room that he has “overcome the world”.
    - (b) Jesus has beat the devil.
    - (c) He stands sinless and worthy of making judgment.
  
- vii) Instead of Lion, John sees a lamb.
  - (1) One of the least intimidating of creatures.
  - (2) Not only a baby sheep, but one that had been slain.
    - (a) He was a sacrificial lamb.
  - (3) To the eye of the inhabitant of heaven, He is a Lion. But to the eye of the man John, He is a lamb.
    - (a) Jesus seemed meek and harmless on earth.
    - (b) Spiritually, He was a warrior.
      - (i) Binding the strong man (Satan) and spoiling his house.
      - (ii) Tearing the devils kingdom apart.
    - (c) A fierce lion in the spiritual world, but a gentle and meek lamb in the physical.
      - (i) This was the very thing that conquered the kingdom of darkness violently.
      - (ii) The devil and demons see Him in this light as well.

**Rev 5:6-10**

**7 Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.**

**8 Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sang a new song, saying:**

**"You are worthy to take the scroll,  
And to open its seals;  
For You were slain,  
And have redeemed us to God by Your blood  
Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,  
10 And have made us kings and priests to our God;  
And we shall reign on the earth."**

**NKJV**

- viii) Being praised for His redemptive work here.

**Rev 5:11-12**

**11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice:**

**"Worthy is the Lamb who was slain  
To receive power and riches and wisdom,  
And strength and honor and glory and blessing!"**

**NKJV**

- ix) Now joined by a chorus of millions in heaven.
  - (1) 7 things worthy of: (power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, blessing).

**Rev 5:13-14**

**13 And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying:**

**"Blessing and honor and glory and power**

*Be to Him who sits on the throne,  
And to the Lamb, forever and ever!"*

*14 Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.*

*NKJV*

- x) Now joined by every living thing in creation
    - (1) Peak of praise crescendo.
    - (2) Obviously cannot be literal.
  - xi) Jesus is Lord over everything in heaven and earth.
- f) *Introduction to the 7 seals.*
- (1) Probable that all 7 seals have to be broken before the contents of it are revealed.
    - (a) Therefore we don't really know what's inside until Ch 8:1.
      - (i) 7 trumpet judgments.
    - (b) Each time a seal is broken, we get a vision of something significant.
  - (2) Under the view of this being a court scene where judgment is being handed down against Israel for all the blood of the saints shed.
    - (a) This could be predicting the fulfillment of what Jesus said in Matt 23.

*Matt 23:31-36*

*31 "Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. 32 Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' guilt. 33 Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? 34 Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, 35 that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. 36 **Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.***

*NKJV*

- (i) This happened in 70AD.
- (b) Who's going to be the executioner?
  - (i) Jesus of course.
    - 1. The Lamb who was slain.
    - 2. The only one of all of them that didn't deserve to die.
    - 3. The only one who can legitimately cast the first stone.
- (c) Who is the executed?
  - (i) Nation of Israel.
- (d) What is the crime?
  - (i) Adultery against God.
  - (ii) Killing His servants (the prophets)
  - (iii) Finally, killing His very Son.
- (e) Destruction of Jerusalem was the vindication of Christ and the Martyrs.
  - (i) The wrath of the Lamb.
  - (ii) All the excitement is about bringing justice to over 4000 years of wrongful persecution of the saints.
- (3) Under the futurist view, the breaking of the seals represents the devil having his hay day on the earth and wreaking havoc.
  - (a) However, the devil is not the one ordaining things here.
    - (i) The Lamb is the one who is breaking the seals.
  - (b) They would see this vision being in the beginning of the 7 year tribulation.
    - (i) The puzzling thing is that this looks more like the end of the universe if you take it literally.

1. Great earthquake.
  2. sun is blackened.
  3. Moon turns to blood
  4. sky rolls back like a scroll...etc.
- (ii) As much stuff that happens after this vision, it must not be chronological if we take the futurist viewpoint.
- (iii) Another problem is that we see all the islands disappearing? (vs 14).
1. However, later in the book they all disappear again.

*Rev 16:20*

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

*NKJV*

- (iv) End of stars, sun, and moon (vs 12)
1. Yet, later only a third of these were affected.

*Rev 8:12-13*

*12 Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night.*

*NKJV*

- (c) The evidence suggests that the book is not chronological.
- (d) The evidence also suggests that the book is not literal but symbolic.
- (i) Jesus a lamb
  - (ii) Satan a dragon
  - (iii) City a harlot...etc.

- (4) 1<sup>st</sup> 4 seals all have something in common...colored horses
- (a) Reminiscent of Zech Ch1 and Ch6

*Zech 1:7-11*

*7 On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet: 8 I saw by night, and behold, a man riding on a red horse, and it stood among the myrtle trees in the hollow; and behind him were horses: red, sorrel, and white. 9 Then I said, "My lord, what are these?" So the angel who talked with me said to me, "I will show you what they are." 10 And the man who stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, "These are the ones whom the LORD has sent to walk to and fro throughout the earth." 11 So they answered the Angel of the LORD, who stood among the myrtle trees, and said, "We have walked to and fro throughout the earth, and behold, all the earth is resting quietly."*

*NKJV*

-and-

*Zech 6:1-8*

*6:1 Then I turned and raised my eyes and looked, and behold, four chariots were coming from between two mountains, and the mountains were mountains of bronze. 2 With the first chariot were red horses, with the second chariot black horses, 3 with the third chariot white horses, and with the fourth chariot dappled horses--strong steeds. 4 Then I answered and said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?" 5 And the angel answered and said to me, "These are four spirits of heaven, who go out from their station before the Lord of all the earth. 6 The one with the black horses is going to the north country, the white are going after them, and the dappled are going toward the*

south country." 7 Then the strong steeds went out, eager to go, that they might walk to and fro throughout the earth. And He said, "Go, walk to and fro throughout the earth." So they walked to and fro throughout the earth. 8 And He called to me, and spoke to me, saying, "See, those who go toward the north country have given rest to My Spirit in the north country."

NKJV

- (i) These were scouts sent out by God to survey the world and bring back a report.
- (b) In the Revelation passage, the horsemen are not just scouting but involved in bringing disaster.
- (c) Each time a seal is broken, the creatures say "come" or it can be translated "come and see".
  - (i) If "come and see" then words are apparently spoken to John.
  - (ii) Older manuscripts simply say "come" suggesting the creature is speaking to the horse and the horse comes out.
    - 1. Most commentators favor this view.
- (5) 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> seal are different.
- (6) Interlude between 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> seal.
  - (a) Entire chapter 7.
- (7) 7<sup>th</sup> seal begins in Ch 8:1
- (8) Josephus works have many parallels with what is recorded in this vision and other visions in the book of Revelation.
  - (a) Josephus not a Christian
  - (b) He never read the book of Revelation.
  - (c) If book is describing 70AD (things that must shortly come to pass), then Josephus can help us connect prediction and fulfillment.

g) *Opening of the 1<sup>st</sup> 4 seals: Four Horsemen*

### **Rev 6**

**6:1 Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, "Come and see." 2 And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.**

- i) Who is the rider?
  - (1) Dispensationalists say this is Antichrist
    - (a) Last 7 years in history.
    - (b) Dominated by Antichrist.
    - (c) This person is conquering, therefore this is him.
    - (d) This depends on the assumption that there is a future 7 year tribulation and an antichrist that dominates the world during that time.
      - (i) This is far from being an established scriptural fact.
  - (2) Others say the rider is Christ Himself.
    - (a) Not in 2<sup>nd</sup> coming (much too early for that)
    - (b) Going out to execute the sentence of the court upon Jerusalem in Ch 5.
      - (i) White Horse here and in Ch 19, which nobody questions is Jesus.
    - (c) Objections by dispensationalists are that this cannot be the Jesus as in Ch 19 because there He is pictured conquering with a sword out of His mouth. This one has a bow.
      - (i) Splitting hairs....He's conquering is the bottom line.
    - (d) To say Jesus has a bow is supported in OT as well:

*Ps 45:3-5*

3 Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Mighty One,  
 With Your glory and Your majesty.  
 4 And in Your majesty ride prosperously because of truth, humility, and righteousness;  
 And Your right hand shall teach You awesome things.  
 5 Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies;  
 The peoples fall under You.  
 NKJV

- (i) This is a Messianic Psalm quoted as such in Hebrews Ch 1
- (ii) Also in Habbakuk

8 O LORD, were You displeased with the rivers,  
 Was Your anger against the rivers,  
 Was Your wrath against the sea,  
That You rode on Your horses,  
 Your chariots of salvation?  
 9 Your bow was made quite ready;  
 Oaths were sworn over Your arrows.  
 Selah

You divided the earth with rivers.  
 10 The mountains saw You and trembled;  
 The overflowing of the water passed by.  
 The deep uttered its voice,  
 And lifted its hands on high.  
 11 The sun and moon stood still in their habitation;  
At the light of Your arrows they went,  
At the shining of Your glittering spear.  
 NKJV

- 1. This is prediction of the fall of Jerusalem by Bablyon.
    - a. Figurative description of the destruction by Nebuchadnezzar.
      - i. Resembled the destruction in 70AD in many ways.
      - ii. God said to be the one doing it.
  - 2. Notice the similar apocalyptic language and terms used.
    - a. It wouldn't be too far fetched to say that this imagery is also being used in Revelation to talk about a similar event (70AD).
- (e) Going out conquering and to conquer
- (i) Jesus said earlier

Rev 3:21  
 21 To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame  
 and sat down with My Father on His throne.  
 NKJV

- 1. Word for “overcame” is same in this passage as “conquer” in Ch 6:2
  - a. NT:3528 *nikao* (nik-ah'-o); from NT:3529; to subdue (literally or figuratively): KJV - conquer, overcome, prevail, get the victory.

Rev 5:5-6  
 5 But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals."  
 NKJV

- 2. Likewise “prevailed” is also the same word.

- (ii) Since Jesus is already said to have overcome, prevailed, or conquer and is sitting on His throne, this is another way to identify this one as Him.

***3 When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come and see." 4 Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword.***

- ii) Takes peace from the earth (or land).
  - (1) Again, the translation depends on whether this is universal, or localized in Israel.
  - (2) Jerusalem and Israel had enjoyed the benefits of the Roman peace for a long time (Pax Romana).
    - (a) In 66AD, the Jews revolted which sparked the Roman/Jewish war.
    - (b) The Jews lost.
  - (3) Not only did Jews lose to the Romans, they were also fighting among themselves as Josephus records in great detail.
    - (a) War of the Jews Book 2, Ch. 18, para. 2

*However, the Syrians were even with the Jews in the multitude of the men whom they slew; for they killed those whom they caught in their cities, and that not only out of the hatred they bore them, as formerly, but to prevent the danger under which they were from them; so that the disorders in all Syria were terrible, and every city was divided into two armies, encamped one against another, and the preservation of the one party was in the destruction of the other; so the day time was spent in shedding of blood, and the night in fear, which was of the two the more terrible; for when the Syrians thought they had ruined the Jews, they had the Judaizers in suspicion also; and as each side did not care to slay those whom they only suspected on the other, so did they greatly fear them when they were mingled with the other, as if they were certainly foreigners. Moreover, greediness of gain was a provocation to kill the opposite party, even to such as had of old appeared very mild and gentle towards them; for they without fear plundered the effects of the slain, and carried off the spoils of those whom they slew to their own houses, as if they had been gained in a set battle; and he was esteemed a man of honor who got the greatest share, as having prevailed over the greatest number of his enemies. It was then common to see cities filled with dead bodies, still lying unburied, and those of old men, mixed with infants, all dead, and scattered about together; women also lay amongst them, without any covering for their nakedness: you might then see the whole province full of inexpressible calamities, while the dread of still more barbarous practices which were threatened was every where greater than what had been already perpetrated.*

- (b) Even while under siege by the Romans, 3-4 warring factions within the Jews themselves.

***5 When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come and see." So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. 6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine."***

- iii) Scales in his hand
  - (1) Denarius was one day's wages for the average worker
  - (2) You'd have to work all day just to earn enough bread for one person to stay alive.
    - (a) If he had a family to support, he'd have to buy cheaper grain.
  - (3) Talking about scarcity.
  - (4) In famines, food is at a premium
    - (a) In a siege, part of the strategy is to starve the people.

- (b) In depression, and in WW2 Germany, it's been said that you had to take a wheel barrow full of money to the store just to buy a loaf of bread.
- (5) Josephus, again, describes similar conditions
  - (a) Wars of the Jews, Book 5, Chapter 10, para. 2

*Many there were indeed who sold what they had for one measure; it was of wheat, if they were of the richer sort; but of barley, if they were poorer. When these had so done, they shut themselves up in the inmost rooms of their houses, and ate the corn they had gotten; some did it without grinding it, by reason of the extremity of the want they were in, and others baked bread of it, according as necessity and fear dictated to them: a table was no where laid for a distinct meal, but they snatched the bread out of the fire, half-baked, and ate it very hastily.*

- (b) Other times Josephus describes people eating their children since they were so starved.
- (c) Other times he describes people breaking into any house with sealed windows and doors because they suspected people eating inside.
  - (i) Killing the people, ripping food out of their throats etc.
- iv) Do not harm the oil or the wine
  - (1) Some believe that this calamity will come upon them during the harvest of grapes and olives, etc.
    - (a) No shortage of those, but the grain needed to sustain life was gone.
    - (b) Oil and wine are luxuries, can't live on them exclusively.
  - (2) However, some believe otherwise because of another passage in Josephus.
    - (a) Wars of the Jews, Book 5, Chapter 13, para. 6

*But as for John, when he could no longer plunder the people, **he betook himself to sacrilege, and melted down many of the sacred utensils, which had been given to the temple;** as also many of those vessels which were necessary for such as ministered about holy things, the caldrons, the dishes, and the tables; nay, he did not abstain from those pouring vessels that were sent them by Augustus and his wife; for the Roman emperors did ever both honor and adorn this temple; whereas this man, who was a Jew, seized upon what were the donations of foreigners, and said to those that were with him, that it was proper for them to use Divine things, while they were fighting for the Divinity, without fear, and that such whose warfare is for the temple should live of the temple; on which account he emptied the vessels of that sacred wine and oil, which the priests kept to be poured on the burnt-offerings, and which lay in the inner court of the temple, and distributed it among the multitude, who, in their anointing themselves and drinking, used [each of them] above an hin of them. And here I cannot but speak my mind, and what the concern I am under dictates to me, and it is this: **I suppose, that had the Romans made any longer delay in coming against these villains, that the city would either have been swallowed up by the ground opening upon them, or been overflowed by water, or else been destroyed by such thunder as the country of Sodom (20)** perished by, for it had brought forth a generation of men much more atheistical than were those that suffered such punishments; for by their madness it was that all the people came to be destroyed.*

- (b) He says that the generation that came under Roman judgment were worse than those of Sodom.
  - (i) He compares them to the people of the flood and Cora's rebellion.
- (c) Jude says:

*Jude 4*

4 For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.....

-skipping down-

*Jude 10-11*

10 But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves. 11 Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

NKJV

- (d) Also, Jesus likened His coming to those of the days of Noah in the Olivet discourse.
- (e) Also, that it would be more tolerable for Sodom than Jerusalem.
  - (i) They had more light.
- (f) Interesting fact that Josephus had no knowledge of any of these statements.
  - (i) He also referred to the “generation” of evil and atheistic people
  - (ii) Parallels Jesus statement that all of this would come upon “this generation”.
  - (iii) Sounds like Josephus agreed with Jesus’ assessment of that wicked generation although he had never read what Jesus said.
- (g) Most interesting, is that this Jew named John, plundered the temple of the sacred vessels of wine and oil.
  - (i) Justified by saying we’re fighting for God so we should live off of temple things.
  - (ii) Some have felt that this is what is meant by “do not harm the oil and wine”
    - 1. Although there is great shortage, don’t touch the sacred things of God.

**7 When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come and see." 8 So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.**

- v) Pale in the greek is actually light green.
  - (1) Sickly is the impression we get here.
- vi) Once again, we see the word “earth” and we have to decide global or local.
  - (1) One thing would be the sources of death. How are a fourth of the people killed?
    - (a) Sword
    - (b) Hunger
    - (c) Famine
    - (d) Death (or pestilence)
    - (e) Beasts of the earth
  - (2) Sounds very much like Ezekiel’s 4 sore judgements on Jerusalem

*Ezek 14:21*

21 For thus says the Lord GOD: "How much more it shall be when I send My four severe **judgments on Jerusalem**--the sword and famine and wild beasts and pestilence--to cut off man and beast from it?

NKJV

- (a) Ezekiel was predicting a local judgment from the Babylonians.
- (3) There was a massive death toll in Jerusalem in the Jewish War because of these things
  - (a) Josephus: “War of the Jews” Book 5, Chapter 12, Para 3 and 4

So all hope of escaping was now cut off from the Jews, together with their liberty of going out of the city. Then did the famine widen its progress, and devoured the people by whole houses and families; the upper rooms were full of women and children that were dying by famine, and the lanes of the city were full of the dead bodies of the aged; the children also and the young men wandered about the market-places like shadows, all swelled with the famine, and fell down dead, wheresoever their misery seized them. As for burying them, those that were sick themselves were not able to do it; and those that were hearty and well were deterred from doing it by the great multitude of those dead bodies, and by the uncertainty there was how soon they should die themselves; for many died as they were burying others, and many went to their coffins before that fatal hour was come. Nor was there any lamentations made under these calamities, nor were heard any mournful complaints; but the famine confounded all natural passions; for those who were just going to die looked upon those that were gone to rest before them with dry eyes and open mouths. A deep silence also, and a kind of deadly night, had seized upon the city; while yet the robbers were still more terrible than these miseries were themselves; for they brake open those houses which were no other than graves of dead bodies, and plundered them of what they had; and carrying off the coverings of their bodies, went out laughing, and tried the points of their swords in their dead bodies; and, in order to prove what metal they were made of they thrust some of those through that still lay alive upon the ground; but for those that entreated them to lend them their right hand and their sword to despatch them, they were too proud to grant their requests, and left them to be consumed by the famine. Now every one of these died with their eyes fixed upon the temple, and left the seditious alive behind them. Now the seditious at first gave orders that the dead should be buried out of the public treasury, as not enduring the stench of their dead bodies. But afterwards, when they could not do that, they had them cast down from the walls into the valleys beneath.

4. However, when Titus, in going his rounds along those valleys, saw them full of dead bodies, and the thick putrefaction running about them, he gave a groan; and, spreading out his hands to heaven, called God to witness that this was not his doing; and such was the sad case of the city itself.

(i) It was even too much for Titus himself to bear.

(b) Later in the same book (Book 5, Chapter 13, para 7)

And, indeed, why do I relate these particular calamities? while Manneus, the son of Lazarus, came running to Titus at this very time, and told him that there had been carried out through that one gate, which was intrusted to his care, no fewer than a **hundred and fifteen thousand eight hundred and eighty dead bodies**, in the interval between the fourteenth day of the month Xanthieus, [Nisan,] when the Romans pitched their camp by the city, and the first day of the month Panemus [Tamuz]. This was itself a prodigious multitude; and though this man was not himself set as a governor at that gate, yet was he appointed to pay the public stipend for carrying these bodies out, and so was obliged of necessity to number them, while the rest were buried by their relations; though all their burial was but this, to bring them away, and cast them out of the city. After this man there ran away to Titus many of the eminent citizens, and told him the entire number of the poor that were dead, and that **no fewer than six hundred thousand were thrown out at the gates, though still the number of the rest could not be discovered**; and they told him further, that when they were no longer able to carry out the dead bodies of the poor, they laid their corpses on heaps in very large houses, and shut them up therein; as also that a **medimnus of wheat was sold for a talent**; and that when, a while afterward, it was not possible to gather herbs, by reason the city was all walled about, some persons were driven to that terrible distress as to search the common sewers and old dunghills of cattle, and to eat the dung which they got there; and what they of old could not endure so much as to see they now used for food. When the Romans barely heard all this, they commiserated their case; while the seditious, who saw it also,

did not repent, but suffered the same distress to come upon themselves; for they were blinded by that fate which was already coming upon the city, and upon themselves also.

(c) Hundreds of thousands brought out of the gate dead.

vii) Death and Hades followed...

(1) It's probable that a fourth is symbolic number to illustrate a significant minority.

**9 When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" 11 Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.**

h) *Opening of 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> seals: Martyrs and cosmic disturbances*

i) Fifth seal gives us an entirely different scene altogether.

(1) The souls of the martyrs are probably seen under the altar because that's where the blood of the sacrificial animals was drained in OT.

ii) Souls crying out for vengeance.

(1) Nature of imprecatory prayers

(a) Concerned that evil is running rampant and unstopped.

(b) All Christians wish for end of abuses taking place in the world.

(2) But God waits because once He does take vengeance, that is the end of opportunity for repentance.

(a) However, judgment on the wicked is better than suffering for the innocent.

(3) Vengeance and it's timing belong to God.

*Deut 32:35*

*35 Vengeance is Mine, and recompense;*

*Their foot shall slip in due time;*

*For the day of their calamity is at hand,*

*And the things to come hasten upon them.'*

*NKJV*

*Rom 12:19-20*

*19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written,*

*"Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.*

*NKJV*

*Heb 10:30*

*30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine; I will repay," says the Lord.*

*NKJV*

(4) Notice they were told it would be a "little while" more.

(a) Consistent with other time references in the book.

(b) Whatever is going to take place has a near fulfillment (not 2000 years off).

(5) Apparently martyrs were still being added to their number (vs 11)

(a) Shows that even though these earlier judgments have come upon wicked it has not stopped them completely.

**12 I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. 13 And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. 14 Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. 15 And the kings**

*of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, 16 and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! 17 For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"*  
NKJV

- iii) This seal (and what follows in ch. 7) is what most reveals a 70AD fulfillment in this vision.
  - (1) Large number of images taken from other parts of the bible.
    - (a) Sun darkening
    - (b) Moon becomes blood
    - (c) Stars falling

*Isa 13:10*  
*10 For the stars of heaven and their constellations*  
*Will not give their light;*  
*The sun will be darkened in its going forth,*  
*And the moon will not cause its light to shine.*  
NKJV

- (d) This was a prophesy against Bablyon in pre-Christian times
  - (i) God's going to put their lights out.

*Ezek 32:7-8*  
*7 When I put out your light,*  
*I will cover the heavens, and make its stars dark;*  
*I will cover the sun with a cloud,*  
*And the moon shall not give her light.*  
*8 All the bright lights of the heavens I will make dark over you,*  
*And bring darkness upon your land,'*  
*Says the Lord GOD.*  
NKJV

- (e) This was a prophesy against Egypt (using Bablyon as His tool for judgment)
- (f) Likewise, Jesus used same language in Olivet discourse.

*Matt 24:29*  
*29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.*  
NKJV

- (g) Other prophets use this imagery as well
- (h) Joel Ch 2, for example, uses imagery of moon turning to blood. Peter quotes this as having it's fulfillment at the time of Pentecost.

*Acts 2:15-21*  
*15 For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. 16 But **this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:***

*17'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God,*  
*That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh;*  
*Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,*  
*Your young men shall see visions,*  
*Your old men shall dream dreams.*

18 And on My menservants and on My maidservants  
 I will pour out My Spirit in those days;  
 And they shall prophesy.  
 19 I will show wonders in heaven above  
 And signs in the earth beneath:  
 Blood and fire and vapor of smoke.  
 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness,  
 And the **moon into blood.**  
 Before the coming of the **great and awesome day of the LORD.**  
 21 And it shall come to pass  
 That whoever calls on the name of the LORD  
 Shall be saved.'  
 NKJV

1. This "Day of the Lord" is most probably the same day spoken of in Malachi

*Mal 4:5*  
 5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet  
 Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.  
 NKJV

2. Since John the Baptist was Elijah (according to Jesus), the great and dreadful day of the LORD was probably 70AD.
  3. Peter included the part about the day of the Lord suggesting that it was coming soon as well.
- (2) Fig tree dropping it's figs.. Heaven rolled up like a scroll...stars falling..etc (v 13-14)
- (a) More apocalyptic imagery of cosmic disturbances associated with the fall of Empires.
  - (b) Taken directly and deliberately from a prophecy which is ostensibly against Edom in Isaiah.

*Isa 34:4*  
 4 All the host of heaven shall be dissolved,  
**And the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll;**  
 All their host shall fall down  
 As the leaf falls from the vine,  
**And as fruit falling from a fig tree.**  
 NKJV

- (i) Many factors in this chapter suggest it's not really Edom but Jerusalem symbolically being called by the name of an unclean and wicked nation to demonstrate that Jerusalem was no better than they.
  1. This idea also supported in Revelation.

*Rev 11:8*  
 8 And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.  
 NKJV

2. And again, this comparison is also made in Isaiah 63 where Jesus is treading out the grapes in the winepress.
- (c) Whether we say this about Jerusalem or Edom, it has to be past.
- (i) Edom is extinct. (since 1<sup>st</sup> century).
- iv) Hiding in caves and mountains
- (1) Josephus records something similar to this

(a) Wars of the Jews Book 6, Chapter 7, Para. 3

So now the last hope which supported the tyrants, and that crew of robbers who were with them, was **in the caves and caverns under ground**; whither, if they could once fly, they did not expect to be searched for; but endeavored, that after the whole city should be destroyed, and the Romans gone away, they might come out again, and escape from them. This was no better than a dream of theirs; **for they were not able to lie hid either from God or from the Romans.** However, they depended on these underground subterfuges, and set more places on fire than did the Romans themselves; and those that fled out of their houses thus set on fire into the ditches, they killed without mercy, and pillaged them also; and if they discovered food belonging to any one, they seized upon it and swallowed it down, together with their blood also; nay, they were now come to fight one with another about their plunder; and I cannot but think that, had not their destruction prevented it, their barbarity would have made them taste of even the dead bodies themselves.

(2) The original passage comes from Isaiah

*19 They shall go into the holes of the rocks,  
And into the caves of the earth,  
From the terror of the LORD  
And the glory of His majesty,  
When He arises to shake the earth mightily.  
NKJV*

(a) This was a prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem under the Babylonians.

(3) Hosea had a similar prophecy.

*Hos 10:8  
8 Also the high places of Aven, the sin of Israel,  
Shall be destroyed.  
The thorn and thistle shall grow on their altars;  
They shall say to the mountains, "Cover us!"  
And to the hills, "Fall on us!"  
NKJV*

(a) This was predicting the destruction of Israel by Assyria.

(4) More closely related is a statement by Jesus Himself.

*Luke 23:27-31  
27 And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him. 28 But Jesus, turning to them, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. 29 For indeed the days are coming in which they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts which never nursed!' 30 **Then they will begin 'to say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" and to the hills, "Cover us!"** ' 31 For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?"  
NKJV*

(a) The green wood is Jesus.

(b) The dry tree is Israel.

(c) Telling these women to worry for themselves and their children

(i) Why weep for their children?

1. Because they would later eat them as Josephus records.
  2. Or watch them die by the sword.
- (d) Very strong argument for a 70AD fulfillment.
- (i) As if it were deliberately repeated from the mouth of Jesus in this passage.
- v) The great day of His wrath....who is able to stand?
- (1) Rhetorical question implying nobody.
    - (a) But that is not correct.
  - (2) Answer is in Chapter 7 during the interlude.
    - (a) The remnant will stand (symbolically 144,000)
    - (b) Those who are on His side will stand.
  - (3) This is very close to a quote from Malachi

*Mal 3:1-2*

*“Behold, I send My messenger,  
And he will prepare the way before Me.  
And the Lord, whom you seek,  
Will suddenly come to His temple,  
Even the Messenger of the covenant,  
In whom you delight.  
Behold, He is coming,”  
Says the LORD of hosts.*

*2 “But who can endure the day of His coming?  
And who can stand when He appears?  
NKJV*

- i) *The interlude: Chapter 7*

**Rev 7**

***7:1 After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. 2 Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, 3 saying, "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads." 4 And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:***

***5 of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed;  
6 of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed;  
7 of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed;  
8 of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed.***

***9 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to***

*our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" 11 All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying:*

*"Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom,  
Thanksgiving and honor and power and might,  
Be to our God forever and ever.  
Amen."*

*13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" 14 And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them. 16 They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; 17 for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."*  
NKJV

j) 144,000

- i) Don't do anything until we've sealed the servants of God (vs. 1-3)
  - (1) 4 corners of earth (or land)
    - (a) Earth doesn't have corners, but the land of Israel did.
    - (b) Earth is contrasted with sea so "land" is probably best translation.
  - (2) 4 angels holding back 4 winds.
    - (a) Withholding judgment until the righteous are identified.
    - (b) Sealing on foreheads is an allusion to a parallel situation in Ezekiel 9

*Ezek 9:2-4*

*2 And suddenly six men came from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, each with his battle-ax in his hand. One man among them was clothed with linen and had a writer's inkhorn at his side. They went in and stood beside the bronze altar.*

*3 Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub, where it had been, to the threshold of the temple. And He called to the man clothed with linen, who had the writer's inkhorn at his side; 4 and the LORD said to him, "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it."*

NKJV

- (i) After everyone was marked, the six men began slaughtering all the wicked people in the city according to this vision.
- (3) Mark on forehead is not literal.
  - (a) John and Ezekiel both saw these things in visions.
  - (b) God has his brand on His people.
    - (i) The blood of Christ.
    - (ii) Just like in the Exodus account of the plague of the first born.
      - 1. Angel passed over houses with blood on the doors.
      - 2. This was a literal type to depict a spiritual truth.
  - (c) God will not destroy the righteous with the wicked in His judgments.
    - (i) Refer to story of Abrahams' conversation with God over Sodom's destruction in Genesis 18.
    - (ii) God made provisions for His people to be spared in 70AD.
  - (d) Referred to again in Ch. 9:4.
- (4) Demonstrates that there is no need for the church to be removed for God to judge the inhabitants of the land.

- (a) Dispensationalists often say that God has not appointed us to wrath and therefore we must be removed (raptured) first.
  - (b) However, many parts of this book show that believers are in the world while all of this is going on. (even if it were about a future trib).
    - (i) Judgments not poured out on believers in this book.
    - (ii) All the Christians escape this judgment.
- ii) 2 groups that John sees in this vision
- (1) Some people believe John is describing the same group of people in two different ways.
    - (a) However, John goes out of his way to say they are not the same.
  - (2) 1<sup>st</sup> group is large but numbered
    - (a) 144,000
      - (i) Symbolic number most likely.
      - (ii) 12 stands for the people of God generally
    - (b) Tribes of Israel.
    - (c) JW's see their leaders as the 144,000
    - (d) Other cults also id their group with this passage.
      - (i) Ignoring the fact it says they are of Israel.
    - (e) Most common way to interpret this is how the dispensationalists do:
      - (i) 144,000 is the literal number of actual Jews that get saved in tribulation.
      - (ii) Jewish evangelists
        - 1. Hal Lindsay says they are "Jewish Billy Grahams"
        - 2. Some even suggest that they will be more effective in evangelizing the world in 7 years than the church was in 200 years.
      - (iii) However not that much is said about them here so anything else is speculation.
        - 1. They are sealed
        - 2. They break down into 12 groups of 12,000 from each tribe.
    - (f) Same group mentioned in Ch. 14. which gives us more information about them.

*Rev 14:1-5*

*14:1 Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. 2 And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. 3 They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. 4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. 5 And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.*  
 NKJV

- (i) They follow the lamb (Christ) wherever He goes. (Jewish Christians).
- (ii) They are virgins
  - 1. Cannot be reference to literal virginity.
    - a. Throughout book of Revelation, Harlotry and adultery refers to spiritual unfaithfulness to God.
      - i. Babylon is mother of Harlots (ch 17)
      - ii. Kings have committed fornication with her. (can't have sex with a city)
      - iii. In OT, God accused Israel of spiritual adultery whenever the people worshipped idols.
    - b. If this were talking about literal virginity, it would suggest that this is required for salvation.

- i. This would be contrary to other scriptures.
- (iii) Without fault before the throne (v. 5)
  - 1. Christians are without fault before God because of Christ.
- (iv) In their mouth was no deceit.
  - 1. Same expression found elsewhere by John (same author)

*John 1:47-48*

*47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is **no deceit!**"*

*NKJV*

- a. The very qualification of being a true Israelite.
  - i. Not only a Jew by birth, but blameless also.
- b.

*1 Tim 4:1-4*

*4:1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, 3 **forbidding to marry**, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by **those who believe and know the truth**.*

*NKJV*

- i. If virginity were required, Christians couldn't marry. Paul calls it a doctrine of demons.
- c. Furthermore, it says they are "men" suggesting that only males would be saved.
- 2. Probably referring to people who have not participated in spiritual harlotry with "women" (that is others who commit spiritual harlotry).
- (v) They are redeemed from among men.
  - 1. God has bought these people.
  - 2. Again, suggesting these are Christians.
- (vi) First fruits to God and to the Lamb.
  - 1. first fruits were the first portion of grain to be harvested.
    - a. Church age is a harvest.
  - 2. First fruits would then be those who were chronologically first in being harvested.
    - a. Strongly suggests that these are early Jewish Christians (1<sup>st</sup> century), not last days ones.
      - i. If they were the last generation, He should have called them "last" fruits instead of first fruits.
    - b. James uses similar language in his epistle.

*James 1:1*

*1:1 James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,*

*To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad:*

*Greetings.*

*--skipping down--*

*.....18 Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that **we** might be a kind of **firstfruits** of His creatures.*

*NKJV*

- i. Obviously written to believing Jews and calls them firstfruits.

3. All the first Christians were Jews.
    - a. Jesus was a Jew
    - b. The 12 were Jews.
    - c. The 120 in the upper room.
    - d. The 3000 at Pentecost
    - e. The church grew for the 1<sup>st</sup> few years by converts that were all Jews.
      - i. With God adding daily to their number, it's not unreasonable to assume the number swelled to hundreds of thousands by the time Gentiles came in to the church.
      - ii. Jews were the only ones evangelized at that time until God opened Peter's eyes at the household of Cornelius to accept gentiles in also.
    - f. 1<sup>st</sup> century Jews are the "first fruits" in this passage therefore.
      - i. 144,000 symbolic number to represent all the converted Jews in the land at that time (which was a very large number).
- (g) In Context of Chapter 6 (destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD.)
- (i) Who's going to survive this?
    1. The believing remnant will (and did)
    2. Eusebius in "Ecclesiastical History" of the year 300 said that just prior to the destruction of Israel, an oracle (prophetic word) was given to the church in Jerusalem and they left the city...all of them.
      - a. Fled to a trans-Jordanian region called Pella where they were preserved.
- (3) 2<sup>nd</sup> group is innumerable (v.9)
- (a) All nations, tribes, and peoples, etc. (gentiles)
  - (b) Jews were first to be evangelized, but after the Gentiles came into the church, their numbers began to become innumerable.
  - (c) Where did they come from? Sir you know...
    - (i) Allusion to Ezekiel's dry bones.

*Ezek 37:3-4*

*3 And He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" So I answered, "O Lord GOD, You know."*

*NKJV*

- (ii) Come out (or coming out) of the Great tribulation (vs. 14)

1. Probably the same Great Trib that Jesus spoke of in the Olivet discourse (Matt 24:21).

*Matt 24:15-21*

*15 "Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), 16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 17 Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. 18 And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. 19 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 20 And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. 21 For then there will be **great tribulation**, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.*

*NKJV*

- a. Term only used these two times in the bible.
- b. To happen shortly after Jerusalem surrounded by armies in Luke's version (parallel).

Luke 21:20-23

20 "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. 21 Then let those in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. 22 For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be **great distress** in the land and wrath upon **this people**.

NKJV

2. Tribulation simply means trouble.
3. Revelation seems to be expanded version of Olivet discourse.
4. Brings us back to seeing this as a 70AD fulfillment.
5. Problem with seeing this as Gentiles killed during that time.
  - a. Mostly Jews died in that war.
6. However, as a result of that tribulation, there were many Gentiles converted.
  - a. When Christianity was centered around the temple and Jerusalem (1<sup>st</sup> 40 years), it was not as an attractive of religion for them.
    - i. Most gentiles had prejudice against Jews.
  - b. Most gentile evangelism happened after this destruction.
    - i. Christianity seen largely independent of Judaism.
    - ii. There were many Gentiles converted before then, but we don't know how big the churches were at that time.
    - iii. Probably very small gentile groups.

(iii) Washing their garments white by washing in blood (vs. 14)

1. obviously symbolic.
2. Talking about their character or their life as their robes.
3. Similar in Ch. 19

Rev 19:7-9

7 Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." 8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

NKJV

4. Lives and souls are clean before God because of the blood of Jesus.
- (iv) Before throne of God and serve in His temple.
1. Temple always depicted as the church in the NT.
  2. Jesus and the Father come to the believer to make a home with him/her, not in heaven.

John 14:21-24

21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." 22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?" 23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and **We will come to him** and make Our home with him.

NKJV

(v) Neither hunger nor thirst. (vs. 16)

1. Not literally a physical hunger and thirst. Jesus said:

*Matt 5:6*

*6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.*

*For they shall be filled.*

*NKJV*

- a. Jesus said to be in their midst to shepherd them

*John 10:11*

*11 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.*

*NKJV*

2. Living fountains of waters
  - a. This out of gospel of John also.

*John 4:10-11*

*10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." ...*

*John 4:13-14*

*... "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst.*

*NKJV*

*John 7:37-39*

*If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. 38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."*

*NKJV*

3. No more hunger and thirst is not to be taken literally but spiritually.

(vi) Wipe away every tear. (vs. 17)

1. Christians do cry sometimes. However, Jesus said:

*Matt 5:4*

*4 Blessed are those who mourn,*

*For they shall be comforted.*

*NKJV*

- a. Jesus comforts those who mourn.
2. Like wise, Paul said:

*1 Thess 4:13*

*13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope...*

*...18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.*

*NKJV*

- a. Unimaginable how those with no hope even endure a loss of a loved one.
3. Christians don't sorrow like the unbelievers, we have hope.

(vii) Sun shall not strike them, nor any heat (vs. 17)

1. Not exactly sure what this means, but language comes from Isaiah:

*Isa 49:10*  
*10 They shall neither hunger nor thirst,*  
*Neither heat nor sun **shall strike them**;*  
*For He who has mercy on them will lead them,*  
*Even by the springs of water He will guide them.*  
*NKJV*

- a. Speaks of God keeping His people (sheep) safe.
- b. Elsewhere, the bible speaks believers dwelling in shadow of God:

*Ps 91:1-2*  
*He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High*  
*Shall abide under the **shadow of the Almighty**.*  
*2 I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress;*  
*My God, in Him I will trust."*  
*NKJV*

- c. God protects us from dangers (elements symbolically used).

- (viii) Gentiles referred to as sheep here.
  - 1. Also in John's gospel.

*John 10:16*  
*16 And **other sheep** I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they*  
*will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.*  
*NKJV*

- a. Jesus revealed that Gentiles will become a part of His flock also.
- b. This group of innumerable Gentiles seen in Rev 7 is also a part of this one flock.

k) *The 7<sup>th</sup> seal is broken*

**Rev 8:1-2**  
**8:1 When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.**  
*NKJV*

- i) After all the excitement with the 1<sup>st</sup> 6 seals, we only get silence when the 7<sup>th</sup> is broken.

## 5) Chapter 8-11: The 7 trumpets

*Rev 8:2-6*

*2 And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets. 3 Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. And he was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand. 5 Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake. 6 So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.*

*NKJV*

a) *Opening vision*

i) Angel burning incense is highly symbolic.

(1) Censor was used for burning incense.

(a) Perhaps reason for silence.

(i) Ceremony of burning incense would include:

1. worshippers seated in outer court waiting in silence.

a. Called time of prayer, time of incense.

b. This was the scene in Luke with Zecharias the priest.

*Luke 1:8-11*

*8 So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, 9 according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. 10 And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense.*

*NKJV*

(b) Similar reference to incense back in Ch 5.

*Rev 5:8-9*

*8 Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.*

*NKJV*

(i) Symbolic of delivering the prayers of saints to God.

(2) Result of the incense (prayers of saints) is the bowl being thrown to the earth.

(a) Imprecatory prayers like the ones we saw under the altar earlier.

*Rev 6:9-11*

*9 When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"*

*NKJV*

(b) Perhaps we are now seeing the fulfillment of that "little while" they were to wait.

(i) The seals have been broken

(ii) The book begins to open.

(iii) The judgment begins to be executed.

(iv) But what was all the activity during the 7 seals?

1. Could just be parallel visions (same thing). Hard to say.

- a. All of these things could be describing the judgment of the same period in different ways (7seals, trumpets, bowls, etc.)
  - b. This would not be unprecedented.
    - i. Josephs dreams, Pharoahs dreams, butler and baker, etc. were all given in two's. (Gen 37 – 41)
    - ii. This established the truth of the dreams, but they were said to be one thing by Joseph.
  - c. Likewise, Daniel's visions (one in Nebuchadnezzar's dream) came in two's (Dan 2 and 7)
2. The seals could have been a preview to the same kinds of things the trumpets describe.
- (c) God is responding to the prayers of the saints by judging their persecutors.
    - (i) God's will to be done on earth requires either the conversion or the destruction of those who are not doing His will.
    - (ii) This goes back to the idea of the trial.

**Rev 8:7**

***7 The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.***  
**NKJV**

- b) *Sounding of the trumpets*
  - i) The 7 trumpets calls to mind the destruction of Jericho in the book of Joshua.
    - (1) Marched 7 times around city.
    - (2) Everyone blew trumpets before the walls came down and they destroyed the city.
    - (3) Jerusalem is symbolically called Sodom which suggests that they are no better than the Canaanite city of Jericho.
    - (4) 1<sup>st</sup> four trumpets may be a picture of what happened to the land of Israel before the destruction of Jerusalem
      - (a) Wouldn't be surprising if the Romans did similar things to the cities and town surrounding Jerusalem that they did to Jerusalem itself.
    - (5) Last three trumpets could be seen as a picture of the actual destruction of Jerusalem.
  - c) *First trumpet: Vegetation burned up.*
    - (1) All the green grass is burned up..literal?
      - (a) Later the locusts are told not to hurt the grass (Ch 9:4).
      - (b) Josephus records an interesting event possibly related to this (Wars Book 6, Ch 1, para. 1):

***And now the Romans, although they were greatly distressed in getting together their materials, raised their banks in one and twenty days, after they had cut down all the trees that were in the country that adjoined to the city, and that for ninety furlongs round about, as I have already related. And truly the very view itself of the country was a melancholy thing; for those places which were before adorned with trees and pleasant gardens were now become a desolate country every way, and its trees were all cut down: nor could any foreigner that had formerly seen Judea and the most beautiful suburbs of the city, and now saw it as a desert, but lament and mourn sadly at so great a change: for the war had laid all the signs of beauty quite waste:***

- (i) This was often done in warfare out of sheer malice.
- (ii) This destroying of all trees was specifically warned against in Deuteronomy.
- (2) Later we see all the trees burned up in the 7 bowl judgments.
- (3) Hail and fire reminiscent of 1<sup>st</sup> plague of Egypt.

Ex 9:23-26

23 And Moses stretched out his rod toward heaven; and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire darted to the ground. And the LORD rained hail on the land of Egypt. 24 So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, so very heavy that there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. 25 And the hail struck throughout the whole land of Egypt, all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail struck every herb of the field and broke every tree of the field. 26 Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, there was no hail.

NKJV

- (a) Fall of Jerusalem is likened to the fall of Egypt in Revelation (Ch11:18).
- (i) The plaques of God's judgment on Egypt are now being used spiritually to describe God's judgment on Jerusalem.
  - 1. Irony is that when He did it to Egypt, it was to save Israel. Now He does it to destroy Israel.
    - a. Established the Old covenant first time.
    - b. Destroying Old covenant this time and establishing new.

**Rev 8:8-11**

**8 Then the second angel sounded: And something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. 9 And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.**

**10 Then the third angel sounded: And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. 11 The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter.**

- d) 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> trumpets: Bitter waters and sea of blood
  - (a) Wormwood means "bitterness"
  - (b) When God brought Israel out of Egypt, he turned the waters of Marah sweet by throwing a piece of wood in it.

Ex 15:22-26

23 Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah. 24 And the people complained against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" 25 So he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet. There He made a statute and an ordinance for them. And there He tested them, 26 and said, "**If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you.**"

NKJV

- (i) Here is the exact opposite picture.
- (ii) The burning of the wood represents judgment since fire is often used as a symbol for that.
- (iii) Egypt did suffer bitter waters (turned the Nile into blood).
- (iv) Also, the Jews were not diligent to obey God.
  - 1. Therefore, they get:
    - a. Bondage
    - b. Diseases God put on Egypt.
- (c) Also, it was often the practice of invading armies to corrupt or stop the water supplies.
  - (i) We don't know if this actually happened in 70AD or not, but it's not inconceivable.

- (2) Third of the sea becomes blood  
 (a) Josephus, again, has an interesting tale to tell similar to this passage (Wars Book 3, Ch. 10, par. 9)

*And for such as were drowning in the sea, if they lifted their heads up above the water, they were either killed by darts, or caught by the vessels; but if, in the desperate case they were in, they attempted to swim to their enemies, the Romans cut off either their heads or their hands; and indeed they were destroyed after various manners every where, till the rest being put to flight, were forced to get upon the land, while the vessels encompassed them about [on the sea]: but as many of these were repulsed when they were getting ashore, they were killed by the darts upon the lake; and the Romans leaped out of their vessels, and destroyed a great many more upon the land: **one might then see the lake all bloody**, and full of dead bodies, for not one of them escaped. And a terrible stink, and a very sad sight there was on the following days over that country; for as for the shores, they were **full of shipwrecks**, and of dead bodies all swelled; and as the dead bodies were inflamed by the sun, and **putrefied**, they corrupted the air, insomuch that the misery was not only the object of commiseration to the Jews, but to those that hated them, and had been the authors of that misery.*

- (i) this happened on the sea of Galilee as the Romans battled the Jews.

- (3) Great Mountain burning with fire and thrown into the sea.  
 (a) Look at what Jesus says earlier:

*Matt 21:18-22*

*18 Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, He was hungry. 19 And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again." And immediately the fig tree withered away.*

*20 And when the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, "How did the fig tree wither away so soon?" 21 So Jesus answered and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, **but also if you say to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' it will be done.** 22 And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."*  
 NKJV

- (b) Cursing of fig tree probably represented cursing of Israel.  
 (i) Most evangelicals agree with this.  
 (ii) Jesus looked for fruit from Israel and found none so he told them they would never produce fruit again.  
 (iii) Jesus said the disciples will do that also.  
 1. Not by might, but by prayer.  
 (c) Jerusalem was on a mountain and He was then standing at the foot of it.  
 (d) Burning mountain seen in the Rev 8 passage is in response to the imprecatory prayers of the saints.  
 (e) This mountain can be seen as Mt. Zion (Jerusalem).  
 (i) Not literally thrown into sea.  
 (ii) Figuratively, it was thrown into the 'sea', which symbolizes the Gentile world in prophesy.  
 1. Israel was scattered throughout the Gentile world in 70AD, where they still are today.

**12 Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night.**

e) *Fourth trumpet brings darkness.*

- (1) Also like the Egyptian plagues. (Ex 10:21-23)
- (2) Third of the sun, moon and stars darkened?
  - (a) Jesus uses this language in the Olivet discourse
  - (b) Peter also did on the day of Pentecost
  - (c) Could be that this means that it's not the complete judgment, but the beginning of it.
  - (d) Sun, moon, stars are symbols of fixed points, immovable.
    - (i) Israel thought of itself the same way.

**13 And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!"**

**NKJV**

ii) Looked and saw an angel

- (1) Modern manuscripts say "eagle" instead of angel.
  - (a) If this is true, it sounds like what Jesus said:

*Matt 24:28*

*28 For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.*

**NKJV**

iii) Last 3 trumpets referred to as "woes" (see Rev 9:12)

- (1) Woe is opposite of blessed (see Luke 6)
- (2) Increased intensity with each successive trumpets
- (3) First 4 were less intense, only affected 1/3 of everything (meaning a significant minority).
  - (a) War of the Jews began up north in the region of Galilee
  - (b) Took Romans almost 3 years to get as far south as Jerusalem to besiege the city in 70AD.
  - (c) Bad stuff happened in the land, but it wasn't that widespread yet.
- (4) The woes could be associated with what happened when Jerusalem was under siege.

**Rev 9:1-12**

**9:1 Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. 2 And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. 3 Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. 4 They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. 5 And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. And their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. 6 In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them. 7 The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. 8 They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. 9 And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. 10 They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months. 11 And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon. 12 One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things.**

**NKJV**

- f) *Fifth trumpet: Locust invasion*
- (1) Not literal locusts (obviously)
    - (a) Attack men, not plants.
  - (2) They have a king over them.
    - (a) Real locusts have no king.

*Prov 30:27*  
*27 The locusts have no king,*  
*Yet they all advance in ranks;*  
 NKJV

- (3) Dispensationalists, (who boast about taking everything literally) take various approaches to this passage.
  - (a) Ryrie says it could be a war machine or a UFO invasion.
  - (b) Others say John saw helicopters or Jets flying in formation in the vision.
  - (c) All comes out of assumption that we're reading about the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- (4) If we take a literal interpretation, we'd have to go with the idea that there is an actual bottomless pit somewhere that these monstrous bugs will come out of and sting people and torment them for 5 months.
  - (a) Like Left Behind series suggests.
- (5) One gets the impression that this is a demonic invasion.
  - (a) Led by Angel of the bottomless pit (Satan)
    - (i) Abbadon means destruction
    - (ii) Apollyon means destroyer
  - (b) Come out of the abyss (abode of the demons)
    - (i) Demons begged Jesus not to send them to the bottomless pit (Luke 8:31)
  - (c) Locust plagues were considered devastating and overwhelming in the ancient world.
    - (i) Don't kill people, but wreak havoc and are irresistible.
      1. No way to stop it.
      2. come by the billions.
      3. All vegetation is consumed.
      4. Been known to eat non-plant materials (leather water bottles, etc.)
    - (ii) Joel describes Locust plague as a mighty army that cannot be resisted.
  - (d) They are compared to scorpions that torment.
    - (i) Sting of scorpion is supposed to be a very painful and tormenting thing.
      1. Ancient mind would have understood this to be so.
    - (ii) Jesus said:

*Luke 10:19-20*  
*19 Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and **scorpions**, and over **all the power of the enemy**, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. 20 Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."*  
 NKJV

1. Can't be literal thing Jesus is describing.
  - a. Christians are hurt physically by literal scorpions and serpents.
  - b. Jesus is using this imagery to speak of demons and Satan.
- (iii) Demons torment people.
- (e) They are described like horses.
  - (i) Considered to be war machines in ancient times.
- (f) They have crowns.

- (i) Speaks of their dominion.
  - 1. over peoples lives.
- (g) Face “Like men”.
  - (i) Intelligent beings.
  - (ii) Rational minds.
  - (iii) Not like real locusts.
- (h) Hair “Like women”
  - (i) Seductive. Seducing spirits.
  - (ii) Women did not wear their hair down in ancient times because it was considered seductive.
- (i) Teeth like “lions”
  - (i) Ferocity
  - (ii) Imagery comes from the book of Joel

*Joel 1:6*

*6 For a nation has come up against My land,  
Strong, and without number;  
His teeth are the teeth of a lion,  
And he has the fangs of a fierce lion.  
NKJV*

- (j) Breastplates of iron (hard metal)
  - (i) Cannot be stopped by human means.
- (k) Sound of chariots and many horses
  - (i) They come in great hoardes invading.
- (l) Jesus may have been referring to this in Matt 12:

*Matt 12:43-45*

*43 "When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. 44 Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. 45 Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. **So shall it also be with this wicked generation.**"  
NKJV*

- (i) A demon goes out, but the man is not converted so the house is still empty.
  - (ii) 7 other spirits suggests that the man becomes completely demonized (7 number of completion).
  - (iii) When Jesus came, it can be said that He cast the demon out of Israel.
    - 1. not entirely, not permanently.
    - 2. His ministry is likened to casting out a demon.
      - a. He bound the strong man and was plundering his house by casting out demons in Israel.
    - 3. But Israel rejected Him.
      - a. So that generation would receive the same fate as any man who has had the mercy of a demon cast out but has not turned to Christ.
- (6) They torment men for five months.
- (a) Much speculation about this time period
  - (b) On view that it's a 3 ½ year trib, there is no apparent reason 5 months would be fitting.
  - (c) Other commentators have pointed out that the duration of a locusts life cycle is 5 months.
    - (i) Makes the comparison more detailed and paralleled with symbol.
  - (d) Another view says that this is the duration of the Roman siege.
    - (i) The Romans besieged Jerusalem on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan (Passover)

1. Beginning of April (approx.)
- (ii) Jerusalem fell on August 6<sup>th</sup> of the same year.
  1. this makes 4+ months under siege.
  2. to the Jew, any portion of a month is counted as a month.
- (7) The Josephus account of the siege and the behaviors of the people in the city during that time would lead any logical thinking person to conclude that they were demonized.
  - (a) Cannibalizing
  - (b) Fighting against each other although the enemy was outside the walls.
    - (i) Burning down houses of the opposing faction filled with grain, even though they were starving.
  - (c) Acting irrationally against their own interests.
  - (d) Going house to house killing each other, even stabbing dead bodies for mere pleasure.
  - (e) Much, much, more.
- (8) So this trumpet would seem to be a vision of Jerusalem itself and not just the outlying areas.

**Rev 9:13-21**

***13 Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, 14 saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." 15 So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind. 16 Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. 17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone. 18 By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed--by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths. 19 For their power is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents, having heads; and with them they do harm. 20 But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. 21 And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.***  
**NKJV**

*g) Sixth Trumpet: 200 million horsemen.*

- (1) Distinctions from locust invasion:
  - (a) Locusts came out of the abyss.
    - (i) These come out of the Euphrates.
      1. Earthly origin rather than hellish origin.
  - (b) Horses have always been a symbol of battle or war.
    - (i) These horses are probably the Romans themselves.
      1. possibly breaking in through the walls.
- (2) The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpets could be seen as a dual invasion.
  - (a) The 5<sup>th</sup> a demonic invasion during the siege.
  - (b) The 6<sup>th</sup> an invasion from the Romans.
- (3) Came out the Euphrates
  - (a) Eastern frontier of the Roman Empire.
  - (b) Most of the troops sent against Jerusalem were sent from this frontier.
    - (i) Per Josephus and other historians.
- (4) 200 million horsemen.
  - (a) Some take this literal (dispensationalists).
    - (i) Must be armies of China (according to some)
      1. Population considerations.
      2. Mao Tse Tung said back in the 60's that he was capable of mobilizing and army of 200 million.
    - (ii) However, there is nothing here to even suggest that it's China.

- (b) Others take this symbolically as other numbers.
  - (i) Overwhelming hoard of soldiers.
  - (ii) Other parts appear to be symbolic.
    - 1. fire and brimstone coming out of their mouths.
- (5) Some were not killed during this plague.
  - (a) Could refer to those who sought to escape during siege.
    - (i) Many sought to defect to the Romans during the madness that was going on during the siege.
    - (ii) Those inside killed anyone that tried to defect.

\*\*\* Time gap in middle of the tape, undetermined amount of time.\*\*\*

### Rev 10

*10:1 I saw still another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was on his head, his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. 2 He had a little book open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, 3 and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars. When he cried out, seven thunders uttered their voices. 4 Now when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them." 5 The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven 6 and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer, 7 but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.*

*8 Then the voice which I heard from heaven spoke to me again and said, "Go, take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the earth." 9 And I went to the angel and said to him, "Give me the little book." And he said to me, "Take and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth." 10 Then I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter. 11 And he said to me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings."*

NKJV

#### h) Interlude

- i) We expect a 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet to sound at this point, but it doesn't.
  - (1) We have another interlude that extends through Chapter 10 and into 11.
  - (2) This seems to be a picture beyond 70AD.
    - (a) 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet appears to be the end of the world.
      - (i) Kingdoms **have become** ...of our Lord and His Christ etc.
      - (ii) He **has taken** His power and reigned.
      - (iii) The time of the dead that they should be judged etc.
    - (b) This taken at face value hasn't happened yet.
    - (c) Not inconsistent with Partial-Preterism
      - (i) Most prets see this also as fulfilled in 70AD
        - 1. Since Jerusalem fell, the world has become the kingdom of Christ's domain
          - a. Even though they haven't surrendered, He has all authority on heaven and earth.
        - 2. Time of the dead to be judged can also mean that they will be vindicated.
          - a. David prayed this in a Psalm:

Ps 7:8

*8 The LORD shall judge the peoples;  
Judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness,  
And according to my integrity within me.  
NKJV*

- i. David really means vindicate me from my enemies.
- b. This could mean the time when the martyr's were vindicated.
- (d) However, this passage could be talking about the end of the world without doing violence to the preterist view up to this point.
  - (i) Possible that there is a clear dividing point in the book between Chapters 11 and 12.
  - (ii) Chapter 12 begins a new segment of the book and is very probably talking about the birth of Jesus again.
    - 1. going back to the very beginning of the church age.
  - (iii) Chapters 13 and 14 go over the same material we just covered in the previous segment.
    - 1. Fall of Jerusalem described again.
  - (iv) Therefore, it could be suggested that Chapters 1-11 make up one prophesy, and Chapters 12 through 22 make up the same prophesy described differently.
    - 1. It would be quite logical for the book to focus primarily on the destruction of Jerusalem first.
    - 2. Then a brief description of the church age.
    - 3. Then an even briefer description of the second coming.
  - (v) So it would not be unnatural for John to put the Second Coming of Christ at the end of chapter 11.
  - (vi) Also, the end of Revelation seems to give us a picture of the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ.
    - 1. Rev 20
  - (vii) We might expect that last trumpet to be talking about the second coming because it would be consistent with Paul's writings:

*1 Cor 15:52*

*52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the **last trumpet**. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.  
NKJV*

- 1. Even though Paul was not familiar with this vision, God was.
- (viii) Not unreasonable to suggest that a small part of the book talks about the church age and the end of the world.
  - 1. majority talking about 70AD.
  - 2. Just a glance of the future.
- (e) If the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet is end of world, there must be a connecting link between the destruction of Jerusalem at the 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet and the end of the world at 7<sup>th</sup>.
  - (i) Chapters 10 and 11 could be that connecting link.
- ii) Introduced to a 2<sup>nd</sup> book
  - (1) This is a little book, no seals.
- iii) This book could represent the church age, whereas the first one represented Israel.
  - (1) The book is opened
    - (a) Except for seven thunders.
      - (i) John was told to seal that part up.
      - (ii) The 7 sealed book that was talking about the destruction of Jerusalem had to be unsealed and John was told not to seal it up because the time is at hand (Rev 22:10)

- (iii) Maybe John was told to seal up this part of the book because the time was not at hand (just like Daniel):

*Dan 8:26*  
*26 "And the vision of the evenings and mornings*  
*Which was told is true;*  
*Therefore seal up the vision,*  
*For it refers to many days in the future."*  
*NKJV*

1. might be future
- (2) Person uttering this vision has one foot on land, and one on the sea.
  - (a) Land typifies Israel
  - (b) Sea typifies Gentile nations.
  - (c) This may suggest that the vision is now extending outside the land of Israel to include a broader Gentile world.
    - (i) This would be supported by v. 11 "...prophesy against many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings..."
    - (ii) In contrast to earlier prophesy that was not about all these, but only Israel.
- (3) Vs. 7 states that "in the days" of the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet, the "mystery of God" will be finished.
  - (a) The church is the mystery of God in the NT. (Rom 16:25, Eph 3, Col 1 and 2)

*Eph 3:3-7*  
*by revelation He made known to me the **mystery** (as I have briefly written already, 4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the **mystery** of Christ), 5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: 6 that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel,*  
*NKJV*

- (4) If true, Jesus would be saying here that things are completely over until the 7<sup>th</sup> angel sounds.
  - (a) Before that happens, there is an extended period of time during which the "mystery" of God has to be completed.
    - (i) Many nations
    - (ii) Foot on the sea and the land
    - (iii) 7 thunders to be sealed up
      1. implies this trumpet not "at hand"
- iv) Verse 11: Eating the book
  - (1) Repeat of Ezekiel 3:3 and 2:10
    - (a) Hard to say what the sweet in the mouth and sour in the belly mean.

## **Rev 11**

- i) *Measuring the temple*
  - i) 2 images in this chapter
    - (1) 1 seems connected to 70AD, but looks beyond to the church age
    - (2) The other is the two witnesses.

**11:1 Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. 2 But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.**

- ii) Also, allusion to Ezekiel (ch. 40-48)

- (1) Man given a reed to measure the temple.
  - (2) In this passage, John is told to leave out the outer court.
    - (a) This is given over to Gentiles.
      - (i) Destruction of temple.
  - (3) Word for temple in this passage is not the ordinary word.
    - (a) NT:3485 *naos* (nah-os'); from a primary naio (to dwell); a fane, shrine, temple KJV - shrine, temple. Comp NT:2411.
      - (i) This is the special Greek word for Holy of Holies.
        1. this is where God dwelt Himself
        2. where intimate fellowship with God was possible.
  - (4) This part of the temple, was to be preserved, the rest was given over to the Gentiles.
  - (5) The part that was preserved is probably the Spiritual part of the temple
    - (a) NT uses "temple of God" to describe the church.
      - (i) Described in Rev 21 in ways reminiscent of the holy of holies.
        1. 1500ft cubed (15ft)
        2. lit by glory of God
    - (b) Similar to the sealing of the 144,000 in the interlude in Ch 7.
      - (i) Symbolically sealed on foreheads in Ch 7
      - (ii) Number symbolically "measured" in this chapter
        1. Church is the true holy of holies.
- iii) What about this phrase "Tread the city underfoot for 42 months"?
- (1) 1<sup>st</sup> time in book we come across this time frame expression.
    - (a) 3 ½ year period
    - (b) There are 5 different references to this time found within Ch 11-13.
      - (i) 42 months (11:2, 13:5)
      - (ii) 1260 days (11:3, 12:6)
      - (iii) Time, times, and half a time. (12:14)
    - (c) Dispensationalists say that these are two specific 3 ½ year periods back to back.
      - (i) However, there is no good reason to see that here.
      - (ii) It's more likely that these are all talking about the same time period.
    - (d) Preterists tend to see this as the period of the Jewish war.
      - (i) Beginning in June of 66AD until August 70AD
        1. Almost exactly 3 ½ years (short by a few months)
      - (ii) Also, the time Nero persecuted the church (64 – 68 AD) was approximately 3 ½ years.
        1. The Beast reigns and persecutes church for 3 ½ years.
      - (iii) However, Jerusalem was not trodden under foot for 42 months.
        1. Under siege for only 5 months.
        2. Was trodden under foot until the end of the war when they broke through the wall.
    - (e) Another view (Idealist) would say that the number is figurative.
      - (i) Supporting cross reference in Luke 21

*Luke 21:20-24*

*20 "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. 21 Then let those in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. 22 For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. 24 And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. **And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.***

*NKJV*

1. What is the "times of the Gentiles"?

- a. Most reasonable explanation is the time that God deals with the Gentiles. Church age.
  - i. God has been dealing with Israel up to this point, but now they're gone.
  - b. This has been much longer than 42 months so far.
- (ii) Therefore, the 42 months could simply be symbolic of the whole church age.
  - 1. On this assumption, the witnesses, the persecution by the beast etc. all apply to the whole church age.
  - 2. But why 42 months as a symbol?
    - a. Nobody knows how long, not even the Son (Jesus).
    - b. Jesus ministered for 3 ½ years.
      - i. Church's ministry is a continuation of that.

***3 And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." 4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. 5 And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. 6 These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophesy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.***

- j) *Two witnesses.*
  - i) Joshua the High Priest and Zerubabel the governor were called the two olive trees in Zech 4
  - ii) Witnesses seem to be symbolic
    - (1) Miracles they perform are like Moses and Elijah.
      - (a) 2 things in common with each.
        - (i) Elijah called fire from heaven on his enemies (1 Kings).
        - (ii) Elijah caused a 3 ½ year drought (1 Kings).
        - (iii) Moses turned water into blood
        - (iv) Moses smote the world with plagues.
      - (b) This has led futurists to believe that these are two literal witnesses in the tribulation.
        - (i) Many even believe that this is actually the real Moses and Elijah.
          - 1. they would cite Mal 4

*Mal 4:5*

*5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet  
Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.  
NKJV*

- a. However, Jesus said that John the Baptist fulfilled this (Matt 11).
- (ii) Others have felt this is Elijah and Enoch.
  - 1. They would argue that everyone must die

*Heb 9:27-28*

*27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,  
NKJV*

- 2. Elijah and Enoch were only 2 men in bible that didn't die
  - a. So they say that have to come back to die.
- 3. However, Paul indicates that not everyone will die. When Jesus comes back, so will be transformed without dying. (1Thes 4, 1Cor 15)
  - a. No necessity for them to come back and die theologically.
- (c) Some Preterists have tried to identify these two as people living in the time of the Jewish war.
  - (i) James (brother of Jesus), and someone else.
- (d) Others (non-futurists) say that this is not two literal people at all, but the church.
  - (i) Two witnesses were necessary in a court of law to confirm the truthfulness of a testimony.

- 1. One not enough to condemn someone.
- (ii) Some have thought this is referring to the Jewish and Gentile elements of the church.
- (iii) Some have thought it represented the old and new testaments.
- (iv) Others would say that there doesn't have to be a division.
  - 1. Two witnesses simply confirm truthfulness of testimony.
- (v) Career is the same length of time that Jerusalem is trampled under by the Gentiles (3 ½ years).
  - 1. This could be symbolically speaking of the whole church age.
    - a. Christ ministry literally 3 ½ years.
    - b. Church (Christ's ministry extended through church) is symbolically 3 ½ years.
- (vi) Also, vs. 7 says the beast makes war against them.
  - 1. You don't make "war" against two individuals.
  - 2. Suggest an army. The church is an "army" of sorts.
    - a. Engaged in spiritual warfare against the beast and his army.
- iii) The power their given seems also to be symbolic.
  - (1) All power given to law and prophets are now in the church.
    - (a) Moses and Elijah were the two main miracle workers in the OT.
      - (i) Exodus and aftermath.
      - (ii) Time of Elijah and Elisha.
    - (b) Church now has the Spirit of God that worked these miracles in OT.
  - (2) Ceasing the rain and calling fire from heaven not literal.
    - (a) Jesus forbade James and John (Luke 9:54-55)

***7 Now when they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. 8 And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. 9 Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves. 10 And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.***

***11 Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. 12 And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them. 13 In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand men were killed, and the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven. 14 The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly. 15 Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" 16 And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying:***

***"We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty,  
The One who is and who was and who is to come,  
Because You have taken Your great power and reigned.  
18 The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come,  
And the time of the dead, that they should be judged,  
And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints,  
And those who fear Your name, small and great,  
And should destroy those who destroy the earth."***

***19 Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.***  
**NKJV**

- iv) Much about this passage is hard to explain.
- v) Beast seems to overcome and kill them.
  - (1) Bodies is actually singular in the greek.
    - (a) NT:4430 *ptoma* (pto'-mah); from the alternate of NT:4098; a ruin, i.e. (specifically) lifeless body (corpse, carrion). KJV - dead body, carcase, corpse.
- vi) Jerusalem is the city
- vii) 3 ½ days laying in street, etc.
  - (1) could be the “little while” of church persecution just before Jesus comes back
    - (a) church driven under ground
    - (b) Corresponding with Rev 20's 1000 years. Many parallels
      - (i) Both speak of an extended period of time of church influence followed by a shorter period of church persecution.
      - (ii) Both speak of the rapture when Christ comes back.
    - (c)
- viii) “Come up here”
  - (1) Could be the rapture of the church when Jesus comes back.
- ix) Third “woe” did not come quickly after 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet, but is said to come quickly now.
- k) 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet: 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ?.
  - (1) Taking vengeance out on those who oppose Him.

\*\*\*\* tape ended before any commentary on 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet. \*\*\*\*

## 6) Chapter 12: The woman, the male child, and the dragon

- a) *Same story told another way.*
  - i) Marks 2nd major division of book
  - ii) Also 4<sup>th</sup> major segment of book.
    - (1) 1<sup>st</sup> one that doesn't divide naturally into 7 sub-units.
  - iii) Seems to start over.
    - (1) Describes the birth of Jesus again.
  - iv) 3 segments to chapter (some overlapping)
    - (1) Verses 1-6
      - (a) Woman bearing child,
      - (b) child being caught up to God,
      - (c) Woman fleeing from dragon
      - (d) Woman nurtured for 3 ½ years.
    - (2) Verses 13-17 (continuation of v. 1-6)
      - (a) Woman given wings of eagle to fly
      - (b) Serpent spewing flood
      - (c) Earth swallowing up flood
      - (d) Serpent makes war with Woman's offspring
    - (3) Verses 7-12 (signs in heaven)
      - (a) Michael and dragon fight
      - (b) Dragon cast down
      - (c) Woe to inhabitants of earth
      - (d) Some of these heavenly visions parallel what's happening on earth.

### **Rev 12**

**12:1 Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars.**

- b) *Who is woman?*
  - i) Sun, moon, and 12 stars suggest this "woman" is Israel (allusion to Gen 37:9-10)
    - (1) or remnant thereof possibly
    - (2) Every camp seems to recognize this

**2 Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.**

- c) *Who is child?*
  - i) Child is obviously Jesus
    - (1) Isaiah 26:17-18 had this motif of pregnancy, labor pains, and childbirth.
      - (a) Israel appointed to bring forth fruit of deliverance pictured as a child.
      - (b) She went through labor, but brought forth wind.
      - (c) God did eventually bring forth Christ as the deliverance Israel was destined to bring forth.
    - (2) However, most futurists don't see this as the birth of Jesus, but a representative of the 144,000 Jews that will be saved at the end of time.
      - (a) Some cults see their own group as this man-child
        - (i) Manifest sons of God
          - 1. Elite that first come to maturity in the end times are this group.
  - ii) Labor pains
    - (1) Israel suffered political chaos under many nations before the Messiah came forth
      - (a) Babylonians
      - (b) Samaritans

- (c) Greeks
- (d) Syrians
  - (i) Antiochus Epiphanes.
- (2) Olivet discourse describes labor pains also (Matt 24:8 NAS, NIV).

**3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads.**

- d) *Who or what is dragon?*
  - i) Dragon obviously Satan
    - (1) Supported later in book

*Rev 20:1-3*

*20:1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, **who is the Devil and Satan**, and bound him for a thousand years;  
NKJV*

- ii) 7 heads and 10 horns
  - (1) Exact characteristics of beast in Ch 13:

*Rev 13:1-2*

*13:1 Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having **seven heads and ten horns**, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.  
NKJV*

- (2) Later explained to John by angel:

*Rev 17:9-13*

*9 Here is the mind which has wisdom: The **seven heads are seven mountains** on which the woman sits. 10 There are also **seven kings**. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time. 11 And the beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition. 12 The **ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet**, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast.  
NKJV*

- (3) Another similarity: beast in Ch. 17 is scarlet, dragon in Ch. 12 is “fiery red”
  - (a) Not the same character necessarily, but we could say that the beast is really the dragon thinly disguised.

**4 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born.**

- iii) Drew a third of the stars...
  - (1) 1 theory is that this passage is describing Satan causing 1/3 of the angels to fall and become demons.
    - (a) Usually said to have happened in Ancient times before Adam and Eve were even created.
    - (b) However, time frame of this prophesy doesn't appear to support that conclusion.
    - (c) Also, the stars could just as easily be referring to people as angels.
      - (i) Supported by the fact that this is an allusion to Dan 8:10

*Dan 8:10-11*

*10 And it grew up to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and some of the stars to the ground, and trampled them.*

*NKJV*

1. This is a prediction of Antiochus Epiphanes who killed people, not angels.
  - (ii) Therefore, it's much more sensible to assume that the dragon is the persecutor of righteous people in this passage, not the seducer of angels.
- iv) Dragon standing ready to kill child as soon as it was born.
- (1) Indicates Satan had some knowledge that Christ was about to be born.
    - (a) Gabriel's frequent trips to Nazereth probably noticed by Satan.
  - (2) Herod's attempt to kill Jesus by killing all of the baby's in Bethlehem could be seen as an attempt by Satan, using Herod as his instrument.

***5 She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne.***

- v) Rule all nations with rod of iron.
- (1) This is no doubt Jesus.
    - (a) Depicted in Messianic passages like:

*Ps 2:7-9*

*7 "I will declare the decree:*

*The LORD has said to Me,*

*'You are My Son,*

*Today I have begotten You.*

*8 Ask of Me, and I will give You*

*The nations for Your inheritance,*

*And the ends of the earth for Your possession.*

*9 You shall break them with a rod of iron;*

*You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.' "*

*NKJV*

- (b) Jesus said to the overcomers earlier in Rev.

*Rev 2:26-27*

*26 And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations--*

*27'He shall rule them with a rod of iron;*

*They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels'--*

*as I also have received from My Father;*

*NKJV*

- (i) Some say that this comparison demonstrates that the child is believers, not Jesus
    1. however, it's the only place in scripture that applies this phrase to anyone other than Jesus.
    2. much more natural to see this Child as Jesus.
- vi) Child caught up to God and His throne.
- (1) Entire earthly life passed over in this passage.

- (a) Focus of this vision is not about the life of Christ, but what happened to His people after His ascension.

**6 Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.**

e) *Flight in wilderness.*

(1) Also mentioned in v. 14

(a) There it says she was given the wings of a great eagle.

(i) Deliberate reference back to the Exodus story.

1. Dragon symbolizes Egypt elsewhere in OT as persecutor of Israel.

*Isa 51:9-10*

*9 Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the **dragon**?*

*10 Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?*

*KJV*

*Ezek 29:3*

*3 Speak, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great **dragon** that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself.*

*KJV*

2. When Israel escaped, they went into wilderness where God nourished them supernaturally with manna. Then God said:

*Ex 19:3-5*

*3 And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: 4 You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on **eagles' wings** and brought you to Myself.*

*NKJV*

a. God compares their flight from Egypt as being bore on Eagles wings.

3. Likewise, the woman here can be seen as the remnant of believing Jews in Jesus' day.

a. In 69AD, before the siege of the city, the believers in Jerusalem had to flee into the wilderness, to Pella.

**7 And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, 8 but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. 9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. 10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. 11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. 12 Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time."**

f) *War between Michael and the Dragon*

i) When did this war take place?

(1) 1 clue is that Satan was cast out

- (a) John (same author) gives us only other reference in bible of Satan being cast out.

*John 12:27-31*

27 "Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. 28 Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." 29 Therefore the people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to Him." 30 Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake. 31 Now is the judgment of this world; **now the ruler of this world will be cast out.**

NKJV

- (i) Jesus is talking about his death and resurrection here.
    - 1. Jesus identifies the casting out of Satan with his own cross.
  - (b) Furthermore, in vs. 10 (Rev12), it says "Now salvation" has come.
    - (i) Again, pointing us to the cross.
  - (c) Therefore, this battle must have been events that led up to the cross.
    - (i) Probably the time of Christ's earthly ministry.
      - 1. While He was on earth, there was a war in heaven.
      - 2. Jesus was lamb on earth, yet a lion of Judah in the heavenlies.
        - a. Prevailing
        - b. Conquering.
        - c. He bound the strong man (Matt 12)
        - d. Saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven while demons were being cast out by disciples (Luke 10:18).
    - (ii) Michael and his angels (figuratively speaking) defeated Satan and his.
- (2) Futurists believe this is during a future tribulation period.
- (a) Dispensationalists say that in the middle of the tribulation, the devil is going to be cast down to the earth.
    - (i) This begins the "great" tribulation (last 3 ½ years of tribulation).
  - (b) Not much in this passage that would actually favor that view, it's only a part of the paradigm.

g) *Satan a fallen angel?*

- (1) Some people use this passage to show that Satan is a fallen angel.
  - (a) One of few passages that can even remotely suggest such a thing.
  - (b) Not a very good proof text for it, since the timing does not allow this to be going on before the creation of Adam and Eve.
  - (c) Also, when he's cast out, he persecutes the woman and her seed.
    - (i) Overcome by the blood of the Lamb.
      - 1. Has to be after the cross.
  - (d) Also, vs. 10 says accuser of brethren has been cast down.
    - (i) One of Satan's main activities is lying
      - 1. Satan appears only 3 times in OT (Job 1 &2, Zech 3, 2 Chron, and alluded to in Genesis as serpent).
      - 2. Satan is Hebrew word for *adversary*.
        - a. Lied and accused Job before God.
        - b. Accused Joshua the high priest before God in Zech.
        - c. Deceived David into taking a census in 2 Chron.
    - (ii) Since the cross, God no longer listens to Satan's accusations.
      - 1. All punishment for man's sins has been executed. There's no need for accusation.
      - 2. Echoed by apostle Paul in Romans:

Rom 8:31-34

31 What then shall we say to these things? ***If God is for us, who can be against us?*** 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 ***Who is he who condemns?*** It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

NKJV

- a. God will not listen anymore, He offered up His own Son.
  - i. There's no room for accusations before God anymore.
  - ii. He's still an accuser, in that he tries to get us to suspect each other, and be self-condemned, but God's not listening to him.
  - iii. What he wants most is that we do not have confidence in God.
  - iv. Main trick is to lie to us and tell us God has something against us and that we stand condemned.
- (e) Jesus said he was a murderer from the beginning (John 8:44). [my addition, not in lecture]
- h) *Overcoming Satan*
  - i) Overcoming by blood of lamb, and word of their testimony.
    - (1) Satan is overcome personally by being covered in the blood of Christ as Savior.
      - (a) Own heart is no longer condemned before God.
    - (2) He is overcome by taking territory from him by taking the gospel out to others with the word of our testimony.
      - (a) Setting captives free by releasing them from condemnation with the gospel.
    - (3) This doesn't preclude them dying. "they did not love their lives to the death"
      - (a) Dying faithful is a victory, not a defeat.
        - (i) Paul said before his imminent death:

2 Tim 4:7-8

7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Finally, there is laid up for me the ***crown of righteousness***, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

NKJV

- (ii) Dying is gain (Phil 1:21)
- (iii) Blood of martyrs is seed of the church (early church quote)
  - 1. It is said that for every Christian that died in the arenas, a dozen spectators were converted to Christ.
- (iv) Jesus also said:

John 12:24-26

24 Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. 25 He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

NKJV

- (4) So this is a picture of spiritual warfare for the whole church age.
  - (a) Satan makes war with church, but church overcomes.
  - (b) Even though the church loses some battles (corruption, compromise, etc), the net effect is that Christianity is spreading throughout the world.
    - (i) Church is progressing.
- ii) Woe to inhabitants...he knows his time is short.

- (1) Inhabitants of earth or land?
  - (a) Used 3 times in this book (8:13, 12:12, 17:2)
    - (i) 8:13 probably meaning land
    - (ii) 17:2 probably meaning land if harlot is Jerusalem
  - (b) If this is to be understood as land, then inhabitants of Israel and Satan are said to have a short time.
    - (i) Satan has only a short time to stop this movement.
    - (ii) 1<sup>st</sup> persecution of church broke out against Jerusalem.
      - 1. James beheaded.
      - 2. Peter was to die, but escaped supernaturally.
      - 3. Steven was stoned.
      - 4. After that, a general persecution against church broke out.

***13 Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. 14 But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.***

- i) *Time, times, and half a time*
  - (1) No literal 3 ½ years we can identify as significant after church fled into wilderness.
    - (a) Another reason to suggest that this could simply mean the church age symbolically.
      - (i) Same period Gentiles trample Jerusalem
      - (ii) Same period two witnesses testify.

***15 So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. 16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. 17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. NKJV***

- ii) Water out of dragons mouth
  - (1) Earth opening up resembles the rebellion of Korah in Exodus.
    - (a) Helping Moses, Aaron, and the faithful
  - (2) Here the earth opens up to help the woman.
  - (3) What comes from Satan's mouth?...lies. (father of lies)
    - (a) Persecution didn't stop the church
    - (b) Deception was his new tactic. (heresy)
      - (i) Cults
      - (ii) Other ideologies [my addition, not in lecture]
    - (c) The world swallows it, but the church doesn't
- iii) Those who keep commands, and have testimony of Jesus.
  - (1) Church..obviously

## 7) Chapter 13: The beast

*Rev 13:1*

**13:1 Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. 2 Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion.**

a) *Characteristics of the beast.*

- (1) Resembles two other beasts in seen earlier in scripture
  - (a) Daniel's 4<sup>th</sup> beast (Daniel 7)
    - (i) Resembles all 4 beast of Daniel in fact:

*Dan 7:7-8*

*7 After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had **ten horns**. 8 I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.*

*NKJV*

- (b) Also, it resembles the earlier description of the dragon (last chapter)
  - (i) Difference is dragon has 10 crowns on his heads, beast has them on his horns.
    1. Not enough to be a significant difference.
- ii) Most futurists apply this chapter to the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation (aka "Great Tribulation"), just before Jesus comes back.
  - (1) Beast usually identified as a man.
    - (a) Termed as the 'Anti-Christ'
      - (i) However, that term is only used in 1 and 2 John as a generic term for anyone who denies the Jesus is the Christ.
    - (b) Global leader
    - (c) All world worships him.
  - (2) 2<sup>nd</sup> beast is identified by futurists as another man
    - (a) False prophet.
      - (i) Makes a literal image of the 1<sup>st</sup> beast, and places it in the temple in Jerusalem.
        1. Everyone required to worship it upon penalty of death.
        2. Daniel 9 used as biblical support of this:

*Dan 9:27*

*But in the middle of the week*

*He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.*

*And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate,*

*NKJV*

- a. The "He" (they say) is the Anti-Christ, and not the Messiah (as most other Christians have understood it over the centuries).
- b. This is the same way Antiochus Epiphanes did it.
- (3) Mark of the Beast 666
  - (a) Nobody can buy or sell unless they have the mark (vs. 17)

iii) Most Preterists view the beast as a reference to Nero.

- (1) The fatal wound is considered reference to Nero's suicide.

- (a) Followed by about a year of civil wars and turmoil throughout the empire.
  - (i) Almost destroyed Rome.
- (b) Everyone marveled that Rome recovered from all that.
- (2) In Ch. 17 the 7 heads of the beast is described as 7 hills
  - (a) Rome has often been described as the city of 7 hills.
- (3) 7 hills said to be 7 kings (Ch. 17:10)
  - (a) 6<sup>th</sup> fallen
    - (i) Nero was the 6<sup>th</sup> emperor of Rome
- (4) Vs 2 (rev 13), beast has mouth of Lion
  - (a) Apostle Paul stood trial before Nero, afterward he wrote:

*2 Tim 4:17*

*17 But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and that all the Gentiles might hear. And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.*

*NKJV*

- (5) Some evidence in early writings that early Christians referred to Nero as **the beast**.
  - (6) 666 can be translated into Caesar Nero in Hebrew using the numerical values of the letters.
  - (7) Nero was probably the persecutor of the church when the letter was written.
  - (8) Beast makes war with the saints for 3 ½ years.
    - (a) Length of time he persecuted Christians (64-68AD)
  - (9) However this view may not answer all the questions of the beast.
    - (a) Could be that Nero was the person representing the beast at that time, but the beast symbolizes all oppressive systems and governments that oppose Christ and His people.
- iv) Some consider beast, not as individual at all, but Satan's use of state systems
- (1) 7 heads said to be 7 emperors.
    - (a) Transcends individual.
  - (2) Some see Roman empire in view here.
  - (3) Others see reasons to see it as something even more than that.
    - (a) Daniel's vision, the fourth beast is the Roman empire (Dan 7).
      - (i) Lion beast is Babylon
      - (ii) Bear is Media-Persia
      - (iii) Leopard is Greece
      - (iv) Beast w/ten horns is Rome.
      - (v) All of those are wrapped into **one beast** here.
        - 1. seems like John (via Jesus) could have made it much clearer by not combining all the beasts if he wanted to specify just the Romans.
    - (b) For this reason, it could be suggested that the beast represents political powers in general that are opposed to the church.
      - (i) This is not something confined to a time period.
        - 1. Especially if the 3 ½ years (42 months) is seen as the whole church ages.
      - (ii) Includes Roman empire, but goes beyond that to include others also.
        - 1. Some of the details might point to Nero since he was the expression of that beast at the time of this letter.
      - (iii) Many powers have done this over history.
        - 1. Romans in John's day.
        - 2. Other nations up to the present have persecuted church.
        - 3. Communist governments in modern times.

***The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. 3 And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the***

*beast. 4 So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" 5 And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. 6 Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. 7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. 8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. 9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear. 10 He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.*

- v) Mortally wounded...
  - (1) As mentioned earlier, when Nero committed suicide, the Roman empire was in upheaval and almost collapsed.
    - (a) The world (and historians) "marveled" that it didn't
- vi) Who is able to make war with him (the beast)?
  - (1) The church.

*Rev 11:7*  
*7 Now when they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make **war** against them,*  
*NKJV*

- (2) The church seems to be overcome for a short time (Rev 11:7, 13:7)

- vii) Kills with the sword...
  - (1) Sounds like what Jesus said to Peter. (Matt 26:52)

*Matt 26:52*  
*52 But Jesus said to him, "Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.*  
*NKJV*

- viii) 42 months
  - (1) Assumed by futurists to be the same 3 ½ year period after Satan is cast to the earth in Ch. 12
    - (a) The "great" tribulation, last part of the trib.
  - (2) As earlier suggested, this could also be seen as the church age.

*11 Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. 12 And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. 13 He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.*

- b) *Who is second beast?*
  - (1) Obviously loyal to 1<sup>st</sup> beast.
  - (2) Two horns (little bit of power)
    - (a) Thinly masquerades as the Lamb (messiah) who has 7 horns (complete power).
  - (3) Speaks like a dragon
  - (4) Most commentators believe this as a religious system as opposed to a state system or power (1<sup>st</sup> beast)
    - (a) Satanically energized
  - (5) 2<sup>nd</sup> of Satan's allies in the church age
    - (a) 1<sup>st</sup> one is governmental oppression of believers
    - (b) 2<sup>nd</sup> is spiritual deception. (false religion)

- (c) Satan has always used these two things to try and thwart the church.
  - (i) In John's day, there actually was an emperor cult that worshipped the emperor (Nero).
    - 1. May be why we see the 2<sup>nd</sup> beast commanding people to worship the 1<sup>st</sup> beast.
- (6) Counterfeit miracles
  - (a) Two witnesses called fire down from heaven also.
  - (b) This beast looks like the lamb (v.11) but talks like the dragon.

***14 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. 15 He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. 16 He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, 17 and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. 18 Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.***  
 NKJV

c) What is the Mark of the beast?

- (1) Not a literal physical mark at all.
  - (a) We've seen a mark already that wasn't literal.

*Rev 7:2-4*

*2 Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, 3 saying, "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads."*

NKJV

- (2) All people have one mark or the other
  - (a) Mark of Satan = agreement with him
  - (b) Mark of God = agreement with Him.
- (3) Forehead and hand
  - (a) Moses made similar statement about the law

*Deut 6:8*

*8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.*

NKJV

- (i) Jews took this literally.
  - 1. Boxes called phylacteries with little scrolls of scripture in them bound on their heads.
  - 2. Jesus mocked them for this (Matt 23:5)
- (b) Hand represents works
- (c) Forehead represent thoughts, or intentions.
- (d) Both of these reveal who you are and who is your Lord.
- (4) Not being able to buy or sell
  - (a) May be referring to a requirement to do the things and think the thoughts of the non-Christian world.
    - (i) Worship the state
      - 1. Follow the norms of the culture and Gov't.
    - (ii) If you follow God, you'll stand out like a sore thumb and possibly receive persecution for it.
- (5) What about 666?

- (6) As stated earlier, 666 can be translated into Caesar Nero in Hebrew using the numerical values of the letters.
  - (a) Nero could have been the present manifestation of the “beast” at the time of John’s writings.

## 8) Chapter 14: Getting back to 70A.D.

- a) *Opinions on 2<sup>nd</sup> half of book.*
  - i) Some Preterists think that everything after Ch 13 is talking about something other than the fall of Jerusalem
    - (1) Jay Adams
      - (a) 2<sup>nd</sup> half looking to fall of Rome.
      - (b) Jerusalem and Rome 2 major persecutors of the church.
        - (i) Saying purpose of book is to punish both, vindicating the Martyrs.
        - (ii) References to punishing the beast later in book.
  - ii)

### *Rev 14*

***14:1 Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. 2 And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. 3 They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. 4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. 5 And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.***

- b) *More on the 144,000.*
  - i) Refer to Ch. 7 for more notes for description of 144,000
  - ii) With the Lamb on Mt Zion (v1).
  - iii) Before the throne of God (v5).
    - (1) They are Christians.
  - iv) Sang a new song (v3).
    - (1) New song (like new covenant) is directly in contrast to an old song (like the old covenant).

### *Rev 15:3*

***3 They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb***  
NKJV

- (a) Moses gave the old covenant, Jesus gave the new.
    - (i) When God delivered the Israelites out of Egypt, they broke out in song.
- v) Being virgins
  - (1) Not literal.
    - (a) Not a prerequisite for salvation.

### *1 Tim 4:1-3*

***4:1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, 3 forbidding to marry,...***

NKJV

- (2) Probably this means that these are uncompromised Jews, not giving themselves over to harlotry (Babylon Ch. 17).
- vi) First fruits
  - (1) First Jews to be saved, not the last.
    - (a) Otherwise they should be called “last fruits”.
    - (b) James, writing to Jewish Christians said:

*James 1:18*

*18 Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of **firstfruits** of His creatures.*

*NKJV*

vii) Earlier, they were being delivered or protected from the judgments of the seven seals

viii) Here, they are enduring the ravages of the beast.

(1) They have not compromised.

(a) Mark of God on their heads.

(b) Contrast with those in last chapter that had mark of worshipping the beast.

***6 Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth--to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people-- 7 saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."***

c) *Three Angels.*

i) (Some have found 7 angels in this passage.)

ii) 1<sup>st</sup> Angel – preaching gospel

(1) Some believe that during the tribulation, the gospel is going to be preached by angels flying through the heavens.

(a) Church doesn't need to be here, angels will be doing the job.

(b) However, God has not chosen to preach the gospel through angels, but through the church.

(i) Angel appeared to Cornelius (who desired the gospel) and didn't preach it to him. Rather he told him where to find a missionary (Peter). *Found in Acts 10.*

(ii) God could have preached the gospel through angels for last 2000 years despite the failure of the church if that was His purpose to do so.

(iii) This would be a shift in policy for God to do this.

(2) This Angel could represent the church

(a) The word Angel simply means "messenger".

(i) The gospel is spread through messengers called evangelists.

(ii) Fall of Jerusalem was followed by an effort to evangelize the whole world.

***8 And another angel followed, saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."***

iii) 2<sup>nd</sup> Angel – announcing Babylon is fallen

(1) 1<sup>st</sup> time we see reference to Babylon, but not last (see Ch 16, 17, 18)

(a) Focal point of 17 and 18

(i) Must understand the later chapters to understand this verse.

(2) 2 theories about Babylon

(a) Futurist would say it refers to the harlot church at end of the age.

(i) Ecumenicalism

(ii) False prophet

(iii) Roman Catholic

(b) Preterist would say that Babylon is either Rome or Jerusalem

(i) Jay Adams says it's the fall of Rome.

(ii) Other preterists would see it as Jerusalem.

1. Later, woman is sitting on beast w/ 7 heads

a. Rome the city of 7 hills.

b. Harlot could be Jerusalem whom the beast destroys.

c. The term "the great city" has implications of Jerusalem (11:8, 17:18)

- i. Spiritually called Egypt and Sodom
  - ii. Could also be easily called Babylon.
  - iii. Egypt and Babylon both nations that Jews were in captivity.
  - iv. Other similarities.
- (iii) Either case would place the fall in Ancient times.
1. See Chapter 17 for closer examination.

***9 Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."***

- iv) 3<sup>rd</sup> Angel – Warnings of worshipping the beast.
- (1) Allusion back to Isaiah.

*Isa 34:8-10*

*8 For it is the day of the LORD's vengeance,  
The year of recompense for the cause of Zion.*

*9 Its streams shall be turned into pitch,  
And its dust into brimstone;*

*Its land shall become burning pitch.*

*10 It shall not be quenched night or day;*

***Its smoke shall ascend forever.***

*From generation to generation it shall lie waste;*

*No one shall pass through it forever and ever.*

*NKJV*

- (2) In the presence of the holy angels and the Lamb
  - (a) But we're told elsewhere that the final judgment and sentence is away from the presence of the Lamb.

*2 Thess 1:7-10*

*7 and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, 10 when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe,*

*NKJV*

- (i) Could be the presence of the Lord that destroys them, but most interpret this to mean that it's away from the presence of the Lord.
- (b) This could be hyperbole speaking of those who participate in the "worship" of the beast.
  - (i) Edom (in Isaiah passage) is gone and it's smoke is not continuing to ascend.
  - (ii) Jerusalem is destroyed and it's smoke is no longer ascending.
  - (iii) Just saying that the judgment is a permanent judgment.

*12 Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. 13 Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' " "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."*

- v) Blessedness upon the martyrs or any who die.
  - (1) Martyrs are the focus of much of the book of Revelation (Ch 6, 20, etc.)
  - (2) Rest from labors
  - (3) Contrast with those who die in compromise.

*14 Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. 15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe." 16 So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.*

*17 Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. 18 And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe." 19 So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. 20 And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs.*

*NKJV*

- d) *Harvest of the Righteous and the wicked*
  - i) Futurists see this as 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ, or close to it.
  - ii) Dual Harvest – Antitype of two harvest feasts in Israel.
    - (1) Earth was reaped in vs. 14 (presumably of it's grain)
      - (a) Feast of Pentacost was celebrated for the harvest of grain.
        - (i) Feast of first fruits.
    - (2) Earth was again reaped in vs. 19 (presumably of it's grapes or vintage)
      - (a) Feast of Tabernacles was associated with this harvest.
        - (i) Feast of ingathering.
  - iii) Grain harvest (v.14)
    - (1) Other NT references to this idea.

*Matt 3:12*

*12 His winnowing fan is **in His hand**, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."*

*NKJV*

- (a) This was soon to take place according to John the Baptist. Earlier he said:

*Matt 3:10-11*

*10 And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which **does not bear good fruit** is cut down and thrown into the fire.*

*NKJV*

- (b) Interesting the tree that is being cut down is a fruit tree with no fruit.
- (c) The gathering of the "grain" took place for 40 years after Jesus was crucified until 70AD.

- (i) All the good seed in Jerusalem
  - (ii) They were gathered out of the city in 69AD
  - (iii) The fruitless vine was then trampled upon by the Romans.
- iv) Harvest of the grapes.
- (1) Clues that this is talking about 70AD
    - (a) Trampled outside the city (the great city previously mentioned, Babylon.)
      - (i) If Babylon is Rome, this doesn't make sense. If it's Jerusalem it makes perfect sense.
    - (b) 1600 furlongs of blood up to horses bridles.
      - (i) This happens to be the distance from the Northern to the Southern end of Israel (Dan to Beersheba).
    - (c) Vine of the earth is being trampled.
      - (i) Vine is reference to Israel throughout OT.
        - 1. examples:

*Isa 5:7*

*7 For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel,  
And the men of Judah are His pleasant plant.  
NKJV*

*Lam 1:15*

*15 "The Lord has trampled underfoot all my mighty men in my midst;  
He has called an assembly against me  
To crush my young men;  
The Lord trampled as in a winepress  
The virgin daughter of Judah.  
NKJV*

## **9) Chapter 15-16: 7 bowls of wrath**

*a) Ch 15: Opening vision*

***Rev 15***

***15:1 Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete. 2 And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. 3 They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying:***

***"Great and marvelous are Your works,  
Lord God Almighty!  
Just and true are Your ways,  
O King of the saints!  
4 Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?  
For You alone are holy.  
For all nations shall come and worship before You,  
For Your judgments have been manifested."***

***5 After these things I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. 6 And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues, clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands. 7 Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever. 8 The temple***

*was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.*

*NKJV*

- i) Scene in heaven
  - (1) Saints victorious unto death praising God for judgment (on Jerusalem)
  - (2) All nations to be worshipping to Him.
    - (a) Gospel is going out globally, not restricted to HQ in Jerusalem.
- ii) Temple
  - (1) Filled w/smoke from glory of God sounds like pillar of smoke in Moses time.
  - (2) Likewise, Solomon's temple was filled with this glory cloud.
  - (3) Could symbolize that God is now dedicating the temple in heaven for general access. (inauguration).
    - (a) Temple in Jerusalem is about to be destroyed.
      - (i) Visible emblem of what had already occurred 40 years prior.

b) *Ch 16: Angels pour out the bowls.*

*Rev 16*

*16:1 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth."*

*2 So the first went and poured out his bowl upon the earth, and a foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image.*

*3 Then the second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it became blood as of a dead man; and every living creature in the sea died.*

*4 Then the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. 5 And I heard the angel of the waters saying:*

*"You are righteous, O Lord,  
The One who is and who was and who is to be,  
Because You have judged these things.  
6 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets,  
And You have given them blood to drink.  
For it is their just due."*

*7 And I heard another from the altar saying, "Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments."*

*8 Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to scorch men with fire. 9 And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory.*

*10 Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain. 11 They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.*

*12 Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. 13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 14 For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. 15 Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame." 16 And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.*

**17 Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, "It is done!" 18 And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth. 19 Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. 20 Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. 21 And great hail from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great.**  
**NKJV**

c) *False prophet.*

- (1) Mentioned for first time here.
- (2) Some identify false prophet w/ 2<sup>nd</sup> beast of Ch. 13
  - (a) This would make the beast mentioned here, the first beast in Ch 13.

ii) 3 views

d) *Futurist view*

- (a) 7 last plagues (15:1)
  - (i) In them wrath of God is complete
  - (ii) Suggests end of world.
- (b) These plagues are seen as literal in this view.
- (c) 6<sup>th</sup> plague is seen as happening so that 200,000,000 Chinese soldiers can cross it into Israel.
  - (i) Earlier (Ch.9) the angels who were bound at the river Euphrates were released to send 200 million horsemen.
  - (ii) Mao Tse Tung said he could field an army of 200 million soldiers.
  - (iii) Problems with seeing it this way is:
    1. A river today would not pose much of a problem to modern armies as it would in ancient times.
      - a. Amphibious vehicles
      - b. Airplanes, etc.
    2. Sounds more like the actual fall of Ancient Babylon where the river was dried up to conquer it.
      - a. This is probably figurative of the overthrow of whoever Babylon is in this passage (v. 19).
      - b. Borrowing language from history to make the point.
- (d) Battle of Armageddon is seen as WW3
  - (i) This is only place in bible that mentions this battle.
  - (ii) Thought to be centered outside Jerusalem in valley of Meggido.
    1. Word Armageddon means "Mountain of meggido".
  - (iii) God will miraculously deliver Jerusalem (see Zech 12).
- (e) 7<sup>th</sup> bowl brings the greatest earthquake ever (v18).
  - (i) Hailstones are also unique in history (increased size and intensity)
  - (ii) Also this sounds like Jesus' statement in the Olivet discourse:

*Matt 24:21*

*21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.*

**NKJV**

1. Preterist would say this is hyperbole that is typically used in the bible.
- (iii) Earthquakes are sometimes used to symbolize the fall of a city (comp. Rev 11:13).
  1. Also:

Heb 12:25-28

25 See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, 26 whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven." 27 Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the **removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.** 28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.  
NKJV

- a. Indicates that the things made with hands (temples, city's, obsolete religion and visible trappings thereof) will be soon shaken.
  - b. The kingdom of God cannot be shaken.
- (f) Every Island fled away..(v20)
- (i) Figurative (compare with Ch 6:14)
  - (ii) Scenery to show exactly how great this shaking is.
- e) Preterist 1 – Fall of Jerusalem.
- (a) The plagues given here again resemble plagues of Egypt before Exodus.
    - (i) Loathsome sores (v2)
      - 1. 6<sup>th</sup> plague on Egypt was boils (Ex 9:8-12)
    - (ii) Water turning to blood (v4)
      - 1. 1<sup>st</sup> plague on Egypt was similar (Ex 7:20-21)
    - (iii) Frogs (v13)
      - 1. 2<sup>nd</sup> plague on Egypt was frogs (Ex 8:1-15)
    - (iv) Likewise, the trumpets had similar characteristics to the plagues of Egypt.
  - (b) Jerusalem is the city that is **spiritually** called Egypt in Revelation. (Ch 11:8)
    - (i) Judgment on Jerusalem can be seen here to be described like those that were poured out on Egypt.
      - 1. God's people were delivered here just like they were from Egypt.
  - (c) Shedding the bloods of saints and **prophets** (vs 5-6)
    - (i) Jesus said:

Luke 13:33-35

33 Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.

34 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, **the one who kills the prophets** and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing!

NKJV

- 1. Almost all the prophets who should have been received by the Jews, died at their hands.
- (ii) Also:

Matt 23:34-36

34 Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them **you will kill and crucify**, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, 35 that **on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth**, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. 36 **Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.**

NKJV

- 1. That generation was to be judged for the blood of all the prophets.
- (d) 4<sup>th</sup> bowl scorching (v8)
  - (i) plagues mixture of symbolic and literal things.
  - (ii) Direct contrast to Ch 7:16.

*Rev 7:16-17*

*16 They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat;*  
*NKJV*

- 1. Compare w/ Isaiah 49:10

*Isa 49:10*

*10 They shall neither hunger nor thirst,  
 Neither heat nor sun shall strike them;  
 For He who has mercy on them will lead them,  
 Even by the springs of water He will guide them.*  
*NKJV*

*Also:*

*Ps 121:5-6*

*5 The LORD is your keeper;  
 The LORD is your shade at your right hand.  
 6 The sun shall not strike you by day,  
 Nor the moon by night.*  
*NKJV*

- 2. Figurative of God's protection over His people.
- 3. Here it is deliberately reversed.
  - a. God causes the sun to strike them even more intensely than before. Their calamity is intensified.
- (e) 5<sup>th</sup> bowl throne of the beast.
  - (i) 2 possibilities:
    - 1. Throne is bottomless pit.
      - a. Ch. 11:7 ascended out of bottomless pit.
      - b. Corresponds with 5<sup>th</sup> trumpet and locusts coming out of pit.
    - 2. Throne is Rome.
      - a. When Nero committed suicide in 68AD, the empire was in turmoil
      - b. Almost didn't survive.
      - c. 3 kings were murdered within a year.
      - d. Doesn't necessitate being identified with Babylon.
- (f) 6<sup>th</sup> bowl Euphrates drying up
  - (i) Could be figurative comparison to the literal fall of Babylon
    - 1. Persian kings were east of Babylon.
    - 2. Euphrates was literally dried up in that overthrow.
  - (ii) Roman legions that came against Jerusalem were largely from the Euphrates area (eastern border of Roman empire).
- (g) Battle of the Great day of God Almighty
  - (i) Sounds very much like some of the earlier expressions about the destruction of Jerusalem.

*Joel 2:31*

*31 The sun shall be turned into darkness,  
And the moon into blood,  
Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.  
NKJV*

Also:

*Mal 4:5*

*5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet  
Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.  
NKJV*

1. Jesus said this sending of Elijah was fulfilled in John the Baptist.
- (ii) Located in Armageddon (Mountains of Megiddo) (v16).
  1. Romans did set their camp in the valleys around Jerusalem, including Megiddo.
  2. Symbolic value in that the valley of Megiddo was a historic place of defeat, humiliation and destruction.
    - a. King Josiah died there. Reference to that in Zech.

*Zech 12:10-11*

*10 "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they have pierced; they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. 11 In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.  
NKJV*

3. This verse (Rev 16:16) seems to rule out possibility of Babylon being Rome.

(h) City divided into 3 parts.

- (i) Two ways to understand it.
  1. Josephus records that the Jews were divided into 3 warring camps.
  2. –OR- Alluding back to Ezekiel 5:1-5

*Ezek 5:1-6*

*5:1 "And you, son of man, take a sharp sword, take it as a barber's razor, and pass it over your head and your beard; then take balances to weigh and divide the hair. 2 You shall burn with fire one-third in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are finished; then you shall take one-third and strike around it with the sword, and one-third you shall scatter in the wind: I will draw out a sword after them. 3 You shall also take a small number of them and bind them in the edge of your garment. 4 Then take some of them again and throw them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire; for from there a fire will go out into all the house of Israel.*

*5 "Thus says the Lord GOD: 'This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the midst of the nations and the countries all around her.*

*NKJV*

- a. Goes on to say how they will die:

*Ezek 5:12*

*12 One-third of you shall die of the pestilence, and be consumed with famine in your midst; and one-third shall fall by the sword all around you; and I will scatter another third to all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them.*  
NKJV

- b. Remembering back to how Jerusalem was divided by the Babylonians.
  - i. Here Jerusalem is figuratively called Bablyon.
- (i) Hailstones weigh a talent....
  - (i) Interesting passage in Josephus: 5:6:3

So they cast stones and arrows at those that were making the banks; they also ran out upon them by companies, and fought with them. Now those that were at work covered themselves with hurdles spread over their banks, and their engines were opposed to them when they made their excursions. The engines, that all the legions had ready prepared for them, were admirably contrived; but still more extraordinary ones belonged to the tenth legion: those that threw darts and those that threw stones were more forcible and larger than the rest, by which they not only repelled the excursions of the Jews, but drove those away that were upon the walls also. Now the stones that were cast were of the \_\_\_\_\_, and were carried two furlongs and further. The blow they gave was no way to be sustained, not only by those that stood first in the way, but by those that were beyond them for a great space. As for the Jews, they at first watched the coming of the stone, for it was of a **white color**, and could therefore not only be perceived by the great noise it made, but could be seen also before it came by its brightness; accordingly the watchmen that sat upon the towers gave them notice when the engine was let go, and the stone came from it, and cried out aloud, in their own country language, THE STONE COMETH (15) so those that were in its way stood off, and threw themselves down upon the ground; by which means, and by their thus guarding themselves, the stone fell down and did them no harm. But the Romans contrived how to prevent that by blacking the stone, who then could aim at them with success, when the stone was not discerned beforehand, as it had been till then; and so they destroyed many of them at one blow. Yet did not the Jews, under all this distress, permit the Romans to raise their banks in quiet; but they shrewdly and boldly exerted themselves, and repelled them both by night and by day.

- f) *Preterist 2 view – Fall of Rome.*
  - (a) 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries AD.
  - (b) 5<sup>th</sup> Angel would be scene as the torments that came upon Rome when the Barbarians, the Huns, etc. invaded Rome.

## 10) Chapters 17-18: Babylon the harlot

### a) Ch 17: Opening Vision

#### Rev 17

*17:1 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, 2 with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication." 3 So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. 4 The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. 5 And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. 6 I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.*

*7 But the angel said to me, "Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. 8 The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. 9 Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. 10 There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time. 11 And the beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition. 12 The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. 13 These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. 14 These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful." 15 Then he said to me, "The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. 16 And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. 17 For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. 18 And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth."*

NKJV

- i) John sees the vision in this chapter.
  - (1) After being carried into the wilderness.
  - (2) This harlot is in the wilderness just like the other woman (the bride) was in the wilderness back in Ch. 12
    - (a) Contrast between two entities
      - (i) bride and harlot.
      - (ii) Babylon and Jerusalem
      - (iii) Both are same. Harlot is also figuratively Babylon, Bride is also figuratively Jerusalem.
- b) City (harlot) is identified.
  - (1) Sitting on a beast (vs. 3)
    - (a) Similar to beast in chapter 13
      - (i) Very probably the same beast.
    - (b) Scarlet
      - (i) Dragon in Ch 13 also red with 7 heads and 10 horns.
        - 1. depicting Satan in disguise.
          - a. Acting through an entity like a state system (see ch 13 notes.).

2. John seems to identify this manifestation of the beast as Rome. Two identifications of the 7 heads.
  - a. 7 kings.
    - i. 1<sup>st</sup> Julius Caesar, 6<sup>th</sup> is Nero (“now is”)
  - b. 7 hills (v.9)
    - i. Rome called city of 7 hills.
- (c) “Was and is not” (v. 8)
  - (i) Compare with beast and dragon in Ch. 11 and 20
    1. seem to overcome church for a “little while”.
      - a. Ch 11 contrasts 3 ½ days with 3 ½ years which is suggested to be the church age.
        - i. Two witnesses (perhaps the church) appear dead for that long.
      - b. This could be seen as a persecution of the church, driving it underground, just before the end of time.
    - (ii) This beast is also said to be the eighth
      1. Strange wording, any answer is speculation on this one.
        - a. Present beast is 6<sup>th</sup>, and will be the 8<sup>th</sup>? Not the 7<sup>th</sup>.
  - (d) 10 horns are 10 kings (v. 12-13)
    - (i) Futurists have the advantage on this verse.
    - (ii) However, at 2<sup>nd</sup> coming, it’s not likely that anyone will be at war with Him.
      1. “comes in a moment, twinkling of an eye, taking vengeance on those who know not God.”
      2. Heavens will be dissolved and earth burned up
      3. Who can wage war with a return like that?
    - (iii) We could see the 10 horns as the same ones mentioned in Daniel 7

*Dan 7:23-25*

*The fourth beast shall be  
A fourth kingdom on earth,  
Which shall be different from all other kingdoms,  
And shall devour the whole earth,  
Trample it and break it in pieces.  
24 **The ten horns are ten kings**  
Who shall arise from this kingdom.  
And another shall rise after them;  
He shall be different from the first ones,  
And shall subdue three kings.  
25 He shall speak pompous words against the Most High,  
Shall persecute the saints of the Most High,  
And shall intend to change times and law.  
Then the saints shall be given into his hand  
For a time and times and half a time.  
NKJV*

1. This has been historically understood to be the 10 ethnic nations which came to be when the Roman empire was dissolved.
  - a. Huns in Hungary
  - b. Ostragoths in Mecia
  - c. Visigoths in Panomia
  - d. Suaves and the Allens in Spain
  - e. Vandals in Africa
  - f. Fracs in France
  - g. Burgundians in Burgandy
  - h. Huruly in Italy.
  - i. Saxons and Angols in Britain
  - j. Lombards on the Danube

2. The fourth kingdom is almost certainly the Roman empire and these nations grew out of it.
    - a. The stone that breaks the toes of the image in Daniel 2 is identified in Daniel 2:44 as the kingdom of God being established.
    - b. Dispensationalists see this as a revived Roman empire in the last days.
      - i. Many believe that EU is that revived 10 nation empire and the antichrist will rise out of it.
      - ii. Must assume a huge time gap between the ankle and toes of the image.
  3. Amillennialists do not see Christ's kingdom being established at 2<sup>nd</sup> coming, but at 1<sup>st</sup>
    - a. No future revival of Roman empire necessary for the stone (Christ's kingdom) to break the toes.
    - b. If so, these 10 kings can be applied as the same ones in Daniel and support the historic view.
- (iv) They will make war with the Lamb.
1. That is, His saints on earth. Compare with 2 witnesses in Ch. 11:7
    - a. If witnesses are to represent the church as suggested earlier.
  2. Also, reference to war against Lamb in Ch. 19
  3. This could be seen simply as the continuous persecution and spiritual warfare against the church during the church age.
  4. Ultimate victory for those who are faithful unto death.

(2) Many waters (v15)

(3) She is that great city (v18)

(a) This is the clearest identity we get about the harlot. Two viable options:

(i) Rome (seems most like on surface)

1. 10 horns hate the harlot and destroy her. (v16)
2. In John's day, Rome was ruler over the empire (v18)
3. Harlot (the city) sits on the beast (Roman empire) in vs. 2-3
  - a. City of Rome was the central head of the Empire
  - b. Rome did eventually fall to the nations around her.

(ii) Jerusalem (some very strong evidence also)

1. Encountered Babylon in Ch.14 and 16
  - a. Strong evidence that it was talking about destruction of Jerusalem
  - b. Context seemed to ID her as Jerusalem.
2. Ch 17:16 could be reference to destruction of Jerusalem
3. Ch 18 has number of places that suggest sudden destruction
  - a. Vs. 8 – one day
  - b. Vs. 10,19 – one hour
  - c. Jerusalem's fall was rapid, Rome's fall was stretched out over a century or so.
4. Identification as a "harlot"
  - a. Commits adultery against her husband
    - i. Rome was never in covenant relationship with God
  - b. Jerusalem is repeatedly referred to as a harlot and an adulterer in OT. Most of the imagery in Revelation is taken from the OT.

*Isa 1:21*

*21 How the faithful city has become a harlot!*

*It was full of justice;*

*Righteousness lodged in it,*

*But now murderers.*

*NKJV*

*Ezek 16:15-16*

15 "But you trusted in your own beauty, played the harlot because of your fame, and poured out your harlotry on everyone passing by who would have it.  
NKJV

- i. Also lists the nations she played the harlot with.
- ii. Rev 17:2 also speaks of the kings of the earth with her.

Hos 2:2-3

2 "Bring charges against your mother, bring charges;  
For she is not My wife, nor am I her Husband!  
Let her put away her **harlotries** from her sight,  
And her adulteries from between her breasts;  
3 Lest I strip her naked  
And expose her, as in the day she was born,  
**And make her like a wilderness,**  
And set her like a dry land,  
And slay her with thirst.  
NKJV

- iii. Book of Hosea is another place where Israel is depicted as a harlot through Hosea's wife Gomer
- iv. Make her like a wilderness, just like in the vision

5. Laments over Babylon in Ch. 18: (see Ch 18 notes)

6. What about references to "kings of the earth" (Rev. 17:2, 18)?
  - a. Consider usage of same expression (in greek) elsewhere

Acts 4:26-27

26 The **kings of the earth** took their stand,  
And the rulers were gathered together  
Against the LORD and against His Christ.'

27 "For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both **Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel**, were gathered together  
NKJV

- i. Apostles praying quoting Ps.2 and applying it to all who were in **Israel** who conspired to crucify Jesus. Therefore "kings of the earth" can simply mean "**rulers of the land**". Pilate wasn't a king, neither were the Sanhedrin or even Herod really (Tetrarch).
- ii. This could be the meaning of Rev 1:5 also:

Rev 1:5

5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the **kings of the earth**.  
NKJV

- iii. Could be talking about the same people that mourn Him in vs. 7

Rev 1:7

7 Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him.  
NKJV

iv. Also, in Rev 6:15: (see earlier notes)

*Rev 6:15-17*

*15 And the **kings of the earth**, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, 16 and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! 17 For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"*

*NKJV*

- v. Many indicators in Ch. 6 that it's talking about fall of Jerusalem. So kings of the earth would be a local thing (rulers of the land).
- b. This would make sense in the context of this passage.
  - i. The rulers of the land (Sanhedrin, Herod, etc.) did get rich by the exploits of the people of Jerusalem (the harlot).
- c. Key vs. is Ch 17:18
  - i. Compare to other references to Jerusalem as woman with rulers

*Lam 1:1*

*How lonely sits the city  
That was full of people!  
How like a widow is she,  
Who was great among the nations!  
**The princess among the provinces**  
Has become a slave!*

*NKJV*

*Matt 2:6*

*6'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
Are **not the least among the rulers of Judah**;  
For out of you shall come a Ruler  
Who will shepherd My people Israel.' "*

*NKJV*

ii. Also, from Josephus

The southern parts of Judea, if they be measured lengthways, are bounded by a Village adjoining to the confines of Arabia; the Jews that dwell there call it Jordan. However, its breadth is extended from the river Jordan to Joppa. The city Jerusalem is situated in the very middle; on which account some have, with sagacity enough, called that city the Navel of the country. **Nor indeed is Judea destitute of such delights as come from the sea**, since its maritime places extend as far as Ptolemais: it was parted into eleven portions, of which the royal city **Jerusalem was the supreme, and presided over all the neighboring country, as the head does over the body**. As to the other cities that were inferior to it, they presided over their several toparchies;

- 7. This view not devoid of difficulties
  - a. Example: Identification of 10 horns that destroy the harlot.
    - i. Romans came with multi-national force of at least 10 nations.

- ii. However, they are said to have not yet received dominion. Could simply mean they're not autonomous from Rome just yet

c) Ch 18: *Babylon is Fallen*

**Rev 18**

*18:1 After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. 2 And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! 3 For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury." 4 And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. 5 For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. 6 Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her. 7 In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, 'I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.' 8 "Therefore her plagues will come in one day--death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her.*

*9 "The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning, 10 standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.' 11 "And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore: 12 merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of citron wood, every kind of object of ivory, every kind of object of most precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble; 13 and cinnamon and incense, fragrant oil and frankincense, wine and oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and bodies and souls of men. 14 The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you, and all the things which are rich and splendid have gone from you, and you shall find them no more at all. 15 The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, 16 and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls! 17 For in one hour such great riches came to nothing.' Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance 18 and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What is like this great city?' 19 "They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! For in one hour she is made desolate.' 20 "Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you on her!"*

*21 Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore. 22 The sound of harpists, musicians, flutists, and trumpeters shall not be heard in you anymore. No craftsman of any craft shall be found in you anymore, and the sound of a millstone shall not be heard in you anymore. 23 The light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore, and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you anymore. For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived. 24 And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth."*

**NKJV**

- i) John hears the announcements
  - (1) Like funeral dirges or laments
  - (2) Language taken from some OT prophets, especially Ezekiel 28 (concerning fall of Tyre and Sidon) and Jeremiah 51 (fall of Babylon).
    - (a) Fall of Sodom echoed in v. 5
  - (3) Laments strongly suggest the identity of Babylon is Jerusalem (also see Ch 17 notes above)
    - (a) Vs. 14 – no more fruit.

- (i) God continuously looking for fruit from Israel in OT.
- (ii) Similar to what Jesus told the fig tree (symbolically Israel)

*Matt 21:19*

*19 And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again." And immediately the fig tree withered away.*

*NKJV*

- (b) Vs. 16 – adorned with gold, precious stones, pearls.
  - (i) Temple was adorned with these things
  - (ii) Similar to what Luke records in Olivet discourse:

*Luke 21:5-6*

*5 Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was **adorned with beautiful stones and donations**, He said, 6 These things which you see--the days will come in which not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down."*

*NKJV*

- (c) Vs. 19-23 – Good things taken away and land is made desolate
  - (i) Similar language to other OT passages talking about destruction of Jerusalem.

*Jer 25:10-11*

*10 Moreover **I will take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. 11 And this whole land shall be a desolation** and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.*

*NKJV*

- (d) Vs. 23 – merchants great men of the earth.
  - (i) Has always been the case that the Jews were well known for their business savvy...even today.
- (e) Vs. 24 – blood of prophets and saints
  - (i) Again, this seems to point to Jerusalem (see notes above on this)
- (f) Most of the laments in Ch. 18 are taken from the actual laments of Babylon in Jeremiah, the Psalms, Isaiah. Some are taken from the laments against Tyre in Ezekiel.
  - (i) Vs. 2 – Babylon is fallen...hated bird

*Isa 13:21-22*

*21 But wild beasts of the desert will lie there,*

*And their houses will be full of **owls**;*

***Ostriches** will dwell there,*

*And wild goats will caper there.*

*22 The hyenas will howl in their citadels,*

*And jackals in their pleasant palaces.*

*Her time is near to come,*

*And her days will not be prolonged."*

*NKJV*

- (ii) Vs. 3 - nations have drunk....

*Jer 51:7-8*

*7 Babylon was a golden cup in the LORD's hand,*

*That made all the earth drunk.  
The nations **drank her wine;**  
Therefore the nations are deranged.  
8 Babylon has **suddenly fallen** and been destroyed.  
NKJV*

(iii) Vs. 4 – Come out of her...(comes from 3 passages)

*Isa 48:20  
20 **Go forth from Babylon!**  
Flee from the Chaldeans!  
With a voice of singing,  
Declare, proclaim this,  
Utter it to the end of the earth;  
Say, "The LORD has redeemed  
His servant Jacob!"  
NKJV*

*Jer 50:8  
8 "**Move from the midst of Babylon,**  
Go out of the land of the Chaldeans;  
NKJV*

*Jer 51:6  
6 **Flee from the midst of Babylon,**  
And every one save his life!  
Do not be cut off in her iniquity,  
For this is the time of the LORD's vengeance;  
He shall recompense her.  
NKJV*

(iv) Vs. 5 – sins have reached to heaven (Jerusalem spiritually called Sodom in Revelation).

*Gen 18:20-21  
20 And the LORD said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, 21 I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the **outcry against it that has come to Me;** and if not, I will know."  
NKJV*

(v) Vs. 6 – Render to her...

*Ps 137:8  
8 O daughter of Babylon, who are to be destroyed,  
Happy the one who **repays you as you have served us!**  
NKJV*

(vi) Vs 7 – I sit as a queen...

*Isa 47:7-8  
7 And you said, 'I shall be a lady forever,'  
So that you did not take these things to heart,  
Nor remember the latter end of them.*

8 "Therefore hear this now, you who are given to pleasures,  
Who dwell securely,  
Who say in your heart,  
'I am, and there is no one else besides me;  
I shall not sit as a widow,  
Nor shall I know the loss of children';  
NKJV

(vii) Vs. 8 – strong is the Lord who judges ...

*Jer 50:34*  
34 Their Redeemer is strong;  
The LORD of hosts is His name.  
He will thoroughly plead their case,  
That He may give rest to the land,  
And disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon.  
NKJV

(viii) Vs. 9 – kings will weep and lament (Ezek 27:35 about Tyre)

*Ezek 27:35*  
35 All the inhabitants of the isles will be astonished at you;  
Their kings will be greatly afraid,  
And their countenance will be troubled.  
NKJV

Also

*Jer 50:46*  
46 At the noise of the taking of Babylon  
The earth trembles,  
And the cry is heard among the nations.  
NKJV

(ix) Vs 11-13 – merchants mourning because they can't buy comes from Ezek 27:12-34 (too long to list)

(x) Vs. 16 – clothed in fine purple etc...

*Ezek 28:13*  
13 You were in Eden, the garden of God;  
Every precious stone was your covering:  
The sardius, topaz, and diamond,  
Beryl, onyx, and jasper,  
Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold.  
The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes  
Was prepared for you on the day you were created.  
NKJV

(xi) Vs. 21 – Angel took up a stone...threw it into the sea...

*Jer 51:62-64*  
63 "Now it shall be, when you have finished reading this book, that you shall **tie a stone to it and throw it out into the Euphrates.** 64 Then you shall say, 'Thus **Babylon shall sink** and not rise from the catastrophe that I will bring upon her. And they shall be weary.' " Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.

*NKJV*

(xii) Vs. 22-23 echo Jeremiah 7:34 and 25:10 (see above notes).

(xiii) Vs. 23 – Merchants great men of the earth

*Isa 23:8*

*8 Who has taken this counsel against Tyre, the crowning city,*

*Whose merchants are princes,*

*Whose traders are the honorable of the earth?*

*NKJV*

(xiv) Vs. 24 – all who are slain on the earth

*Jer 51:49*

*49 As Babylon has caused the slain of Israel to fall,*

*So at Babylon the slain of all the earth shall fall.*

*NKJV*

## 11) Chapter 19: King of Kings and Lord of Lords

### *Rev 19*

**19:1 After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! 2 For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her."**

- a) *Persecuted avenged*
  - i) Jews who were not living in Jerusalem were dispersed throughout the whole earth.
    - (1) 2/3 of the Jews lived outside Jerusalem.
    - (2) Corrupt Judaism, centered in Jerusalem, could be said to corrupt the entire earth (or land).

**3 Again they said, "Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!"**

- ii) Echo of phrase earlier in the book (Rev 14:11). Which is also an echo from Isaiah 34:8-10.
  - (1) In context of Ch 14, it seemed to be a statement about Jerusalem.

**4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, "Amen! Alleluia!" 5 Then a voice came from the throne, saying, "Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!" 6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!"**

- iii) His Omnipotence is demonstrated by His judgments.
  - (1) The land has overcome them.
  - (2) This could be a reference to Jerusalem or Rome
    - (a) The sound of many waters could be the church (compare w/Ch 7 multitude)

**7 Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." 8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. 9 Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!' " And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God." 10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."**

- iv) Angels are servants of God and the brethren.

- b) *Marriage supper of the Lamb*
  - (1) Dispensational view teaches that the church will be raptured into the clouds.
    - (a) Will remain there 7 years with Christ until He comes back to the earth to judge the world and set up the Millennial kingdom. (this time is known as the tribulation period).
      - (i) This is thought to be the "marriage supper of the Lamb".
  - (2) However, this doesn't need to be talking about 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ at all.
    - (a) True, this is only place that speaks of "marriage supper" of Jesus, but not the only place that talks about His marriage.
      - (i) See Jesus' parable:

*Matt 22:1-14*

*22:1 And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: 2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, 3 and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. 4 Again, he sent out other servants, saying, "Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding." ' 5 "But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. 6 And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. 7 But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and **burned up their city.** 8 Then he said to his servants, "The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. 9 Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, **invite to the wedding.**' 10 "So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. 11 But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who **did not have on a wedding garment.** 12 So he said to him, "Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?" And he was speechless. 13 Then the king said to the servants, "Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." 14 "For many are called, but few are chosen."*

*NKJV*

1. Jesus describing His own ministry as invitation to the wedding.
  - a. Jews invited first but showed little interest.
  - b. Then the message was sent out to the Gentiles.
    - i. Good and bad responded so it can't be a picture of heaven after the rapture. There won't be any bad in heaven.
    - ii. Feast is after 70AD (city burned up)
    - iii. Garments in Rev 19 are righteous acts of the saints. Here there are those who don't have that garment and must be expelled.
2. This can't be an eschatological picture.
  - a. Feast happens right after city is burned up
3. So wedding feast is the church. Jesus alluded to this earlier in Matthew:

*Matt 9:14-16*

*14 Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast?" 15 And Jesus said to them, "Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the **bridegroom will be taken away from them,** and then they will fast.*

*NKJV*

- a. Jesus said they are at a wedding feast.
4. John the Baptist also called Jesus the Groom:

*John 3:29*

*29 "**He who has the bride is the bridegroom;** but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled.*

*NKJV*

- a. Those who were coming to Jesus were the bride.
- b. John is merely the matchmaker.
5. Therefore these verses about the wedding feast have their fulfillment in the church age.
  - a. Feast is populated with people before the judgment.

- ii) Cryptic statement at end of vs. 10 “Testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy”.
  - (1) Testimony of Jesus is a common phrase in Revelation (1:2, 1:9, 6:9, 12:17)
    - (a) Probably means testimony about Jesus. The church’s commission.
  - (2) These prophecies are not to honor the angel, but they’re about Jesus and therefore worship Him.

***11 Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. 12 His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. 13 He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. 15 Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.***

- c) *Jesus riding on white horse*
  - i) This passage is generally thought to be describing the second coming (mainly by futurists).
    - (1) This is also one reason why Rev 20 is thought to be talking about a future millennium after the second coming.
      - (a) However, even if it is second coming, it doesn’t mean that Ch 20 must follow chronologically.
        - (i) This is the end of a segment
        - (ii) Ch 20 begins another segment
        - (iii) We saw end of world and 2<sup>nd</sup> coming in Ch 11 also. Then we saw birth of Jesus in next chapter.
    - (2) Wedding supper is listed
    - (3) Judgment in vs 17-21
    - (4) Armies following Him would either be angels or the raptured church.
  - ii) This is not necessarily describing the second coming.
    - (1) Some (especially Postmils) see this as the conquest of the earth through the preaching of the gospel.
      - (a) Sword (Word of God) out of His mouth.
      - (b) This “conquering” has been happening over the last 2000 years (esp. last 400)
    - (2) The armies following Him would be the church.
      - (a) Our citizenship is in heaven even though we live.
      - (b) There is a similar type of scene in Zechariah:

*Zech 10:3  
 3 "My anger is kindled against the shepherds,  
 And I will punish the goatherds.  
 For the LORD of hosts will visit His flock,  
 The house of Judah,  
 And will make them as His royal horse in the battle.  
 NKJV*

- (i) Jesus riding the horse here could be Him riding the church into all nations carrying the gospel (Sword).
  - iii) Rod of Iron
    - (1) Image taken from Psalm 2:9

***17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, "Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, 18 that you may***

*eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great." 19 And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. 20 Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. 21 And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.*

**NKJV**

d) 2 feasts: Wedding supper and vulture supper.

(1) Wedding supper of the Lamb

(2) Supper of the vultures.

(a) Judgment

(b) This seems most likely to be talking about 2<sup>nd</sup> coming.

(i) Beast and false prophet reach end of their career.

1. Earlier we saw the length of this career to be 3 ½ years which could be figurative for the entire church age.

(c) Reminiscent of Jesus statement in Luke 17:

*Luke 17:34-37*

*34 I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. 35 Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. 36 Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left." 37 And they answered and said to Him, "Where, Lord?" So He said to them, **"Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together."***

**NKJV**

(d) However, this does not necessitate that vs. 11-16 are about 2<sup>nd</sup> coming.

## 12) Chapter 20: The Millennium

### a) Introduction

#### i) Millennium

- (1) Only place in bible that speaks of this 1000 year reign of the saints with Christ.
- (2) Mille = 1000, Annus= year
- (3) The view of the Millennium affects much of how you see the bulk of OT prophecies as well.

### Rev 20

*20:1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; 3 and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.*

*4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.*

*7 Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. 9 They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. 10 The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*

*11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.*

**NKJV**

### b) Outline of Chapter

- i) Vs 1-3 describes binding of Satan
- ii) Vs 4-6 1000 year period during Satan's binding which saints reign with Christ
- iii) Vs 7-9 describes the releasing of Satan for a little while to deceive nations
- iv) Vs 9-end, describes Satan and enemies of God being devoured by fire and then a general judgment of the dead.

### c) Millennial views

- i) This chapter doesn't correspond to the 5 different views of the book (futurism, preterism, etc)
  - (1) 3 classic views of the Millennium is a separate issue for the most part.
    - (a) Pre-millennial view
      - (i) Christ returns before the literal 1000 years.
      - (ii) Dispensational camp

1. Most popular today.
- (iii) Historic camp (non-dispensational)
  1. Many church fathers held this view.
- (b) Post-millennial
  - (i) Millennium comes first, then 2<sup>nd</sup> coming
  - (ii) Binding of Satan takes place through efforts of the church
    1. Evangelism.
    2. Done **by Christ**, through church (His body)
  - (iii) Jesus Christ will conquer world through preaching of gospel
    1. Majority (or all) the world will become Christianized.
      - a. Real Christians, not just professing.
    2. No war
  - (iv) When Jesus returns, it's to a subdued world.
  - (v) Sub-group of Post-millers called Reconstructionists.
    1. some call it "dominion theology".
    2. Believe society must be reconstructed according to the laws of Moses.
      - a. Including penalties.
    3. Not all Post-millers believe this view.
- (c) A-millennial view
  - (i) Means "no Millennium" (literally speaking)
    1. Doesn't negate Rev 20
  - (ii) Christ returns at end of 1000 years (but 1000 years is figurative for church age)
    1. 1000 years is symbolic for an extended period of time.
  - (iii) Binding of Satan took place at the cross.
  - (iv) Little season at the end is short period of time at the end where the church is persecuted globally.
    1. some even see this time period as the great tribulation with anti-Christ and everything else.
  - (v) Fire from heaven is 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ followed by the judgment.
- (d) Each of the 3 views has very impressive scholars in their camp.
  - (i) Pre-mil
    1. George Eldon Ladd
  - (ii) Post-mil
    1. Benjamin B. Warfield
    2. Jonathan Edwards
    3. Many others since the reformation.
  - (iii) A-mil

d) *Hermeneutics of each view*

- (1) Pre-mil tends to take things more literally.
  - (a) Israel in OT is always literal nation of Israel.
  - (b) 1000 years is 1000 years.
  - (c) Satan bound is literal binding.
- (2) Post-mil and A-mil recognize symbolic language of prophets.
  - (a) Typically see many references to Israel as speaking of the church.
    - (i) NT writers quote many passages and apply them to church.
  - (b) Both agree that 2<sup>nd</sup> coming is at end of Millennium.
  - (c) Binding of Satan is seen as figurative.
  - (d) Revelation must be interpreted rather than taken at face value.
- (3) Question is not "what do we prefer", but "what help do we get from the rest of scripture"?

- ii) Comparison of Pre-mil and Amil view.
  - (1) Pre-mil
    - (a) Seems to agree more with literal interpretation of Revelation.
      - (i) For them, Ch20 chronologically follows Ch19
      - (ii) Easier to interpret.
      - (iii) This was the one thing that kept George Eldon Ladd from being Amillennial according to one of his books.
    - (b) This literal hermeneutic of the Millennium also gives them opportunity to believe in literal fulfillment to the promises to nation Israel in OT.
      - (i) Kingdom passages in the prophets.
      - (ii) Literal temple, sacrificial system, Levitical priesthood, reign of Messiah on literal throne of David in literal Jerusalem.
      - (iii) World wide mandate to offer sacrifices in Jerusalem at feast of tabernacles.
      - (iv) This is known as the Golden Age of the Jews.
        - 1. Of course none of those passages mention 1000 years, and some of them speak of it as being forever.
    - (c) Sabbath Millennium view.
      - (i) If 2<sup>nd</sup> coming is around 2000
        - 1. 4000 years in OT
        - 2. 2000 years in NT
        - 3. 1000 years in Millennium = the Sabbath Mil.
        - 4. 1000 years is like a day to the Lord (2Pet 3:8)
        - 5. Look also at the Creation week. 6 days work, 1 day rest.
      - (ii) This view held by some Church fathers and some Rabbi's.
      - (iii) This is not a biblical argument, but a philosophical one.
    - (d) Jehovah's Witnesses view
      - (i) Millennium is necessary for God to be fair.
        - 1. Many have died without hearing gospel and therefore need a chance to hear it.
        - 2. These people will be resurrected and given a chance in the Millennium
        - 3. At end of Millennium, Satan deceives some and they never do turn to Christ.
      - (ii) However, bible doesn't indicate that people get second chance

*Heb 9:27-28*

*27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,  
NKJV*

- (e) "Man's innate corruption" view. (Held by some dispensationalists)
  - (i) God has to show man that he's culpable by his own innate depraved.
    - 1. When Satan is bound, God can demonstrate that man himself is to blame for his own sin.
  - (ii) However, again, nowhere in bible does it say that God is either required or concerned to prove such a thing.
  - (iii) Also, the bible indicates that people don't fall when Satan is absent.
    - 1. It's only when devil is loosed that we see them sinning again.
- (f) Critique of Premil.
  - (i) Nobody takes all of Revelation totally literally...it's impossible.
    - 1. Example 1: 200,000,000 horsemen are taken by dispensationalists literally in number, but not actual horses.
    - 2. Example 2: Dispensationalists see 7 letters to 7 churches as symbolically representing all the church age.
    - 3. Everybody picks and chooses what is symbolic and what is literal.
      - a. Each sees different compelling reasons for what they take literally.

- b. Each finds things that are convenient to their view to take literally and things that are not.
- 4. Premil's generally insist that they are the one's that take prophesy literally.
- 5. Rev 20 has things that can and cannot be taken literally.
  - a. Satan can't be literal bound by a chain in a literal pit...He's not a physical being.
    - i. He's also described as a dragon and a serpent, he can't be both.
    - ii. We can say that Jesus limited Satan's freedom and this can be seen symbolically as chaining him up and putting him in a pit that opens with a key.
  - b. Angel cannot have literal key to bottomless pit for same reasons.
    - i. Bottomless pits cannot exist on earth because it's round.
    - ii. Michael is most powerful angel mentioned in scripture. Yet even he would not dare to bring accusation against Satan (Jude).
    - iii. This "angel" could represent Jesus Himself. He's the only One with the power to "bind" Satan. The word for "angel" means "messenger". Jesus was described as messenger in Malachi:

*Mal 3:1*  
*"Behold, I send My messenger,*  
*And he will prepare the way before Me.*  
*And the Lord, whom you seek,*  
*Will suddenly come to His temple,*  
*Even the **Messenger of the covenant**,*  
*In whom you delight.*  
*Behold, He is coming,"*  
*Says the LORD of hosts.*  
 NKJV

- c. 1000 years can be taken literal, but it's not necessary.
  - i. Many other things in passage (and book) are obviously symbolic.
  - ii. Other time passages aren't taken literally, like 10 day persecution of Smyrna in Ch. 2.
  - iii. 1000 years is never used literally in the rest of the bible (which isn't nearly as symbolic as Revelation). 1000 years is usually used to describe a very long time from our point of view, but not from God's. Example:

*Ps 90:4*  
*4 For a thousand years in Your sight*  
*Are like yesterday when it is past,*  
*And like a watch in the night.*  
 NKJV

*2 Peter 3:8*  
*8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day*  
*is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*  
 NKJV

- iv. The number 1000 is commonly used in OT to simply describe a big number. It's never statistical.

*Deut 1:11*  
*11 May the LORD God of your fathers make you a thousand times*  
*more numerous than you are*  
 NKJV

*Deut 7:9-10*

*9 Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments;  
NKJV*

*Ps 50:10*

*10 For every beast of the forest is Mine,  
And the cattle on a thousand hills.  
NKJV*

*Ps 84:10*

*10 For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand.  
NKJV*

- v. If the book wanted to be specific about time frames, why is Satan's release described as "a little while"?

e) *Things that compel us to take 1000 years symbolically:*

1. Looking at chronology of chapter – binding of Satan (vs 1-3), 1000 years (4-6), little while (7-9), and the rest after that (9-15).
2. Vs. 9-15 are very likely to be things that take place at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ (comparing with other scriptures).
  - a. If true, the things which happen before that must take place before the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming.
  - b. If true, it establishes either Amil or Post-mil to be true.
3. Look at cross-scriptural arguments for 9-15 being 2<sup>nd</sup> coming
  - a. Fire from heaven (vs 9) and end of heavens and earth (vs 11)

*2 Thess 1:6-9*

*6 since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, 7 and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 8 **in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God**, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power  
NKJV*

*2 Thess 2:8-9*

*8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the **brightness of His coming**.  
NKJV*

*2 Peter 3:10-13*

*10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the **elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up**. 11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the **heavens will be dissolved, being on fire**, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? 13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.  
NKJV*

- b. Resurrection (12-13). General resurrection (2<sup>nd</sup>) and spiritual resurrection (1<sup>st</sup>...in this life)

*Acts 24:15-16*

*15 I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a **resurrection** of the dead, both of the just and the unjust.*

*NKJV*

*John 5:24-29*

*24 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but **has passed from death into life**. 25 Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, **and now is**, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. 26 For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, 27 and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. 28 Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which **all who are in the graves will hear His voice 29 and come forth--those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.***

*NKJV*

*Eph 2:1*

*2:1 And you **He made alive**, who were dead in trespasses and sins,*

*NKJV*

*2 Cor 5:17*

*17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a **new creation**;*

*NKJV*

- i. 1st death can be seen as physical death.
- ii. 2<sup>nd</sup> death can be seen as judgment after death.
- iii. This kind will only be experienced by those who are not written in the book
- iv. This is a different kind of death than the first.
- v. Likewise, the 1<sup>st</sup> resurrection is a different kind than the first.
- vi. The rest of scripture indicates a general resurrection of the dead all at the same time.

- c. Judgment (vs 14)

*Matt 25:31-35*

*31 "When the Son of Man **comes** in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 **All the nations** will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his **sheep from the goats**. 33 And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, **inherit the kingdom** prepared for you from the foundation of the world: .....41 "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the **everlasting fire** prepared for the devil and his angels:.....46 "And these will go away into **everlasting punishment**, but the righteous into eternal life."*

*NKJV*

- i. At 2<sup>nd</sup> coming

- ii. Everyone comes before Him
  - iii. Some to life, some to death.
- d. So, we can't let the obscure symbolic passages (like Revelation) interpret the plainer passages, it needs to be the other way around.
- e. In Rev 20:9-15, we have:
- i. End of the world
  - ii. General resurrection.
  - iii. General judgment.
- f. The rest of scripture places these events at the same time.
- g. Revelation needs to be "decoded" by the use of the plainer teachings of scriptures.
- f) *Satan bound for 1000 years.*
- a. Scriptural references to something similar.

*Matt 12:28-29*

*28 But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. 29 Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first **binds the strong man**? And then he will plunder his house. NKJV*

- i. Christ is plundering Satan's house here (casting out demons), and He had to first bind Him.
- ii. This does not imply that Satan can't do anything. He's not inactive.
- iii. But Jesus has rendered him incapable of resistance.
- iv. The primary meaning behind the metaphorical "binding" of Satan is that he no longer has the power to universally deceive the nations into disobeying God.
- v. Only 1 nation before Jesus had any light from God, the rest were blinded and deceived by Satan. (Idol worshippers, child sacrifices, etc.)
- vi. The great commission is to bring the light to the nations.

*Col 2:15*

*15 Having **disarmed principalities and powers**, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. NKJV*

- vii. Past tense. This image suggests that the powers of darkness are fighting without weapons. Satan is defeated, but there's mop up to do.
- viii. This imagery is borrowed from the Roman practice of chaining their enemies and leading them back in a victory procession as they return from battle.

*Heb 2:14-15*

*14 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. NKJV*

- ix. Greek word for **destroy**: NT:2673 *katargeo* (kat-arg-eh'-o); from NT:2596 and NT:691; to be (render) entirely idle (useless), literally or figuratively:

g) *1000 years reign*

- a. Earth or heaven?
  - i. Pre-mil believes this is on earth.
- b. Nowhere in this chapter does it mention Jesus being on earth.
  - i. This comes from the assumption that Ch 19 is the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ.
  - ii. However, there are multiple times in the book that we see the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming followed by something that precedes it, making this a false assumption. (ex. Ch. 11 followed by Ch. 12)
- c. Since we established the binding of Satan and 1<sup>st</sup> resurrection to be before the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming, it follows that this too is speaking of something before as well.
- d. John saw souls (vs. 4). Disembodied, beheaded Christian souls are in heaven, not on earth.
  - i. If this was after the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming, they wouldn't just be souls.
  - ii. Can't be all resurrected saints because it says "those who didn't take the mark of the beast."
  - iii. Souls of martyrs are often mentioned in Revelation, and they're always in heaven.
- e. So this **must** represent a time before the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming and general resurrection.
  - i. These are people enthroned with Christ.

h) *Satan's release and war.*

- (i) Some Amil's think Satan has already been released.
    - 1. Back in 1800's many ideological deceptions and other things began to arise.
      - a. Rise of almost all pseudo-Christian cults
      - b. Darwinism
      - c. Communist manifesto
      - d. Humanist manifesto
      - e. Post-Christian culture
      - f. Increase in technology and communications allowing the whole world to be deceived very quickly.
    - 2. However, this theory is very Anglo-centric.
      - a. This describes what has happened in the west
      - b. If you go to China, Africa, other parts of Asia, Christianity is spreading faster than it ever has in history anywhere.
        - i. We don't see the church globally pinned at this point.
        - ii. The gospel is spreading faster than it has ever in history.
      - c. For America or the western world to collapse does not mean the end of the world or the gospel era.
  - (ii) The beloved city is the church.
    - 1. There hasn't yet been a global persecution of the church.
      - a. There has throughout history been many localized persecutions.
      - b. This may happen after the world has been fully evangelized....who knows?
- (b) In what sense is there danger to the glorified resurrected Christ and His resurrected saints?
- (i) None. That's why this can't be speaking of Christ physically reigning on earth and being attacked by a bunch of mere mortals and a loser of a devil.

### 13) Chapter 21-22: New Heavens and New Earth

#### a) *Identifying New heavens and new earth*

- i) Bit of a problem identifying what this is.
  - (1) Concept first encountered in Isaiah.

*Isa 65:17*

*17 "For behold, I create **new heavens and a new earth**;  
And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind.  
NKJV*

- (2) Also, Peter wrote:

*2 Peter 3:13*

*13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which  
righteousness dwells.  
NKJV*

- (a) This “promise” is apparently the promise in Isaiah.

- (3) Now we come to Revelation:

- (a) 1<sup>st</sup> 8 verses give outline of the remaining two chapters.

#### **Rev 21**

**21:1** *Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.  
Also there was no more sea.*

- ii) Rev 21 and 22 are only place in the bible that we can derive the final destiny (place) of the saints.
- iii) The great difficulty is whether this new heaven and earth is to be seen as literal or figuratively.
  - (1) Could be both for all we know.
  - (2) Good case can be made for each view.
    - (a) The Isaiah 65 passage (above) appears to be talking about the church age.
    - (b) Also Paul says:

*2 Cor 5:17-18*

*17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.  
NKJV*

- (i) Whole new order, creation, experience has replaced the old.
- (c) However, if it's not literal, we are left with no indication in the bible of what the eternal state of the believer is.
  - (i) We're told that we will live forever, but not where.
  - (ii) Bible doesn't say we'll spend eternity in heaven.
  - (iii) This passage indicates that we are to spend eternity on the new earth.
    - 1. Jesus to live here as well apparently.
  - (iv) No compelling reason not to take literally.
- iv) Doesn't the bible say elsewhere we are going to be living in heaven?
  - (1) What about John 14 (in my Father's house ....)

*John 14:1-3*

*14:1 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*

*NKJV*

- (a) Not reference to heaven.
- (b) God's house is the church in the NT. Temple or Tabernacle in OT.
  - (i) Where God "dwells" on earth.
- (c) Scriptures indicating church as God's house:

*Eph 2:21-22*

*21 in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.*

*NKJV*

*Heb 3:6*

*6 but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.*

*NKJV*

- (d) In the John 14 passage, the word "mansions" is not correct translation.
  - (i) NT:3438 **mone** (mon-ay'); from NT:3306; a staying, i.e. residence (the act or the place):
    1. God's abiding place.
    2. Many of John's writings use the idea of abiding, remaining, etc. with Christ.
    3. this word used only 1 other time and it's in the same chapter.

*John 14:22-24*

*23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.*

*NKJV*

- a. the word for home is also **mone**.
- b. The abiding place (home) for God, will be with the person (Christian) who loves Him, not in heaven.
- c. The Father's house (the church) has many such abiding places (Christians) in it.
- (ii) So this passage is not talking about Jesus taking us to heaven, but Jesus making His home with us.
- (e) But since the book and even these chapters are so symbolic, it's hard to know whether it should be taken literally or not.

v) No more sea?

- (1) Sea in OT is reference to the wicked or the Gentile nations.

*2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.*

vi) Is this to be understood as a literal city or the church of God (the saints)?

- (1) Elsewhere in the bible, New Jerusalem is something that has already come.

22 *But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the **heavenly Jerusalem**, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the **general assembly and church** of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.*

NKJV

- (a) Church is the New Jerusalem here. We've already come to it.
- (b) Not physical Mt Zion.

*Heb 12:18*

*18 For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched*

NKJV

- (2) Also:

*Gal 4:25-26*

*25 for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children-- 26 **but the Jerusalem above is free**, which is the mother of us all.*

NKJV

- (a) Whole chapter contrasting old covenant with new.
- (b) Mother of us all can be seen as the church.
  - (i) God is our Father, the church is His bride, and they bring forth spiritual children (us).
- (3) Later (v14), we see this Jerusalem having the foundations with the apostles names on it.
  - (a) Paul also spoke of something similar about the church.

*Eph 2:19-20*

*19 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 having been built on the **foundation of the apostles and prophets***

NKJV

- (4) We also see that it is lighted by the glory of God (vs. 23)
  - (a) Also true of the holy of holies.
- (5) This all seems to be imagery the describes the church as it now is.
  - (a) The argument has been made that all this is merely talking about the New Jerusalem (church) which survives after the destruction of the Old physical one in 70 AD.
  - (b) Jesus said to the woman at the well:

*John 4:21-23*

*21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will **neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem**, worship the Father. 22 You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. 23 But the **hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth**; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.*

NKJV

- (6) However, the argument is also good to see this as a literal New heavens and earth also.
  - (a) The bodily resurrection of the dead supports this.
    - (i) Spirit goes to heaven when we die, but will be reunited to our physical bodies.
      - 1. If heaven was our ultimate destination, why then a resurrection?
  - (b) Paul says that even creation groans for the day.

Rom 8:19-22

19 For the earnest expectation of the **creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.**  
20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; 21 because the **creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.** 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.

NKJV

- (i) 2<sup>nd</sup> law of thermodynamics proves this decay and bondage of corruption.
  - (ii) There will be a change to physical laws.
  - (c) Also, the 2 Peter ch 3 verse we looked at earlier.
- (7) Can the two views be harmonized?
- (a) A Christian is one who has “tasted” of the world to come (Heb 6:5).
  - (b) We are new creations, but the rest of the world is not yet.
  - (c) Therefore, these things can be seen both as a future heavens and earth, and in another sense something we have already experienced.
    - (i) We “have come” to the heavenly Jerusalem (Heb 12:22)
    - (ii) But also, Paul speaks of it as being above (Gal 4:25)
    - (iii) This passage speaks of it as coming down from heaven and having earthly existence.
      - 1. This could be the eschatological element.
      - 2. It already exists, but it’s coming to earth.

***4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." 5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." 6 And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. 7 He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. 8 But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."***

- vii) These 1<sup>st</sup> 8 verses provide outline or framework for the rest of the remaining two chapters. (7 major parts)
  - (1) Introduction (vs. 1)
  - (2) God’s city – New Jerusalem. (vs 2 expanded in vs 9-21)
  - (3) God’s tabernacle or dwelling place (vs. 3 expanded in vs. 22-27)
  - (4) Renewal of the world (vs. 4 expanded in vs 22:1-5)
  - (5) God’s word affirmed to be true (vs. 5 expanded in vs 22:6-10)
  - (6) God’s work is completed (vs. 6 expanded in vs 22:11-15)
  - (7) Final blessing (vs. 6b-7 expanded in vs 22:16-17)
  - (8) Final curse (vs. 8 expanded in vs. 22:18-19)

viii) The last two verses are the epilogue of the book.

- (1) Coming quickly is probably reference to coming in judgment on Jerusalem.

***9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife."***

- b) *The Lamb's wife and New Jerusalem...the church.*
  - i) Used elsewhere earlier in the book:

Rev 19:7

7 Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has **made herself ready**.<sup>8</sup> And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.  
NKJV

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

- ii) Some say this is a picture of the New Jerusalem as a city orbiting the earth, like the moon
  - (1) Like a satellite or something.
  - (2) Based on the fact that it doesn't state that this New Jerusalem comes to the earth.
  - (3) However, that is not stated in this passage.
    - (a) Also, if it's coming down from heaven there's no reason to assume it's not coming all the way to earth.
- iii) The lambs' wife is pictured as the New Jerusalem here.
  - (1) We've seen this before too.
    - (a) Paul's usage in Galatians and the author of Hebrews identified with the church.
    - (b) Recall the two entities contrasted in Revelation:
      - (i) Bride vs. the harlot
      - (ii) New Jerusalem vs. spiritual Babylon
      - (iii) Here the two are mixed (city "adorned like a bride")
  - (2) Jesus also told disciples:

*Matt 5:14*

*14 You are the light of the world. A **city** that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.*  
NKJV

**11 having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.**

- (3) He that sat on the throne had this appearance (Ch. 4)
  - (a) Not sure what a jasper stone is but it's clear as crystal.

**12 Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: 13 three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. 14 Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. 15 And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall.**

- (4) John was given a reed to measure earlier (Ch. 11)
  - (a) Told to measure holy of holies (spiritual Jerusalem)
- (5) Here the angel is measuring the city.
- (6) Reference to walls and gates
  - (a) Look at similar reference in Isaiah speaking of Jerusalem:

*Isa 60:18-19*

*18 Violence shall no longer be heard in your land,  
Neither wasting nor destruction within your borders;  
But you shall call your **walls Salvation**.  
And your **gates Praise**.*

*19 "The **sun shall no longer be your light by day,**  
Nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you;  
But **the LORD will be to you an everlasting light,***

*And your God your glory.*  
NKJV

- (b) Idea of high wall is a secure city. God is our salvation.
- (c) Gates being Israel similar to what Jesus says:

*John 4:22-23*

*22 You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.*  
NKJV

- (i) Initially, salvation was through Jews
    - 1. 1<sup>st</sup> evangelists
    - 2. Jesus was Jew
  - (ii) 144,000 was also representative of the 12 tribes also (Ch7)
    - 1. They were firstfruits
    - 2. all who came in after them came through that “gate”.
  - (iii) One of the tribes is Judah. Judah means “praise”. So like the Isaiah passage (above), at least one of these gates would be called praise.
- (7) Names of the apostles on the foundations of the wall.  
(a) Easily identified with Ephesians 2:20:

*Eph 2:19-22*

*19 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 having been built on the **foundation of the apostles** and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.*  
NKJV

***16 The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal.***

- (8) To make this literal would make it more like a skyscraper than a city.
  - (a) 1500 miles tall
  - (b) Or we could see this as symbolic
    - (i) Character of this city is as the holy of holies.
    - (ii) Place where God dwells
      - 1. illuminated by glory of God.
      - 2. Cube shaped to suggest immensity.
        - a. Actual holy of holies was small 15x15x15ft.
        - b. Only 1 man could be in there
        - c. This holy of holies can fit a big crowd.
          - i. Veil separating men from holy of holies was torn inviting all to come into it.

***17 Then he measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel.***

- (9) 144 cubits is probably symbolic of the product of multiplying the 12 apostles times the 12 tribes. (12 x 12 = 144)
  - (a) 24 elders are often thought of as the sum of the 12 apostles and 12 tribes of Israel, representing the church.

- (b) Both numbers are probably just symbols of the same thing.

**18 The construction of its wall was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.**

(10) Faith is purified like pure gold

*1 Peter 1:7*

*7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, NKJV*

- (a) Many other passages compare the refining of a Christian to that of gold.  
(b) The walls and streets of this city are made of gold (symbolic of Christians?)

*1 Peter 2:4-5*

*5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, NKJV*

- (i) Symbols of the church sometimes shift (city, temple, house, bride, etc.)  
(c) Agreeable with Malachi

*Mal 3:16-17*

*16 Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another,  
And the LORD listened and heard them;  
So a book of remembrance was written before Him  
For those who fear the LORD  
And who meditate on His name.*

*17 "They shall be Mine," says the LORD of hosts,  
"On the day that I make them My jewels.  
And I will spare them  
As a man spares his own son who serves him."  
NKJV*

**19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, 20 the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysope, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.**

- (11) Not same stones, but reminiscent of the stones on the breastplate of High priest.  
(a) Represented 12 tribes of Israel (people of God)

**21 The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.**

- (12) This is where we get the streets of gold and pearly gates.  
(a) Most people use this as a description of heaven.  
(b) But this is a description of the New Jerusalem come out of heaven.  
(13) The way of the righteous does become purified.

*Prov 4:18*

*18 But the path of the just is like the shining sun,  
That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.*

NKJV

- (14) Pearls are formed by irritation of the oyster.
- (a) Liquid secreted to surround irritant and hardens to become a pearl.
  - (b) Suffering of the oyster
  - (c) Paul said:

Acts 14:22

*"We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."*

NKJV

- (d) Gates represent entrance

***22 But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.***

- (15) No need for an earthly temple.
- (a) Those who are in Christ are in the temple of God.

***23 The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light.***

- (16) Agrees with the Isaiah 60 passage (above)

***24 And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. 25 Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). 26 And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. 27 But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.***

NKJV

- (17) This is where God abides  
(18) Vs 24:26 also come from Isaiah 60

*Isa 60:1-3*

*Arise, shine;*

*For your light has come!*

*And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you.*

*2 For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth,*

*And deep darkness the people;*

*But the LORD will arise over you,*

*And His glory will be seen upon you.*

*3 The **Gentiles shall come to your light,***

***And kings to the brightness of your rising.***

NKJV

*Isa 60:11*

*11 Therefore your gates shall be **open continually;***

*They shall not be shut day or night,*

*That men may bring to you the wealth of the Gentiles,*

*And their kings in procession.*

NKJV

- iv) This Chapter may be a vision of the fulfillment of the church age.

c) River of the water of life, tree of life, throne of God.

**Rev 22:1-20**

**22:1 And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. 2 In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.**

i) Imagery of river taken from OT.

*Ezek 47:1*

*47:1 Then he brought me back to the door of the temple; and there was water, **flowing from under the threshold of the temple** toward the east, for the front of the temple faced east;.....*

*....12 **Along the bank of the river, on this side and that, will grow all kinds of trees used for food**; their leaves will not wither, and their fruit will not fail. They will **bear fruit every month**, because their water flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their **leaves for medicine**."*

*NKJV*

(1) Also

*Isa 61:3*

*3 To console those who mourn in Zion,  
To give them beauty for ashes,  
The oil of joy for mourning,  
The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;  
That **they may be called trees of righteousness**,  
The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."*

*NKJV*

(2) Believers represent the trees of the Lord.

(3) Their leaf shall not wither (Ps 1)

*Joel 3:18*

*18 And it will come to pass in that day  
That the mountains shall drip with new wine,  
The hills shall flow with milk,  
And all the brooks of Judah shall be flooded with water;  
A fountain shall flow from the house of the LORD  
And water the Valley of Acacias.*

*NKJV*

(4) Valley of Acacias is across the Jordan from Jerusalem. (Numbers)

(a) Can't be literal because rivers don't cross each other.

ii) Compare OT river imagery with Jesus' statements.

*Zech 14:8*

*8 And in that day it shall be  
That **living waters** shall flow from Jerusalem,  
Half of them toward the eastern sea  
And half of them toward the western sea;  
In both summer and winter it shall occur.*

NKJV

*John 7:37-39*

*37 On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. 38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." 39 But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.*

NKJV

- (1) Notice "as the scripture has said"
  - (a) Nowhere in scripture (OT) does it say that rivers of living waters will flow out of believers.
  - (b) Jesus must be referring to Zech 14:8, it's the closest we can come to.
    - (i) Jerusalem in Zech 14 is compared to believers in John 7.
- iii) Tree of life
  - (1) Represents eternal life

*Gen 3:22*

*22 Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"*

NKJV

(2)

***3 And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. 4 They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.***

- iv) Name of Christ on the foreheads
  - (1) Contrast with name of the beast on the foreheads of unbelievers.
  - (2) There's always been a choice.
    - (a) Identify with Christ
    - (b) Identify with Anti-christ.

***5 There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.***

***6 Then he said to me, "These words are faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place.***

- v) Lord God of Holy prophets
  - (1) Continuity between OT prophets and this angel.
  - (2) Same God speaking through OT prophets is now speaking thru John
  - (3) Possible that the same issues are being addressed in this book

d) Epilogue

***7 Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." 8 Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. 9 Then he said to me, "See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book.***

***Worship God." 10 And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. 11 He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still."***

- i) Righteous still, filthy still?
  - (1) This will happen so quickly, nobody has time to change their mind.
    - (a) Fate is sealed for them.
  - (2) Probably exaggerated.
    - (a) Some probably did have chance to repent prior to the destruction of Jerusalem.
- ii)

***12 "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.***

- iii) Rewarded according to works
  - (1) Reward isn't always positive.
  - (2) Coming in judgment includes rewarding those that crucified Jesus and persecuted the church.

***13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."***

- iv) Alpha and Omega
  - (1) Title that belongs to Jehovah God.
  - (2) Jesus using them of Himself here.

***14 Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.***

- v) Enter through the gates
  - (1) Eternal life is entered into not just by faith, but by obedience.
    - (a) Obedience flows from faith.

***15 But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.***

- vi) Outside are...
  - (1) Dogs
    - (a) Paul warned Phillipians:

*Phil 3:2-3*

*2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation!*

*NKJV*

- (i) Those Jews who resist the gospel.

***16 I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star." 17 And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.***

- vii) Spirit and the bride say "come"

- (1) Holy spirit and church are beckoning to the lost world.
- (2) This “come” is suggested by some to be the same “come” in verse 20
  - (a) They say this is the calling of church to Christ.
  - (b) However, this is not a summons for Jesus, but to those who are thirsty for the water of life.

***18 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.***

***20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!***  
***NKJV***

viii) Final curse

- (1) Adding to the book
  - (a) Some use this to prove that the canon of Scripture is closed.
  - (b) However, “this book” is probably not referring to the whole Bible, but Revelation itself.
    - (i) Adding plagues of “this book”
    - (ii) NT wasn’t assembled for good while after this writing.
    - (iii) Same expression is used in Proverbs:

*Prov 30:5-6*

*5 Every word of God is pure;*

*He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.*

*6 Do not add to His words,*

*Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.*

*NKJV*

1. Many books added since Solomon’s time.
    - a. All books of prophets
    - b. New Testament
  - (c) Probably just means don’t change the words of the book, take them as they are.
    - (i) Don’t adjust them to make them more palatable.
  - (d) Some say this means that we need to take everything literally or else we “taking away” from the words of the book.
    - (i) But even they take some things non-literal.
- (2) Name taken away from the book of life
    - (a) Taken at face value would suggest that their names are in it and are removed if they tamper with the book.
    - (b) Contrast this with overcomers who will not have their name removed earlier (ch 3:5)
  - (3) Should not be understood to mean that we shouldn’t try our best to interpret.
    - (a) Even if we’re wrong, we gave it an honest attempt.
    - (b) We do need to take the book seriously.
      - (i) Must do all in our power to interpret the way it was intended.