Revelation Notes

Verse by Verse

Windell Gann

e-Sword Notes on Revelation

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Introduction

***Author*:** We understand the Apostle John to be the author of the last book in the New Testament (Rev_1:1, Rev_1:4, Rev_1:9; Rev_21:2; Rev_22:8). He is *"a brother, and a companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ" (*Rev_1:9*).*

Evidence from within the book indicate that it was written by the same author as that of the Gospel and Epistles which bear John's name. From the nature of the book no other John can measure up to what is demanded by the essence of the book.

***Date*:** The book of Revelation is unique in that the date of its composition affects the interpretation placed upon its message. There are two general views, called "The Late Date" (c. AD 96) and "The Early Date" (c. AD 64-68).

Some think the book was written about AD 96 during the reign of Domitian (AD 81-96) and that he had banished John to Patmos. The tradition for this however is unreliable and there is no internal support. Those who take the Late Date hold to various views of its interpretation.

For those who understand the book is dealing with the destruction of the Temple, Jerusalem, and Judaism, a date before AD 70 is essential, and therefore a date from the time of about AD 65-68 seems valid.

Reasons for Holding to the Early Date:

1. The parallel between passages in the Gospels and in Revelation that deal with the destruction of Jerusalem would call for a date for the book before AD 70.

2. Allusions to other apostles still alive besides John.

3. The state of Israel and the temple still existed.

4. The fact of Jewish persecution of Christians in foreign cities.

5. In the most ancient version or translation made of the Bible into another language (The Syriac version in the second century) the superinscription says the letter was written by the Apostle John during the reign of Nero.

6. John expected to leave Patmos (in ch.1) and go and preach among the churches to whom he addressed this letter. That could be expected of a man who was 60 years old, but it could hardly be expected of a man who was 96 years old.

7. John says that the visions occurred in the reign of the sixth Roman Emperor. That within itself nails down the date without any doubt. The six emperors were: Julius, August, Tiberius, Caliguia, Claudius, and Nero. Nero reigned from AD 54 to 68. (Rev_17:10)

Overview: There are four important things to remember: --

1. It is a **revelation**, that is, "an uncovering, or unveiling." People who think that the book cannot be understood need to look at its title, it is **not** 'a concealment' or 'a hiding' but an uncovering and an unveiling. It is a book about something that is being made known.

2. It is addressed to the **seven churches of Asia**. (Rev_1:11) We need to realize that first and foremost it was a message for them and it had significance for them.

3. It is a revelation in **signs**. The things revealed were "signified" (Rev_1:1), thus these things are not "literal" but revealed in symbolic language. (We should not expect the *devil* to look like a real dragon.) The signs and symbols are drawn primarily from the Old Testament.

4. The **revelation** concerns "*things which must shortly come to pass"* (Rev_1:1); and the things it talks about *"were at hand"* (Rev_1:3). The time element is emphasized at the beginning of the book, and lest the reader has forgotten during the course of the book, it is emphasized again at the end of the book, as well as several reminders along the way, i.e. 6:10 "a little season," or "a little while." (Rev_1:1; Rev_1:3; Rev_22:6; Rev_22:10).

Any interpretation of Revelation that ignores these vital points is a wrong interpretation.

What *Revelation* Is About:

Revelation is NOT primarily about the "last days" before Christ's second coming, but about the ***"last days"*** of Judaism, and the fall of the nation and the destruction of their capital city Jerusalem, the temple, and the Jewish hierarchical system.

It is a parallel to the subject the Lord dealt with in Matthew 23, Mark 13, and Luke 21. It concerns the vengeance and judgment of God upon the Jewish nations for their rejection of the Son of God and their persecution of Him and the church (Luk_11:47-51; Luk_21:20-22; Rev_18:20-24).

The Message From the Book:

1. It is a message to the saints concerning the tribulation they were suffering. It helped them to understand what the outcome of such suffering was going to be. It helped them to pinpoint the source, the cause, and the eventual outcome of the persecution being inflicted upon the saints.

2. It was particularly a message to the seven churches of Asia to remain steadfast in the faith and to a warning to them to correct the deficiencies in their faith.

3. It was a warning to those saints who needed to repent and get right with God.

4. It was a message that those afflicting the saints would have to face the judgment and wrath of God for their evil deeds.

5. It was a message of hope and comfort to the saints indicating that God had not forgotten them and that the ultimate victory would be theirs.

6. The message of God's judgment upon Judaism stands as a reminder (and a 'type') of the final great judgment upon every individual at the second coming of Christ (2Co_5:10; 1Th_4:13-18.).

The "Coming" of the Lord:

1. Revelation is speaking about the Lord coming soon in a judgment upon the persecutors of His people as vengeance is meted out. (Rev_6:9-10; Rev_18:20-24; Rev_22:20).

a. This was a *coming in judgment* like the judgment upon the world at the time of Noah; and like His judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrah, and His judgment upon Jerusalem in the time of

Nebuchadnezzar.

b. It was a time of vengeance for how the unfaithful Jews had treated the prophets and apostles God sent to them (Mat_23:34-36; Luk_18:7-8; Luk_11:47-51; Rev_18:20-24).

2. We are waiting His visible return when he comes in a final judgment upon all the world (2Co_5:10).

a. This will be the time of the resurrection of the bodies of those who have died (1Th_4:13-18).

b. It will be the rewarding of the saints (Joh_14:1-3) and the ushering in of eternity with God or separation from Him (Mat_25:41-46).

See the note at the end of **Rev_22:21** for a list of resource abbreviations used.

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e-Sword Revelation Study Notes - Windell Gann

Verse Comments:

Rev_1:1 KEY VERSE ***

The Author is the Apostle John: Date: about 66- 68 AD

Revelation .. an unveiling, uncovering, revealing "of Jesus" 1) from Jesus; 2) about Jesus (xxx)

See a study of the word "***shortly***" Rev_1:1, Rev_1:3; Rev_22:6, Rev_22:10 (ἐν τάχει list: **Luk_18:8; Act_12:7; Act_22:18; Act_25:4; Rom_16:20; Rev_1:1; Rev_2:5; Rev_22:6;)**

Four things to remember about Revelation:
1. It is a Revelation (unveiling, intended to be understood)
2. It is a Revelation to the Seven Churches of Asia .Rev_1:4, Rev_1:11
3. It is a Revelation in Signs (Rev_1:1)
4. It is a Revelation about things that must shortly come to pass Rev_1:1; Rev_1:3; Rev_22:6; Rev_22:10

404 verses in Rev; and 278 of them refer to OT; We need to understand OT to understand Rev.

The revelation of Jesus Christ . . Rev_1:1 It was made known by Jesus Christ, that is, it was not concerning Christ himself. The language does not refer to the person of Christ, as the subject of the vision, but to the One by whom it was communicated to John--by Jesus Christ "the faithful witness," through the agency of his angel. - Foy Wallace

Things which must shortly come to pass . . Rev_1:1. Reference to things indicated a definite form of events then shaping, and the word must is not a speculative or conjectural term; it was factual, and the word shortly denoted immediacy. These events applied to them, not to centuries after their time, and even yet to come. The object of the entire revelation was to inform and forewarn, to comfort and encourage the church in the time of this vision --the apostolic age, the period of the churches addressed. - Wallace

He sent . . "He" may be either "God" as in Rev_22:6, or "Jesus Christ," as ibid. Rev_1:16. It seems best to take it of the latter: the sense will be, "He, having received the Revelation from the Father, sent by His angel, and indicated it to His servant John." The angel is the same who is mentioned in Rev_17:1, &c., Rev_19:9, Rev_21:9, Rev_22:6, Rev_22:8, Rev_22:16. - CBSC

signified . . The term "signify" comes from the word "sign" and indicates that the things to be revealed to John would be presented through signs and symbols. This word is used in the same sense by John in the following passages: Joh_1:1 Joh_1:1-19. It is an appropriate word to express a revelation which was to be made largely through symbols. The symbolic nature of much of the book is evident from even a casual reading of it. - Zerr

by His angel . . The word "angel" means "messenger". Which "angel" this is, is not specified here. See Rev_22:16. An angel that Jesus sent to testify, witness, these things to the churches.

to His servant John . . The phraseology and construction of the Book too closely resembles the Gospel of John to believer it is any one else but the Apostle John who also wrote the Gospel.

:Rev_1:2
Rev_1:2

This verse tells us who the author is -- Joh_21:24 - the Apostle John

bare .. Rev_1:9, Rev_6:9, Rev_12:17; Joh_1:32, Joh_12:17, Joh_19:35, Joh_21:24; 1Jo_5:7-11; 3Jo_1:12
The "witness" John is said to bear is that contained in this Book—not, as some have imagined, in his Gospel. - CBSC

who bare record .. John is meant, who made the record of all he saw and heard. - PNT

and of all things he saw .. Rev_1:19; Joh_3:11; Act_4:20, Act_22:15, Act_26:16; 1Jo_1:1, 1Jo_4:14

16 ***The Book of Revelation Made Easy***
The Churches Instructed
As John opens his letter to these seven churches, he emphatically declares that he intends them to understand him. Indeed, the opening verse (a portion of which becomes the title by which we know the book) reads: The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants … and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John." (Rev_1:1)
He expressly states that he intends to "reveal," "to show," to "communicate" something to them—not to hide information from them. When two verses later he directs them to hear with understanding so that they might keep the obligations found in his book:
Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it (Rev. 1:3a). They are to "hear" and to "heed," which obviously require that they understand. Thus, John writes to original 1st century churches who are suffering, in order to give them directives they must understand and act upon. As we will see, this becomes a crucial piece of evidence toward grasping John's expectation.

the testimony of Jesus Christ .. Like v. 1, this can be either an OBJECTIVE, the testimony about Jesus, or SUBJECTIVE GENITIVE, the testimony given by Jesus. - Utley

:Rev_1:3
Rev_1:3

Blessed is .. The first of seven beatitudes in Revelation (Rev_14:13; Rev_16:15; Rev_19:9; Rev_20:6; Rev_22:7, Rev_22:14), reminiscent of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Mat_5:3-11). - FSB

he who reads" The NRSV adds "aloud," implying a public reading (cf. 1Ti_4:13). Congregational reading of the Scripture was done originally by specially trained members of the Church as in the synagogue (cantor). The Church took over the worship forms of the early synagogue (cf. Luk_4:16; Act_13:15; Col_4:16; 1Th_5:27). We have a historical confirmation of the public reading of Scripture from Justin Martyr, a.d. 167, who mentioned that the Church read a portion from the Gospels and a portion from the prophets. - Utley

hear .. in accusative meaning to "understand"

listen … and obey .. Authentic hearing entails obedience - NLTSB

In the early church **one** would read **aloud** while others listened. Revelation's message and its blessing can be received even by hearing it read, but only if that hearing is accompanied by obeying as well. - ESVSB

the words of this prophecy . . Rev_1:3**.** These words were prophetic in the sense of being visional. In this use of the word prophecy, it was apocalyptic only of things already beginning to occur. It was not the foretelling of far future events not connected with the experiences of his servants to whom and for whom the apocalypse was delivered. - Wallace

because .. Introduces the reason that virtuous readers are blessed: God's revealed purposes will soon be fulfilled (cf. Rev_1:1; Rev_22:10). - NIVZSB

time is near .. The **revelation** concerns "*things which must shortly come to pass"* (Rev_1:1); and the things it talks about *"were at hand"* (Rev_1:3). The time element is emphasized at the beginning of the book, and lest the reader has forgotten during the course of the book, it is emphasized again at the end of the book, as well as several reminders along the way, i.e. 6:10 "a little season," or "a little while." (Rev_1:1; Rev_1:3; Rev_22:6; Rev_22:10). (cf. Rev_3:11; Rev_6:10)

Any interpretation of Revelation that ignores these vital points is a wrong interpretation.

time..at hand .. Rome was destroyed AD 476, How could Revelation be about a judgment on Rome if the time was at hand? On the other hand, Jerusalem was destroyed in AD 70, and when this was written the *"time was at hand."*

the time is at hand .. The period to which the prophecy relates is near. - PNT

for the time is at hand . . Rev_1:3**.** There can be no reason to assign any other meaning to this phrase at hand than that which it had in the announcement of John the Baptist that the kingdom of heaven was at hand (**Mat_3:2**), or of Jesus that the kingdom of God was at hand (**Mar_1:14-15**). The language and the context of it can mean only one thing--that these events were imminent. The sole reason for the admonition to read and hear and keep the things signified is stated in the clause of this verse: for the time is at hand. If the things written therein pertained to the remote future rather than to the immediate future, there was no application for such a warning. - Wallace

The concept of time is very fluid in this book for several reasons: (1) there are two different Greek words that express time—chronos, the passing of time (cf. Rev_10:6) and kairos, a special time, season, or event (cf. Rev_1:3; Rev_11:18; Rev_12:12, Rev_12:14); (2) there are several idioms used: "the things which must shortly take place" (cf. Rev_1:1; Rev_22:6); "the time is near" (cf. Rev_1:3; Rev_3:11; Rev_22:10); "I am coming quickly" (cf. Rev_2:5, Rev_2:16; Rev_22:7, Rev_22:12, Rev_22:20); "I will come like a thief" (cf. Rev_3:3; Rev_16:15). All of these speak of immediacy. However, some passages speak of a delay (cf.

Rev_6:11; Rev_10:6; Rev_14:13). Another idiom is that the day of judgment and rewards has arrived, "it is done" (cf. Rev_16:17; Rev_21:6) or "the time has come" (cf. Rev_11:18; Rev_20:12). - Utley

[In the warning to the church at Pergamum, Rev_2:16, Jesus said he would come soon if that church did not repent. cf. Rev_3:11]

Rev_1:4
Rev_1:4

The phrase "***from him who is, who was, and who is to come***" is the Greek correspondent to YHWH, or the "I AM" of the Hebrew O.T. cf. Rev_1:8,

seven churches in Asia .. While these seven churches were not the only ones in Asia 9 [Miletus Act_20:17; Colossae; Hierapolis Col_4:13; Troas] (a western region of modern-day Turkey), they were influential and located on a well-known circular route. The number seven often denotes fullness or completion in the Old Testament (e.g., Gen_2:2; Lev_26:18; Jos_6:4). John uses the number in this way throughout Revelation—most notably in the judgment sequences (seven bowls, seven trumpets). The seven churches would have been understood as representing all the churches of Asia - FSB

> **to the seven churches ..** Exactly why only seven churches were listed is uncertain. There are several theories: (1) some have asserted that these were the churches that John had a special ministering relationship with; (2) others have asserted that they form a postal route in the Roman Province of Asia; and (3) the number seven had great significance to the Jews, especially in inter-biblical apocalyptic literature. It was the number of perfection from its use of the days in Genesis 1. Therefore, it was probably used in both a literal sense—John did write to several churches which formed a Roman postal route in Asia Minor and symbolically as a way of referring to all churches of all days. - Utley

in Asia .. This refers to the western end of the modern country of Turkey, which was, in large part, the old country of Phrygia, which became the Roman province of "Asia Minor." - Utley

> **in Asia ..** The proconsular province of that name. In Acts 16:6 "Asia" seems to be used in a still narrower sense, being distinguished from the adjoining districts of Phrygia and Mysia, as well as from the provinces of Galatia and Bithynia; so that it would correspond approximately with the ancient kingdom of Lydia. But as Pergamum was in Mysia, and Laodicea in Phrygia, it seems that here the word is used to include the whole province. - CBSC

Grace and peace .. Standard Christian blessing (cf. Rom_1:7), here rooted in the triune God - NIVZSB

> Notice the Trinitarian formula of v. 4 (if the seven Spirits represent the Holy Spirit). The term "trinity" is not a biblical word, but the concept of the one God but three divine Persons active in redemption certainly is (cf. Mat_3:16-17; Mat_28:19; Act_2:33-34; Rom_8:7-10; 1Co_12:4-6; 2Co_1:21-22; Rev_13:14; Eph_1:3-14; Eph_2:18; Eph_4:4-6; Tit_3:4-6; 1Pe_1:2). - Utley

who is, who always was, and who is still to come .. God controlled the past, will surely control the future, and is sovereign over every present crisis (see also Rev_1:8; Rev_4:8; Rev_11:17; Rev_16:5) - NLTSB

> **from Him who is and who was and who is to come ..** This is obviously a title for the unchanging

Covenant God (cf. Psa_102:7; Mal_3:6; Jas_1:17). Its grammatical form is awkward in Greek but may reflect an Aramaic background. The literal phrase is "from the One who is, from the One who was, and the One coming" (cf. Rev_4:8). This phrase reflects the OT covenant title "I Am" (YHWH, cf. Exo_3:14). This phrase is used for God the Father in Rev_1:4 and Rev_1:8, and of Jesus Christ in Rev_1:17-18 (cf. Heb_13:8). The purposeful transfer of titles from YHWH to Jesus was one way the NT authors asserted the Deity of Jesus. - Utley

seven Spirits .. 1) A view of the ***fullness*** of the one Holy Spirit.
2) "In the light of the content of the book this must refer to the seven angels who blow the seven trumpets, 'the seven angels who stand before God' (Rev_3:1; Rev_4:5; Rev_5:6)"

seven spirits .. Possibly alludes to the sevenfold spirit of God in Isa_11:2. The number seven indicates the fullness of the Holy Spirit's work (compare Rev_3:1; Rev_4:5; Rev_5:6). - FSB

the seven Spirits. There are two possible meanings: **1)** a reference to Isaiah's prophecy concerning the 7-fold ministry of the Holy Spirit (Isa_11:2); or **2)** more likely, it is a reference to the lampstand with 7 lamps (a menorah) in Zechariah—also a description of the Holy Spirit (*See note on* Rev_4:5*;* Rev_5:6*;* Zec_4:1-10). In either case, 7 is the number of completeness, so John is identifying the fullness of the Holy Spirit. - MSB

Rev_1:5
Rev_1:5

faithful witness .. Refers to Jesus, who testified faithfully unto death (compare Joh_1:18; Joh_18:37; 1Ti_6:13). - FSB

This is the first of three phrases which describe Jesus the Messiah. These opening verses are paralleled in Rev_20:6-21. It had an OT connotation of one who is loyal, true and dependable. - Utley

the faithful witness .. See 1Ti_6:13: Jesus Christ was in His Death much more than a martyr, but He was also the perfect type and example of martyrdom. Observe His own words in Joh_18:37—to which perhaps St Paul l.c. is referring. Here as in the next clause, see below, the *language* recalls Psa_89:37, perhaps too Isa_55:4. - CBSC

"***first begotten"*** ..The preeminence of the firstborn one. He was not the first resurrected from the dead, what about Lazarus (?), he was the "firstborn" one, that is, the preeminent one so raised.

Of all who have been or will be raised from the dead [permanently], He is the preeminent one, the only one who is the rightful heir (cf. Rev_3:14; Psa_89:27; Col_1:15). - MSB

firstborn … ruler .. Jesus' resurrection establishes him as the exalted Davidic king (Psa_89:27; cf. Psa_2:6-9) and anticipates believers' future resurrection (cf. 1Co_15:20; Col_1:18). Jesus—not Caesar—is the supreme ruler, worthy of worship and total allegiance (Rev_11:15; Rev_12:10; Rev_17:14; Rev_19:6). - NIVZSB

ruler of all the kings of the world .. (see also Rev_17:14; Rev_19:16), he is the absolute Lord of everything. Inhabitants of the Roman world were expected to declare Caesar as absolute lord; many early Christians died for their conviction that Jesus alone holds that position. NLTSB

ruler .. Reminiscent of Dan_2:47 (see Rev_17:14; Rev_19:16).

washed .. cf. Act_22:16, in our obedience to baptism (Mat_28:19; Rom_6:3-4; Rom_6:18) in having our sins "washed away" the *cleansing, freeing, loosing*, is done by the "blood of Christ" and not by the water.

washed us .. Rather, as in the Revision, "loosed us." This was done by the shedding of his blood. - PNT

and released us from our sins .. The King James Version has the verb "washed" (*louō*) which was pronounced

exactly like the word "released" (*luō*). - Utley

in His own blood .. This is an obvious allusion to the sacrificial (cf. Lev. 1–7), vicarious atonement of Jesus Christ (cf. Rev_5:9; Rev_7:14; Rev_12:11; 2Co_5:21; Isa. 52:13–53:12).

÷Rev_1:6
Rev_1:6

made us kings and priests .. More accurately, "a kingdom and priests." All who believe live in the sphere of God's rule, a kingdom entered by faith in Jesus Christ. And as priests, believers have the right to enter God's presence. - MSB

kings and priests .. Read, **a kingdom, priests**: a phrase synonymous with the "royal priesthood" of 1Pe_2:9. That is an exact quotation from the LXX. version of Exo_19:6 - CBSC

kingdom, priests .. In Christ, God has done for the Church what He had earlier done for Israel (compare Rev_5:10; 1Pe_2:9; Exo_19:5-6). - FSB (Exo_1:1; rev 20:6; Isa_61:6;)

kingdom and priests. Describes the church's vocation in light of Israel's calling to be a "kingdom of priests" (Exo_19:6; cf. Rev_5:10; Rev_20:6; Isa_61:6; 1Pe_2:9). - NIVZSB

He made us **to be a kingdom; to be priests unto his God.** His disciples are constituted a kingdom; a kingdom in which each one is a priest. No disciple needeth a priest to offer incense or sacrifice for him, for he can go directly to the Father through Jesus Christ. See notes on 1Pe_2:9. Christians are called priests, but are never called kings in a correct translation of the New Testament. - PNT

And hath made us kings and priests"-- Rev_1:6. The God unto whom all members of the church are priests is here affirmed to be his Father, thus ascribing deity to Jesus Christ. The offices of royalty and priesthood are united in the members of the churches, as typified in **Exo_19:6**, and finds its spiritual fulfillment in **1Pe_2:9**. The allusions to the "kingdom of priests," in the Exodus passage, was to emphasize that Christ has made us new kings and priests in contrast with what once was but is no more. The church is the kingdom of Christ, and all the members are priests unto God--hence, the church is a kingdom of priests. The Syriac New Testament reads: "And hath made us a priestly kingdom." - Wallace

to Him be the glory and the dominion . . The term "***glory***" is an OT commercial term that meant "to be heavy"; that which was heavy (i.e. gold) was valuable. The term came to be used of God's brightness, majesty, holiness, etc. Glory was often ascribed to God the Father in the NT (cf. Rom_11:36; Rom_16:27; Eph_3:21; Php_4:20; 1Ti_1:17; 2Ti_4:18; 1Pe_4:11; 1Pe_5:11; 2Pe_3:18; Jud_1:25; Rev_1:6; Rev_5:13; Rev_7:12).

The term "***dominion***" addressed to God the Father, is similar theologically to the subordination of the Son (cf. John 17). Jesus is the Father's agent in all things, but the goal is the ultimate glorification of the Father (cf. 1Co_15:27-28).. - Utley

Amen .. The Greek word used here, meaning "let it be so," served to strongly affirm something just stated. It expressed an indication of trust in God's ability to bring about a desired result. - FSB

Its original etymology was "to be firm or sure." However, the connotation changed to that which is to be affirmed (cf. 2Co_1:20). It was used metaphorically of someone who was faithful, loyal, steadfast, trustworthy. - Utley

÷Rev_1:7

Rev_1:7

[Only the Apostle John supplied information bilingually in the New Testament (cf. Joh_1:1 Joh_1:42; Joh_4:25; Joh_6:1; Joh_9:7; Joh_11:16; Joh_19:13, Joh_19:17, Joh_19:20; Joh_20:16; Rev_1:7; Rev_3:14; Rev_9:11; Rev_12:9).]

clouds .. Are these: 1) bright clouds of glory; or 2) dark thundering clouds of judgment. The context seems to favor #2.

Christ ***coming in the clouds*** -- "judgment" at the destruction of Jerusalem. See Isa_19:1 Mar_13:26; Mat_24:29-30 Joe_2:2; Zep_1:15

he is coming with the clouds .. John applies the imagery of the son of man from Dan_7:13-14 to Jesus. Cloud imagery also recalls the manner in which Jesus left the earth (Act_1:9). - FSB

...recalls Jesus' teaching (Mat_16:27; Mat_24:30; Mar_14:62) - NIVZSB

Behold he cometh with the clouds"-- Rev_1:7. The reference here is not to the second advent, or return of Christ, but to the coming events about to be delineated, as in the Lord's reply to Caiaphas, the high priest in **Mat_26:64** : "*Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."* This high priest would live to see the event here foretold, the fulfillment of which occurred in the figurative coming of Christ in the destruction of Jerusalem, as previously foretold in **Mat_24:1-51**, and centuries before by the prophet Zechariah in chapter 14. The prophet referred to the destruction of Jerusalem as "***the day of the Lord,***" and in **Mat_24:1-51** Jesus designated it as his coming. And Jesus told Caiaphas that he would live to witness it. The words behold he cometh are an announcement of warning, a call to expectancy, an alert to the impending developments.

The added expression "***with the clouds"*** is not to be literally taken for a material display of his bodily presence. In the description of God's judgment on Egypt, in **Isa_19:6**, the prophet said: *"Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt.*" Also, in **Eze_38:16**, the prophet said that the latter days God would come up against Israel "*as a cloud to cover the land."* And in **Mat_24:30**, Jesus describes the events in the destruction of Jerusalem as *"the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."* This is precisely what Jesus told Pilate that he should see, and it is the meaning of **Rev_1:7**, pointing to the destruction of Jerusalem. - Wallace

every eye will see him .. They (the scattered tribes of Jews) will know (see) this is His judgment (the destruction of their nation, their holy city and temple) because they have pierce (rejected, crucified) the Messiah. (Mat_21:43-46; Mat_22:7; Matt 23:35-36;

every one who pierced him .. An allusion to Zec_12:10.

These prophecies find initial fulfillment in Jesus' crucifixion (Joh_19:34, Joh_19:37) - NIVZSB

they who pierced. Not a reference to the 4 Roman soldiers usually involved in crucifixion, but to the Jews who were actually responsible for Christ's death (Act_2:22-23; Act_3:14-15). Zechariah identified the ones who pierced Him as "the house of David" and "the inhabitants of Jerusalem" and prophesied that they will weep tears of genuine repentance because of what they did to their Messiah (Zec_12:10). - MSB

all kindreds of the earth .. Better, **all the tribes**—the reference is still to Zec_12:10; through the medium of Mat_24:30.

Thus we see that the fact that the profitable and the unprofitable "mourning" (or "wailing"—the Greek word is the same in St Matthew as here) are foretold in the same terms, in solemnly suggestive contrast with each other, is due not to the Apostle but to his Master: it is He that tells us that all tribes of the earth *must* mourn, either now for the woe our sins caused Him, or then for the woe they will cause us. - CBSC

all peoples on earth "will mourn .. Refers either to sorrowful repentance from sins (Zec_12:10) or lamentation over divine judgment (cf. Rev_1:1). - NIVXSB
` **wail ..** Most scholars think the wailing is a reaction to judgment instead of the kind of grief that leads to salvation. - ESVSB

÷Rev_1:8
Rev_1:8

> **v. 8 ..** YHWH Himself speaks this verse, affirming the truth of the previous statements about Jesus. It combines four titles for Him with an allusion to a fifth and possibly a sixth. Apparently, v. 8 was God adding His personal affirmation to the above statement by the use of these magnificent names: - Utley

I am .. "A weighing of evidence, especially in light of the OT 'flavor' of the expression and a recollection that the Father in the OT refers to Himself as 'I am' (i.e., the Tetragrammaton, Exo_3:14; cf. Isa_48:12), tips the balance ever so slightly to the side of concluding that God the Father speaks in v. 8. - Constable

I am .. "I Am," which is an allusion to the Covenant name YHWH (cf. Exo_3:14), a CAUSATIVE form of the verb "to be." Jesus used this of Himself (cf. Joh_8:56-59). - Utley

Alpha and Omega .. God confirmed the preceding forecast with a solemn affirmation of His eternity and omnipotence. ***Alpha*** and ***omega*** are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet and signify here God's comprehensive control over all things including time. John strengthened this point further with present, past, and future references (cf. Rev_4:8; Rev_11:17; Heb_13:8). He is the originator and terminator of all things. God is not only Lord of the future. He is also powerful enough to bring what John just predicted to pass. He is the "Almighty." - Constable

Alpha and the Omega. These are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. An alphabet is an ingenious way to store and communicate knowledge. The 26 letters in the English alphabet, arranged in almost endless combinations, can hold and convey all knowledge. Christ is the supreme, sovereign alphabet; there is nothing outside His knowledge, so as there are no unknown factors that can sabotage His second coming. (cf. Col_2:3). - MSB

the Lord .. The title "Lord" (*kurios*) in the NT reflects this OT title [YHWH, Exo_3:14; used also of Jesus of Himself] Joh_8:56-59; - Utley

which is, .. was .. is to come .. "The One who is the One who was, the One coming" is the phrase used earlier in Rev_1:4 which speaks of the unchanging, ever-living God (cf. Psa_102:27; Mal_3:6; Jas_1:17). This phrase is used of God the Father, YHWH, in vv. 4 and 8 and of Jesus, God the Son, in Rev_1:17 and Rev_1:18 (cf. Heb_13:8); - Utley

the Almighty."Almighty God" occurs 8 [other] times in Revelation, underscoring that God's power is supreme over all the cataclysmic events it records (see also Rev_4:8; Rev_11:17; Rev_15:3; Rev_16:7, Rev_16:14; Rev_19:15; Rev_21:22). He exercises sovereign control over every person, object, and event, and not one molecule in the universe is outside that dominion. - MSB

the Almighty. The Greek word for "Almighty" is *pantokratōr*, "the all-powerful One." It is used 10 times in the New Testament, 9 of them in Revelation (2Co_6:18; Rev_1:8; Rev_4:8; Rev_11:17; Rev_15:3; Rev_16:7, Rev_16:14; Rev_19:6, Rev_19:15; Rev_21:22). The major revelation of the entire book is referred to in these salutation verses. - BKC

the Almighty .. "Almighty is a key name for God in Revelation (Rev. 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:6, 15; 21:22). - Wiersby

÷Rev_1:9
Rev_1:9

> **1:9–20** John describes here the circumstances of his receiving the revelation, drawing on imagery from the book of Daniel to describe the glorified Christ. John then receives the commission to write to the seven churches. - FSB

your brother .. A common term of endearment among first-century believers, highlighting their equality in Christ. The common barriers of status, gender, and rank were done away with in the early church, and a sense of familial obligation predominated. - FSB

companion .. co-sharer, Persecution is a persistent theme of Revelation. John identifies with those undergoing persecution because he likewise endures hardship for the cause of Christ. - FSB

the affliction and kingdom .. The language suggests that the believers to whom John is writing are suffering persecution (or **tribulation**) and that the **kingdom** is, through the power of the Spirit's work in their lives and the world, already present with the Church. - FSB

"THE tribulation" -- the definite article is present in the Greek. Mat_24:21-29 It thus refers to John's and the church's present **tribulation**, and not to something in the distant future. The term was used by Jesus to refer to the hardships that would accompany the fall of Jerusalem and the temple Mat_24:21-29. The definite article "the" specifies and limits what "the tribulation" was of which John speaks. Mar_13:9; Luk_19:43-44, Luk_21:24; 1Th_2:16; Heb_10:26-29 - WG

your brother, and companion in tribulation . . Rev_1:9. The common ground of fellowship between John and the members of the Asian churches was not his apostleship. It was the brotherhood relation and the mutual participation in the sufferings existing and anticipated. He was speaking not of the incident of his presence on Patmos, or of imprisonment there, but rather to the threat of the gathering and darkening clouds of persecution, such as mentioned in the letters to Smyrna, Thyatira and Philadelphia; particularly as related to its then present and incipient stage; and as in **Heb_10:31-39**, the portent of the things to come. - Wallace

patience .. patience endurance .. Entails waiting on the Lord and overcoming evil amid suffering (cf. 13:10; 14:12). - NIVZSB

Patmos-- There for preaching the word of God, and for the testimony of the Lord Jesus. Nothing said about being a prisoner, or in exile. That is tradition.

Patmos: Patmos is an arid island approximately 24 square miles (62 sq. km) in area and roughly 40 miles (64 km) from the mainland of Asia Minor.

> Since antiquity, it has possessed a working protected harbor near its center (modern Skala) and other places for small boats to anchor. Inscriptions and archaeological remains indicate the existence of a fortress before John's arrival, and the clear presence of the Artemis cult afterward. The limited population of the island during John's day was probably largely pagan. Assuming (with church tradition) that John had been officially banished to Patmos, he may have been granted some freedom of movement on the island (even if, as claimed in later tradition, he lived in a cave) and may not actually have been in a prison, though he would have been barred from leaving Patmos. - ESVSB

on the island called Patmos .. The Romans used these small islands off the coast of Asia Minor for political prisoners (cf. Tacitus' *Annals*, 3:68; 4:30; 15:71). Apparently John was exiled to this small island, 37 miles from Miletus. The island was crescent shaped, facing east, ten miles long and six miles wide. - Utley

> **Patmos . .** Tradition claims that John was banished by the Roman government and exiled on Patmos. There

is no conclusive scriptural evidence nor verified factual history to sustain this traditional claim, and it stands somewhat on the same basis as the Petrine tradition that the apostle Peter once resided in Rome. It is not said in the text, nor necessarily implied in the contents of Revelation, that John was a prisoner on Patmos. If John was a prisoner on Patmos, as Paul was a prisoner in Rome, it is singularly strange, if not unaccountable, that no mention was made of it, and no reference was made to it, by himself or in any other New Testament epistle. - Wallace

for the word of God, and testimony .. [***for preaching … and for my testimony: NLT]*** **..** In typical Semitic parallelism, the second statement means essentially the same as the first. By John's time, Jews were persuading Roman authorities that Christianity was different from Judaism and therefore not an authorized religion. - NLTSB

because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus .. There are three possible interpretations of this phrase. It can refer (1) to John's preaching the gospel; (2) to John's receiving the revelation; or (3) to John's political banishment, which is the most likely. We have several historical references to John's political banishment: (1) Tertullian, *On the Prescription of Heretics*, 36; (2) Origen, *Homilies on Matthew*; (3) Clement of Alexandria, *The Rich Man's Salvation*, 47; (4) Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, III:20:8–9; and (4) Jerome, *Concerning Illustrious Men*, 9. - Utley

For the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ . . **Rev_1:9** The English preposition for in this passage is *dia*, which Professor Terry states that, by its established usage with the accusative, means for the sake of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. It gives the ground or the reason for John's presence on Patmos: that the reason for being there was no other than to receive the revelation, that is, for the vision itself--for "***the testimony of Jesus Christ"*** and "***of all things that he saw,***" and not because of banishment and exile.

The coupling of the testimony with the vision in verse 2, supports the view that he was there to receive the things that he saw, and that these things were themselves the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, for which he was there.

A further evidence of this concept in John's own statement, in Rev_10:11, of his intention to leave Patmos for an active itinerary among the people of many nations, to carry to them in personal evangelism the testimony of this apocalypse. If John had been prisoner in exile, no such liberty existed on which to base such an announcement, for he was imprisoned on Patmos, and his status would have been no different from Paul's imprisonment in Rome. - Wallace

:Rev_1:10

Rev_1:10

in the Sprit -- inspired, 2Pe_1:21; 1Co_12:3 Eze_2:2 Eze_3:12 Eze_37:1; Mat_22:43

in the Spirit .. Probably describes a visionary state (compare Act_10:10; 2Co_12:2-4). John's visions are framed by his four experiences in the Spirit (Rev_1:10; Rev_4:2; Rev_17:3; Rev_21:10). - FSB

in the Spirit .. This was not a dream. John was supernaturally transported out of the material world awake—not sleeping—to an experience beyond the normal senses. The Holy Spirit empowered his senses to perceive revelation from God (cf. Act_10:11). - MSB

In the Spirit .. could also be rendered "in [my] spirit" (cf. Rev_4:2; Rev_17:3; Rev_21:10). That is, he was projected forward in his inner self in a vision, not bodily, to that future day of the Lord when God will pour out His judgments on the earth. - BKC

I was in the Spirit .. This is a special phrase that marks off the different visions that John received (cf Rev_1:10; Rev_4:2; Rev_17:3; Rev_21:10). It seems to refer to a trance-like state in which a revelation was given (cf. Act_10:10; Act_22:17; 2Co_12:1 ff). This is characteristic of Jewish apocalyptic literature. - Utley

Lord's Day -- Sunday ? Usage in apostolic fathers.

Lord's Day .. Sunday, "the first day of the week" (Mat_28:1), the day Jesus rose. The majority of Christ's followers see this passage as evidence that already in the first century this day was set aside for worship and fellowship (Act_20:7; 1Co_16:2). - NIVZSB [Citations given however say "on the first day of the week" and not "the Lord's day." -WG]

-- or "Day of the Lord" Joe_2:1; Isa_2:12; Usage in the *New Testament:* 1Co_1:8 *;* 1Th_5:2*;* 2Th_2:2; Reference to a day of the Lord's judgment, or retribution.

the Lord's Day .. John's revelation occurred **on the Lord's Day** while he **was in the Spirit**. Some have indicated that "the Lord's Day" refers to the first day of the week. However, the word "Lord's" is an adjective and this expression is never used in the Bible to refer to the first day of the week. Probably John was referring to ***the day of the Lord,*** a familiar expression in both Testaments (cf. Isa_2:12; Isa_13:6, Isa_13:9; Isa_34:8; Joe_1:15; Joe_2:1, Joe_1:11, Joe_2:31; Joe_3:14; Amo_5:18, Amo_5:20; Zep_1:7-8, Zep_1:14; Zep_1:18; Zep_2:3; Zec_14:1; Mal_4:5; 1Th_5:2; 2Pe_3:10). - BKC

> The "**Lord's day"** probably refers to Sunday, but it could refer to the future day of the Lord spoken of frequently elsewhere in Scripture. ... The New Testament writers never called Sunday the Lord's day elsewhere in Scripture. - Constable

in the Spirit on the Lord's Day .. An indication that John was transported in the Spirit to "the day of the Lord" judgment which is unraveled, or revealed, in the book. (cf. Rev_4:2; Rev_17:3; Rev_21:10)- WG

loud voice .. Throughout Revelation, a loud sound or voice indicates the solemnity of what God is about to reveal. - MSB

loud voice .. [great sound] .. The voice of the glorified, exalted Christ. - FSB

> The ***loud voice like a trumpet blast*** was an announcement of the Lord's coming. - NLTSB

behind me .. John first heard the great voice and then turned to see, Rev_1:12.

as of a trumpet -- The voice was clear, loud, and sent warnings.

÷Rev_1:11

Rev_1:11

saying ... what thou seest .. -- John was about to see the mighty unfolding of God's judgment upon Jews (Jerusalem), which was to come shortly, for the time was at hand, A.D. 67-70. "The Revelation of Jesus Christ."

I am .. See notes on Rev_1:8. These words are the self disclosure of Deity.

write … what you see .. Like some OT prophets (Rev_1:19; Isa_30:8; Jer_36:2; Hab_2:2). - NIVZSB

write … and send .. God authorized John as a prophet and herald of his revelation (see Rev_22:8; Rev_22:10; cp. Isa_6:8-9; Jer_2:1-2; Eze_2:1-3; Eze_34:1-2). - NLTSB

in a book .. Or on a scroll. The Greek word refers to a scroll made of parchment formed from papyrus, a reed that grows plentifully along the Nile. - MSB

in a book .. This is the Greek term *biblion*. It was used in the sense of a booklet or scroll. It later became a technical term for a codex or book. John was commanded to write down his visions. - Utley

to the seven churches .. All seven churches were the recipients of this prophecy, and not just the "letter" section sent to them. cf. Rev_1:4. The book therefore must has had significance to them.

The cities where these churches met formed a wedge on the map pointing northwest. A messenger carrying John's revelation would have traveled north from Ephesus to Smyrna and on to Pergamum. He would then have turned southeast to reach Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. Note that all the Book of Revelation was to go to these churches, not just the special letter to each one contained in chapters 2 and 3. - Constable

÷Rev_1:12

Rev_1:12

I turned to see the voice .. John received the command to write and looked around to see who issued it. - FSB

saw the voice .. An idiomatic expression.

When John turned to see the person who spoke to him he saw a majestic figure clothed in a long robe standing among seven lampstands (cf. Ezek. 25:31–40; Zech. 4:2; Matt. 18:20). This person would have been a priest in Israel ministering in the tabernacle or temple. - Constable

seven gold lampstands .. Golden lampstands stood in the Holy Place of the tabernacle and the temple (Exo_25:31-37; 1Ki_7:49). Zechariah also had a vision of a golden lampstand (Zec_4:2). The significance of these lampstands is explained in Rev_1:20. - FSB

seven gold lampstands .. The lighted menorah was a symbol of God's presence among his people (Exo_27:21; Lev_24:1-4) and of his all-seeing eyes in the world (Zec_4:10). - NLTSB

lampstands .. These were portable gold lampstands that held small oil lamps. Each lampstand represented a church (Rev_1:20), from which the light of life shone. Throughout Scripture, 7 is the number of completeness, so these 7 lampstands are representative of all the churches. - MSB

I saw seven golden lampstands .. This does not refer to the Menorah (seven-stemmed candelabrum) which was in the Tabernacle (cf. Exo_25:31-40) nor to the lampstand of Zec_4:2. These separate, single lampstands were a symbolic way of referring to the seven churches (cf. Rev_1:20; Rev_2:1). - Utley

Apparently these were individual lampstands rather than one lampstand with seven lamps as was true of a similar piece of furniture in the tabernacle and the temple. - BKC

÷Rev_1:13

Rev_1:13

and in the midst of the candlesticks .. Christ is pictured in the midst of the churches; here we're not told whether he is standing or sitting, though in our minds we tend to see him here standing. - WG

and in the midst .. It is a beautiful thought that he who said "I will be with you always" is represented as moving in the midst of the church. - PNT

seven gold lampstands .. Golden lampstands stood in the Holy Place of the tabernacle and the temple (Exo_25:31-37; 1Ki_7:49). Zechariah also had a vision of a golden lampstand (Zec_4:2). The significance of these lampstands is explained in Rev_1:20. - FSB

one like unto a son of man .. Dan_7:13 Mat_20:18 This is the triumphant Christ, the King of Kings - Rev_1:5. An implication from Dan_7:13 of Deity in human form. - WG

like the Son of Man .. (or *like a son of man* .. See Dan_7:13): *Son of Man* is a title Jesus used for himself (see

Mat_8:20; Mat_9:6; Mat_16:13; Mar_2:28; Mar_9:9; Mar_14:41; Joh_1:51; Joh_3:13; Joh_5:27). - NLTSB

Son of Man .. According to the gospels, this is the title Christ used most often for Himself during His earthly ministry (81 times in the gospels). Taken from the heavenly vision in Dan_7:13, it is an implied claim to deity. - MSB

> **the [a] Son of Man ..** Notice the variety in capitalization [with different translations]. The reason is the ambiguity of the term. In the OT it was a descriptive phrase for a human being (cf. Psa_8:4; Eze_2:1). However, it also was used in Dan. 7:13 and possibly Eze_1:26 to refer to a human Messiah, whose Deity is assumed because (1) he appears before God; (2) he rides on the clouds of heaven; and (3) he is given the eternal kingdom. Jesus used this term to refer to Himself because it had no rabbinical usages, no nationalistic or militaristic connotations. It combined the human and divine aspects of Jesus' person. - Utley
>
> There is no DEFINITE ARTICLE in the Greek text (cf. Dan_7:13; Heb_1:2; Heb_3:6; Heb_5:8; Heb_7:28). However, the fact that it is a title makes it definite. The ambiguity may be purposeful. Jesus is a human being and the Divine Messiah. - Utley

a son of man .. The man looked like "**a son of man**." This expression refers to the divine Messiah in Dan_7:13-14 (cf. Act_7:56). "Son of Man" was Jesus' favorite title for Himself according to the writers of the Gospels (cf. Mar_13:26). The person John saw looked like a human man. His clothing was that of a priest: a long robe with a golden sash around it. Jesus Christ's present office is that of our high priest (Heb_4:14). However this long robe (Gr. *poderes*) was also a sign of rank or dignity in those who wore them (cf. Eze_9:2; Dan_10:5). - Constable

> **one like unto the Son of man ..** There is no article with either noun, while in the title of our Lord "the Son of Man" in the Gospels and in Act_7:56 it is expressed with both. The inference is, not that our Lord is not intended, but that the title is taken, not from His own use of it, but direct from the Greek of Dan_7:13—where also the art. is absent. Whether we should translate "a son of man" is a question rather of taste than of grammar: the words of themselves mean no more than "I saw a human figure," but their associations make it plain to anyone acquainted with the Book of Daniel, that it was a superhuman Being in human form; and to a Christian, of St John's days as of our own, Who that Being was. - CBSC

clothed with a garment down to the foot .. Clothed in priestly attire. Psa_110:4 Heb_5:5-10 Heb_7:1 Heb_8:1-2 Heb_2:17 Heb_2:18,

> **clothed ..** "In Rev_1:13, Christ is seen dressed in the type robe worn by both a priest and a judge; but the position of the girdle about the breasts rather than the waist indicates that Christ, in this passage, is exercising a judicial rather than a priestly role. A priest would be girded about the waist, signifying *service*; but the girdle placed about the shoulders or breasts indicates a *magisterial* function (cf. Joh_13:2-5; Rev_15:6)." - Constable

garment .. Most occurrences of this word in the Septuagint, the Greek OT, refer to the garment of the High-Priest. The golden sash across His chest completes the picture of Christ serving in His priestly role (cf. Lev_16:1-4; Heb_2:17). - MSB

clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash .. This phrase has been understood in several ways: (1) as a reference to the High Priest (cf. Exo_28:4; Exo_29:5; Lev_16:4 and Zec_3:4); or (2) as a reference to a royal, wealthy person (cf. 1Sa_18:24; 1Sa_24:12 and Eze_26:16); or (3) as a vision of the glorious messenger of Dan_10:5, which would identify Jesus as bringing God's message.

Josephus, in his book, *Antiquities of the Jews* III:7:2, 4, said that the High Priest wore a girdle interwoven with gold. Therefore, Jesus is the High Priest of the heavenly sanctuary (cf. Heb_8:1-13). - Utley

robe … golden sash .. Suggests a king's authority (Isa_22:21), a high priest's purity (Exo_28:4; Exo_29:5-9), or both. - NIVZSB

girded about the chest .. *girt about the paps* .. So Rev_15:6, of angels. We therefore can hardly press the distinction of this from Dan_10:5 (and Eze_9:2, LXX.), where the angels wear the girdles of gold or gems, as

men would, on the loins. - CBSC

Rev_1:14

Rev_1:14

hair ... white .. wisdom, honorable.

hair … white like wool .. Symbolizes the perfect wisdom of the Ancient of Days (Dan_7:9), which Jesus also possesses. - NIVZSB

white like wool .. In Dan_7:9, the Ancient of Days' clothing is white like snow and the hair of His head is compared to pure wool. John combines the two descriptions to describe the head and hair of Christ. - FSB

white like wool .. "White" does not refer to a flat white color but a blazing, glowing, white light (cf. Dan_7:9). Like the glory cloud (or Shekinah), it is a picture of His holiness. - MSB

His head and His hair were white like white wool . . This is an allusion to the Ancient of Days in Dan_7:9. This is an example of NT authors attributing titles and descriptions of YHWH to Jesus, emphasizing Jesus' Deity. - Utley

His head and his hair were white .. White is the color of purity and of triumph. The idea here is not age but heavenly glory. - PNT

eyes ... fire .. piercing, penetrating knowledge, the one who knows everything and will judge everyone. - WG

eyes … like blazing fire .. Suggests penetrating, divine insight (Rev_2:18; Rev_19:12; Dan 10:6). - NIVZSB

his eyes were like a fiery flame .. In Dan_10:6, the eyes of the angelic figure are compared to flaming torches. In Dan_7:9, the throne of the Ancient of Days is compared to fire. - FSB

eyes … flame of fire .. Like two lasers, the eyes of the exalted Lord look with penetrating gaze into the depths of His church (Rev_2:18; Rev_19:12; Heb_4:13). - MSB

Rev_1:15

Rev_1:15

Feet .. often refers to messengers, especially to those bringing "glad tidings". Rom_10:15; Isa_52:7;

Feet like unto fine brass .. Shedding forth splendor like burnished brass heated in a furnace. - PNT

feet .. ***Refined*** or hardened ***bronze*** in the ***feet*** implies stability, firmness, and security (cp. Dan_10:6). - NLTSB

feet . . Christ's feet, **like burnished bronze** (cf. 2:18), will crush any opponents. - ESVSB

feet … fine brass .. The altar of burnt offering was covered with brass and its utensils were made of the same material (cf. Exo_38:1-7). Glowing hot, brass feet are a clear reference to divine judgment. Jesus Christ with feet of judgment is moving through His church to exercise His chastening authority upon sin. - MSB

feet ... fine brass .. This word for bronze (*chalkolibanon*) is uncertain. Brass is the related term, *chalkos* (cf. Mat_10:9; 1Co_13:1; Rev_18:22). It was used in Eze_1:7 for the cherubim's feet and in Dan_10:6 for the angelic messenger. Jesus is described in these same terms (cf. Rev_1:15; Rev_2:18) to show His heavenly origin or majestic character. - Utley

His feet .. which **were like bronze glowing in a furnace** (cf. 2:18). The bronze altar in the temple was related to sacrifice for sin and divine judgment on it. - BKC

voice ... many waters .. --majestic, easily heard.

like the sound of many waters .. This is similar to Dan_10:6, where the angelic voice is likened to the sound of a multitude (compare Eze_1:24; Eze_43:2). Rev_1:10 ascribes trumpet-like characteristics to Christ's voice. The emphasis is on the force and authority with which He speaks. - FSB

voice … sound of many waters /. No longer was His voice like the crystal clear note of a trumpet (Rev_1:10), but John likened it to the crashing of the surf against the rocks of the island (cf. Eze_43:2). It was the voice of authority. - MSB

> His voice sounded like a rushing river such as the Niagara at its Falls, namely, authoritative, powerful, and irresistible (cf. Rev_14:2; Rev_19:6; Psa_93:4; Isa_17:13; Eze_43:2). - Constable

Rev_1:16

Rev_1:16

in His right hand He held seven stars . . This phrase is repeated in Rev_1:20; Rev_2:1; Rev_3:1. This shows Jesus' personal care of His local churches. - Utley

right hand .. Represents strength and special blessings. The "churches" are secure in his right hand.

Seven stars .. "angels" or messengers.Rev_1:20; Rev_2:1, etc.

seven stars . . These are the messengers who represent the 7 churches (*see note on v. 20*). Christ holds them in His hand, which means that He controls the church and its leaders. - MSB

and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword . . This refers to the short, tongue-shaped sword which the Roman soldiers carried. This metaphor appears in the OT in Isa_11:4; Isa_49:2 and in the NT in 2 Thess. 2:8; Heb_4:12; and Rev_2:12, Rev_2:16; Rev_19:15; Rev_19:21. It symbolizes the power of the word of God, especially judgment. - Utley

sharp two edged sword .. The word of God, Heb_4:12, Eph_6:17 Indicates the power of God's words, cf. Joh_1:1-5; Rev_2:16; Rev_19:15, Rev_19:21. cf. Isa_1.20; Isa_49:2; Isa_66:16;

a sharp two-edged sword . . A large, two-edged broad sword. It signifies judgment (cf. Rev_2:16; Rev_19:15) on those who attack His people and destroy His church. - MSB

sharp double-edged sword coming **out of His mouth . .** This type of sword (*rhomphaia*, also referred to in Rev_2:12; Rev_16:1; Rev_6:8; Rev_19:15; Rev_19:21) was used by the Romans in a stabbing action designed to kill. - BKC

> The ***sharp*** … ***sword*** coming ***from his mouth*** is his effective message and his judgment (see rev 19:15; Gen_3:24; Eph_6:17; Heb 4:12). Jesus proclaims both grace and judgment, but here the emphasis is that he carries out judgment (see Rev_2:12, Rev_2:16; Rev_19:15; Rev_19:21; cp. Isa_11:4). - NLTSB

> This two-edged sword is a symbol of the word by which Christ's conquests are won. See Eph_6:17; Heb_4:12, and compare Rev_19:15. - PNT

countenance like ..

His face was like the sun shining in its strength . . Similar phrases are used to describe the cherubim of Eze_1:4 and the angelic messenger of Dan_10:6 and Rev_10:1. In Dan_12:3 (cf. Mat_13:43) it was a symbol of the resurrected righteous ones. The brilliance depicts God's glorious presence (cf. Mat_17:2). - Utley

like the sun shining in its strength .. In Dan_10:6, the face of the angelic figure is "like lightning." This

description also reflects the transfiguration in Mat_17:2. - FSB

÷Rev_1:17
Rev_1:17

I fell at his feet . . A common response to a prophetic vision (cf. Eze_1:28; Dan_8:17-18; Dan_10:7-9); appropriate reverence toward the exalted Christ (cf. Mat_17:6) but not toward angelic messengers (Rev_19:10; Rev_22:8-9). - NIVZSB

fell at His feet. A common response to seeing the awesome glory of the Lord (Gen_17:3; Num_16:22; Eze_1:28; Isa_6:1-8; Act_9:4). - MSB

like a dead person . . Falling to the ground from reverence and fear is a common reaction to encounters with the divine. - FSB

laid His right hand .. The Lord graciously responds by the touch of his ***right hand*** (cp. Mat_25:34) and the words ***"Don't be afraid!"*** (cp. Luk_1:13) - NLTSB

Do not be afraid .. A common heavenly greeting to people (e.g., Gen_15:1; Dan_10:12; Luk_1:30). - FSB

> Present Imperative with the negative particle, meaning to stop and act that is already in process. - Utley

I am . . The phrase identifies Jesus as God (see note on Rev_1:8). - NLTSB

the First and the Last. Alludes to God's self-description in Isa_41:4; Isa_44:6; Isa_48:12; similar to "the Alpha and the Omega" in Rev_1:8; cf. Rev_2:8; Rev_22:13. - NIVZSB

First and the Last . . Jesus Christ applies this OT name for Yahweh (Rev_22:13; Isa_41:4; Isa_44:6; Isa_48:12) to Himself, clearly claiming to be God. Idols will come and go. He was before them, and He will remain after them. - MSB

> The Son of Man affirms his divine eternity, echoing the Lord's boast over idols (Isa_41:4; Isa_44:6). ESVSB

> This was usually a reference to YHWH (cf. Isa_41:4; Isa_44:6; Isa_48:12), but here it is used of the exalted Christ (cf. Rev_1:8). - Utley

I am . . recalls Jesus' claims in the Gospels (cf. Mat_14:27; Mar_6:50; Joh_6:20; Joh_8:58) and connects Him with Yahweh (Exo_3:14; Isa_48:12). The title "**the first and the last"** is essentially the same as "**the Alpha and the Omega**" (v. 8) and "**the beginning and the end**" (rev 22:13). All three titles stress the absolute sovereignty of God. - Constable

÷Rev_1:18

Rev_1:18

liveth and was dead .. clear reference to Jesus Christ

Living One . . The risen Christ lives forever like God (Rev_4:9-10; cf. Dan_4:34). - NIVZSB

I died … I am alive forevermore . . Paradoxically, this ever-living One died to redeem believers and now lives forever as "the firstborn of the dead" (Rev_1:5). Because Jesus died and rose again, John must "fear not" (Rev_1:17), and the churches should not fear death, because Jesus has conquered it forever. On Christ's

resurrection, see 1Co_15:42-57. - ESVSB

I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore . . The resurrection was **(1)** the Father's stamp of approval (cf. Act_2:24; Act_3:15; Act_4:10; Act_5:30; Act_10:40; Act_13:30, Act_13:33-34; Act_13:37; Act_7:31; Rom_4:24; Rom_10:9; 1Co_6:14; 1Co_15:15; Eph_1:20; Col_2:12; Heb_13:20; 1Pe_1:21); **(2)** a demonstration of the Spirit's power (cf. Rom_8:11); and **(3)** a demonstration of Jesus' power (cf. John 10:11, Joh_10:15; Joh_10:17-18). This reference to Jesus' death was also a way to thwart the gnostic false teachers who denied His humanity. - Utley

keys of hell (hades) and death .. We don't need to worry about going to some place where Jesus has he keys. - WG

keys of death and of Hades .. Keys represent authority. Christ has the authority both to confine and release from death (see Joh_5:25-29; compare Mat_16:19). See note on Rev_6:8. - FSB

I have the keys of death and of Hades . . The Jews saw death as a prison with gates (cf. Job_38:17; Psa_9:13; Psa_107:18; Isa_38:10; Mat_16:18). This is symbolic of Jesus' authority over death for Himself and His followers (cf. Rev_5:9-10; **1 Cor. 15**). - Utley

keys .. -- symbol of authority or control over something. Opens and closes, etc. For the significance of Jesus having these keys see the note of Act_2:27. Heb_2:14, Mat_12:27, Luk_10:17-18, 1Jo_3:8

keys . . Convey power or control over something (Rev_3:7; Rev_9:1; Rev_20:1; Isa_22:22; Mat_16:19): Christ has complete authority over the cosmic forces of "death and Hades" now and will abolish them forever (Rev_20:13-14; 1Co_15:54-57; Heb_2:14-15). - NIVZSB

÷Rev_1:19

Rev_1:19

Write .. John to write what he saw. (See note on Rev_1:11).

seen .. John was to write **(1)** about what he had seen or experienced so far (chapter 1) ; and **(2)** about things which are (letters to the 7 churches in ch 2 & 3); and **(3)** about things which will soon take place, for "the time is at hand" Rev_1:1; Rev_1:3; Rev_22:6; Rev_22:10.

things seen .. things which are .. things later .. Recalls Dan_2:28-29, Dan_2:45 (cf. Rev_1:1); Isa_48:3-6. May recall vv. 4, 8: God is the one "who is, and who was, and who is to come." - NIVZSB

> The letters (royal edicts) to the churches (chs. 2–3) address the things **that are**. Thereafter John's visions turn primarily to **those that are to take place after this** (see Rev_4:1). - ESVSB
>
> The Greek phrase is a twofold description of what is current and what will occur. John was speaking to his day as well as to the future. This book combines both aspects in the traditional prophetic sense of current events foreshadowing eschatological events. - Utley

things which shall be .. Remember vs. 1, these ***things*** were to shortly come to pass Rev_1:1, they were *"at hand"* Rev_1:3

1:19 Jesus Christ repeated His instruction to John to write down the things God was revealing to him (v. 11). The repetition of 'write' from verse 11 indicates that the 'therefore' is resuming the earlier command where it left off. Now Jesus gave John more specific instructions.

This verse provides an inspired outline of the Book of Revelation. Some of what John was to record he had already seen, namely, the Man standing among the seven golden lampstands with the seven stars in His hand (vv. 12–16). Some had to do with present conditions in the churches as exemplified by the seven churches (chs. 2–3). Some had to do with revelations about the times after conditions represented by the

seven churches ended (chs. 4–22). - Constable

÷Rev_1:20

Rev_1:20

Most of the symbols come from the Old Testament but when they do not, and are something new, they are explained to John.

mystery . . A divine secret previously hidden but now disclosed (Rev_10:7; Rev_17:5, Rev_17:7; cf. Dan_2:47; Rom_16:25-26). Here Christ interprets two symbols from the previous vision (Rev_1:12; Rev_1:16). **-** NIVZSB

mystery . . This term is used in several senses by Paul, but all relate to the believing Jews and Gentiles being united into one new body in Christ (cf. **Eph. 2:11–3:13**). Here, however, it seems to be used in connection with the seven churches Jesus is addressing in chapters 2 and 3. - Utley

the mystery . . The use of this word in the N. T. is not very far removed from its primary meaning in classical Greek. We may paraphrase it, "the hidden divine truth, now made known, but made known to God's favoured ones only:" see Eph. 3:3–12 for the completest illustration of its meaning. Here the *sense* is, "I reveal to thee the secret and sacred meaning of …" - CBSC

seven stars .. -- heavenly angels (*angelos*), or human "messengers" of the seven churches. (In Rev_1:1 and elsewhere in Revelation, the Greek term *angelos* denotes heavenly beings.)

the angels. The word lit. means "messenger." Although it can mean angel—and does throughout the book—it cannot refer to angels here because angels are never leaders in the church. Most likely, these messengers are the 7 key elders representing each of those churches. - MSB

The Greek word *angeloi* ("angels") frequently refers to human messengers (e.g., Mat_11:10; Luk_7:24; Luk_9:52; 2Co_8:23; Jas_2:25). The "messenger" of each church could be a reference to the "reader" who read the letters to the churches Rev_1:3. - WG

The ***angels*** (or *messengers;* Greek *angelos*) ***of the seven churches*** could be (1) the guardian angels of these churches (cp. Mat_18:10; Act_12:15); (2) the leading officials of the churches (cp. Mat_11:10, where "messenger" is *angelos*); or (3) a personification of the *ethos* of the church. The best understanding is probably a combination of 1 and 3. - NLTSB

the angels . . The Greek (*aggelos*) and Hebrew (*malak*) terms can be translated "messengers" or "angels." There have been several theories as to their identity: **(1)** some say they were the seven spirits which are mentioned in verse 4; **(2)** others say they were the pastors of these churches (cf. Mal. Rev_2:7); and **(3)** others say it refers to the guardian angel of these churches (cf. Dan_10:13, Dan_10:20; Dan_10:21). It seems best that they refer to the churches as a whole, whether symbolized as a pastor or an angel. - Utley

seven golden lampstands .. -- symbols of the seven churches of Asia . Symbolize the churches' light-bearing role (Rev_2:1; Rev_2:5; Rev_11:4; Mat_5:14-16.

Christ commends: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Philadelphia.

Christ rebukes: Ephesus, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Laodicea.

÷Rev_2:1

Rev_2:1

Chapter 2 - The Epistles to the Seven Churches

Ephesus, vv. 1-7
Smyrna, vv. 8-11

Pergamos, vv. 12-17
Thyatira, vv. 18-29

See **"Revelation-WG" Topic** notes for information on the seven churches of Asia.

To the angel . . The Greek word *angeloi* ("angels") frequently refers to human messengers (e.g., Mat_11:10; Luk_7:24; Luk_9:52; 2Co_8:23; Jas_2:25). The "messenger" of each church could be a reference to the "reader" who read the letters to the churches Rev_1:3. - WG

These things says .. reflects the expression "***thus says***," which in the OT could introduce either a word from God (e.g., Amo_1:6, Amo_1:9; Amo_1:11) or a royal edict (e.g., 2Ch_36:23). - ESVSB

Ephesus . . It was an inland city 3 mi. from the sea, but the broad mouth of the Cayster River allowed access and provided the greatest harbor in Asia Minor. Four great trade roads went through Ephesus; therefore, it became known as the gateway to Asia. It was the center of the worship of Artemis (Greek), or Diana (Roman), whose temple was one of the 7 Wonders of the Ancient World. Paul ministered there for 3 years (Act_20:31), and later met with the Ephesian elders on his way to Jerusalem (Acts 20). Timothy, Tychicus, and the Apostle John all served this church. - MSB

Ephesus . . Ephesus, the fourth largest city in the Roman Empire, and the largest city in Asia Minor, was situated where the Cayster River meets the Aegean Sea. It was a major center for commerce, political administration, and religion. it became the riches banking center in that part of the world. Ephesus was both a major port city and the site of many temples, including a large one dedicated to goddess Artemis (see Act_19:27 and note).

The people of Ephesus were very independent; they declined help from Alexander in rebuilding their temple after it was destroyed (300s bc), arguing adroitly that one god should not stoop to build a temple to another god (see Strabo, *Geography* 14.1.22). The Ephesians' protective pride also led to the uproar against Paul (Act_19:23-41). - NLTSB

Ephesus .. one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Paul had visited Ephesus about a.d. 53, about 43 years before this letter in Revelation was sent to them. Paul remained in Ephesus for several years and preached the gospel so effectively "that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord" (Act_19:10). This large city was thoroughly stirred by Paul's message (Act_19:11-41), with the result that the silversmiths created a riot because their business of making shrines of Artemis was threatened. - BKC

the one who holds .. This description of Jesus is taken from Rev_1:16. The term "holds" speaks of a firm, sure grasp (cf. Joh_10:28). Nothing and no one could separate these churches from Jesus (cf. Rom_8:31-39) except their own refusal to repent and follow Him!

Christ is identified as the speaker at the beginning of each of the addresses to the churches in Rev 2–3; this reflects aspects of John's introduction in Rev_1:9-20. - Utley

the seven stars in his right hand . . The "stars" were the angels or messengers of the churches and the "lampstands" were the seven churches (Rev_1:20). - BKC

walking among . . This anthropomorphic metaphor is used in Gen_3:8 as a symbol of God's presence with mankind (cf. Lev_26:12).

the golden lampstands . . This does not refer to the Menorah of the Tabernacle, but is another symbol for the seven churches. - Utley

÷Rev_2:2
Rev_2:2

I know .. This repeated refrain (Rev_2:9; Rev_2:13; Rev_2:19; Rev_3:1; Rev_3:8; Rev_3:15 [for each church addressed]) shows Christ's total knowledge of his people, their activities, and their circumstances. • The Ephesian Christians had a correct theology marked by perseverance and faithfulness. - NLTSB

They had ***examined*** various ***claims,*** exercised discipline on ***evil people,*** could tell what is true and what is false, and had ***patiently suffered*** for their faith in Christ. - NLTSB

your .. (second person personal pronoun, genitive singular); Is this addressing the "angel" and his works & labor, perseverance, or is the address speaking of the full church as one entity. - WG

your labor and patient endurance . . Probably describes the church's work for the sake of the gospel. - FSB

patience (KJV, NKJV).. (**perseverance**, NIV, etc.)

I know your deeds . . Commendation, as in Rev_2:19; Rev_3:8. **hard work.** Cf. "labor" in Rev_14:13. **perseverance.** Cf. Rev_2:19; "patient endurance" in rev 1:9. The same three Greek words occur in 1Th_1:3 ("work … labor … endurance").
NIVZSB

perseverance . . This term implies a voluntary, active, steadfast endurance. This is a major theme of the book (cf. 1:9; 2:2, 3, 19; 3:10; 13:10; 14:12). Utley

tested . . This Greek term (*peirazō*) meant to test with either good but mostly bad intentions (cf. Rev_2:2; Rev_2:10; Rev_3:10). The related term (*peirasmos*) had the connotation of testing with the view toward destruction. The balance is found in 1Jn_4:1 where believers are to test (*dokimazō*) with a view toward approval those who claim to speak for God. The call for believers to examine those who claim to speak for God is found in both Testaments (cf. Deu_13:1-5; Deu_18:22; Mat_7:15-23; 1Jn_4:1-6). - Utley

> There is tension in the NT related to believers critically judging each other (cf. Mat_7:1-5). However, Christians are called to evaluate each other for leadership roles (cf. Mat_7:5, Mat_6:1-15; 1Co_5:1-12; 1 Tim. 3; 1Jn_4:1-6). Attitude and motive are the keys to proper evaluation (cf. Gal_6:1; Rom_2:1-11; Rom_14:1-23; Jas_4:11-12). - Utley

who say they are apostles . . The Ephesian church exercised spiritual discernment. It knew how to evaluate men who claimed spiritual leadership by their doctrine and behavior (cf. 1 Thess. 5:20, 21). MSB

which say they are apostles . . False teachers, who made false claims. Every age of revolution throws up such false teachers. We often find traces of them in the epistles. 1Jn_4:1 shows how to test them. The Ephesian church had put them to the test and rejected them. - PNT

÷Rev_2:3
Rev_2:3

patient endurance . . The church was probably encountering opposition, which may have resulted in persecution. Their refusal to conform would have also caused social and political backlash, causing tension in commercial and familial relationships. - FSB

not become weary . . For over 40 years, since its founding, this church had remained faithful to the Word and the Lord. Through difficulty and persecution, the members had endured, always driven by the right motive, i.e.,

for Christ's name and reputation. - MSB

This church was faithful amidst difficult circumstances, even persecutions. They had not denied Christ or grown weary in well-doing (cf. Gal_6:9; Heb_12:3; Jas_5:7-8). See note at Rev_2:7. - Utley

Christ commended those in the Ephesian church ... In addition they were commended for enduring **hardships** and **not** growing **weary** in serving God. In general this church had continued in its faithful service to God for more than 40 years. - BKC

:Rev_2:4
Rev_2:4

I have this against you . . Christ's commendation now turns to condemnation. This introduces Christ's rebuke, cf Rev_2:14; Rev_2:20.

left your first love . . To be a Christian is to love the Lord Jesus Christ (Joh_14:21, Joh_14:23; 1Co_16:22). But the Ephesians' passion and fervor for Christ had become cold, mechanical orthodoxy. Their doctrinal and moral purity, their undiminished zeal for the truth, and their disciplined service were no substitute for the love for Christ they had forsaken. - MSB

Yet I hold this against you: you have forsaken your first love . . The order of words in the Greek is emphatic; the clause could be translated, "Your first love you have left." Christ used the word *agapēn*, speaking of the deep kind of love that God has for people. This rebuke contrasts with what Paul wrote the Ephesians 35 years earlier, that he never stopped giving thanks for them because of their faith in Christ and their love (*agapēn*) for the saints (Eph_1:15-16). Most of the Ephesian Christians were now second-generation believers, and though they had retained purity of doctrine and life and had maintained a high level of service, they were lacking in deep devotion to Christ. How the church today needs to heed this same warning, that orthodoxy and service are not enough. Christ wants believers' hearts as well as their hands and heads. - BKC

left thy first love .. See **Jas_5:19** note on APOSTASY

you have left your first love . . The church was initially zealous and motivated by love, but that love diminished as time passed. This love could be directed at God or brothers and sisters in the Lord. Their love for unbelievers in the city may have also waned under the heavy hand of persecution. - FSB

love you had at first . . Love for Jesus (Eph_6:24) and/or one another (Eph_5:2). - NIVZSB

When the church was first established, their love for Christ and for each other had been strong. Struggles with false teachers and persecution had caused that original love to grow cold. Correct theology, action, and even suffering (Rev_2:2-3) are just an empty shell of Christian life if dynamic love is absent (1 Cor 13). - NLTSB

the love you had at first . . One interpretation is that Ephesus had lost its early love for Christ. Another interpretation is that Ephesian believers had lost love for one another and needed to revive the compassionate **works you did at first**. Many interpreters think both are in view, since love for Christ and love for one another are related (cf. Mar_12:29-31; 1Jn_4:20). - ESVSB
- - - -
NASB, NKJV "you have left your first love"
NRSV "you have abandoned the love you had ast first"

TEV "you do not love me now as you did at first"
NJB "you have less love now than formerly"

There have been several theories as to what this meant: **(1)** TEV and Charles Williams translations assume it means love for Christ; **(2)** James Moffatt assumed it means love for one another; **(3)** Hershell Hobbs in his commentary assumed it means love for the lost; **(4)** J. B. Phillips in his translation combined all of the above**; (5)** some think it is related to the problem of second generation believers (cf. Jdg_2:7-10); or **(6)** some see it as a loveless church of cold orthodoxy (cf. 1Co_13:1 ff). - Utley

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÷Rev_2:5
Rev_2:5

1) Remember, 2) Repent, 3) Re-D0, or 3) be Removed.

remember . . This is a PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE meaning "always keep in mind." Believers are often admonished to remember their previous condition in sin and their new position in the grace and mercies of God through Christ. - Utley

Consider … repent … do the things you did at first. Jesus exhorts the church to seriously consider their situation and change their mind, heart, and actions. - NIVZSB

repent - see the word study in Utley on Rev_2:5.

I will remove . . Failure to repent would result in the church's removal from that place. If a church fails to fulfill its function, it will not continue to exist. - FSB

remove your lampstand . . If the Ephesians do not repent, they will lose their identity as a church. - NIVZSB
God's judgment would bring an end to the Ephesian church. - MSB

will remove your lampstand out of its place . . The lampstand symbolizes the entire church. This may have involved the removal of Christ's presence and blessing. The entire congregation was not facing apostasy, but the loss of their effective ministry.

This also applies to the churches of Pergamum (cf. Rev_2:16); Thyatira (cf. Rev_2:22-23); Sardis (cf. Rev_3:3); and Laodicea (cf. Rev_3:19). It is possible that each of these churches were affected by a Nicolaitan type of false teaching which promoted compromise with pagan culture. - Utley

The church continued and was later the scene of a major church council, but after the 5th century both the church and the city declined. The immediate area has been uninhabited since the 14th century. - BKC

÷Rev_2:6
Rev_2:6

See Word Study on Nicolaitans (See G3531)

deeds of the Nicolaitans . . We know little of the Nicolaitans who were evidently followers of someone named Nicolas (cf. Act_6:5). Irenaeus, who lived in the late second century, wrote that they were without restraint in their indulgence of the flesh and practiced fornication and the eating of foods sacrificed to idols. The word "Nicolaitans" is a transliteration of two Greek words that mean "to conqueror" and "people." Consequently Nicolaitanism has come down through history as typifying any system that seeks to dominate rather than serve people.

"The teaching of the Nicolaitans was an exaggeration of the doctrine of Christian liberty which attempted an ethical compromise with heathenism." (Merrill Tenney, *Interpreting Revelation*, p. 61.) - Constable

deeds of the Nicolaitans . . They were commended because they hated **the practices of the Nicolaitans**. There has been much speculation concerning the identity of the Nicolaitans, but the Scriptures do not specify who they were. They apparently were a sect wrong in practice and in doctrine (for further information see Henry Alford, *The Greek Testament*, 4: 563–65; Merrill C. Tenney, *Interpreting Revelation*, pp. 60–1; Walvoord, *Revelation*, p. 58). - BKC

Little is known of this group; they are probably not connected to the Nicolaus of Act_6:5. Given John's disdain for the religious practices of the Roman Empire, the Nicolaitans may have compromised by allowing pagan religious practices into the church, thereby avoiding persecution and social tension (compare Rev_2:14-15). - FSB

Nicolaitans . . A heretical sect whose name means "victory people." They apparently promoted false teaching, idolatry, and immorality like Balaam (v. 14) and Jezebel (v. 20), and the Ephesian church opposed their practices, while some in Pergamum did not (v. 15). - NIVZSB

Not much is known of ***the Nicolaitans***, but their teaching (Rev_2:15) seems to link them with those who ate food sacrificed to idols and who were involved in sexual immorality, behavior prohibited by the council in Jerusalem (see Act_15:20, Act_15:29). Irenaeus argued (about ad 180) that the Nicolaitans were dependent on Nicolas (Act_6:3-5) and that John's writings were directed against the heresies of the Nicolaitans who followed Cerinthus (see 1 John Introduction, "Setting," p. 2138). - NLTSB

the deeds of the Nicolaitans. A problem in Pergamos also (Rev_2:12-15), this heresy was similar to the teaching of Balaam (Rev_2:14-15). Nicolas means "one who conquers the people." Irenaeus writes that Nicolas, who was made a deacon in Act_6:5, was a false believer who later became apostate; but because of his credentials he was able to lead the church astray. And, like Balaam, he led the people into immorality and wickedness. The Nicolaitans, followers of Nicolas, were involved in immorality and assaulted the church with sensual temptations. Clement of Alexander says, "They abandoned themselves to pleasure like goats, leading a life of self-indulgence." Their teaching perverted grace and replaced liberty with license. - MSB

that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans . . There has been much speculation about who these Nicolaitans were and what they believed. The only biblical source we have is Rev_2:6, Rev_2:14-15. Speculation began early in the Church around a.d. 180 when Irenaeus and Hippolitus supposed that these were the followers of one of "the seven" chosen in Act_6:5 named Nicolas. This is totally unsubstantiated. Irenaeus, in his book, *Contra-heresies*, 3:11:7, assumed that they were followers of Cyrenian gnosticism of the second century. Eusebius, in his book, *Ecclesiastical History*, 3:29:1, said that this particular sect did not last long.

In Rev_2:14-15, the teachings of Balaam and the teachings of the Nicolaitans are similar. There is a possible etymological connection between their names: (1) in Greek it means "conqueror" and "people"; (very similar to the meaning of the name Nicodemus) and (2) in the Hebrew, the rabbinical identification of the same term. What is obvious is that both were encouraging believers to participate in pagan worship practices which involved ritual sexual activity. In this sense the Nicolaitans and Balaamites (cf. Num_25:1-9; Num_31:16-18) are very similar to the teachings of Jezebel (cf. Rev_2:20). - Utley

÷Rev_2:7
Rev_2:7

The one who has an ear . . Recalls Jesus' exhortation throughout the Gospels (e.g., Mat_13:9; Mat_13:43):

Hear, understand, and respond accordingly. This is reflected in the closing of each message to the seven churches (Rev_2:11, Rev_2:17; Rev_2:29; Rev_3:6; Rev_3:13; Rev_3:22). - FSB

Echoes similar exhortations in the Gospels (Mat_11:15; Mar_4:9) and the Prophets (Isa_6:9-10; Eze_3:27) to hear and respond to God's Word. **-** NIVZSB

what the Spirit says .. The one who addresses the churches (Rev_2:7) and inspires prophecy (Rev_19:10) and speaks directly in (Rev_22:17), confirming the exhortation and promise in Rev_2:12-13. - NIVZSB

the one who [overcomes] conquers . . The Lion of Judah conquered as a slain Lamb, redeeming people for God from every nation (Rev_5:5; Rev_5:9). Believers who hold to their testimony conquer the dragon (Rev_12:11) and the beast (Rev_15:2). **-** ESVSB

"Him who overcomes" probably refers to all Christians (cf. Rev_2:2-3; Rev_2:10 c; Rev_2:13; Rev_2:19; Rev_2:25; Rev_3:3; Rev_3:8; Rev_3:10; 1Jn_5:4-5). The promises given to overcomers in all seven letters and in Rev_21:7 bear this interpretation out. **- Constable**

tree of life . . See note on Gen_2:9; compare Rev_22:2; Gen_3:24.

tree of life. Access to this tree in Eden, and the eternal life it promised to the pure, was banned after humanity's fall (Gen_3:22-24). It reappears in the new Jerusalem, its roots watered by living water from God's throne, its fruit a constant source of nourishment, and its leaves bringing healing to the city's inhabitants, whose names appear in the Lamb's book of life (Rev_22:1-2). - ESVSB

> The tree of life appears four times in the Book of Proverbs and its use there helps us understand its presence in Genesis and Revelation. Solomon referred to wisdom (Pro_3:18), righteousness (Pro_11:30), satisfied hope (Pro_13:12), and controlled speech (Pro_15:4) as a tree of life. These are all the fruits that would have provided Adam [with what he needed to rule his world] and will provide the overcomers ... - Constable

the paradise of God . . Paradise represents the ultimate place of rest and refuge with God. The new earth and arrival of the final kingdom of God is later cast in language like that used to describe Eden (Rev_22:1-2; compare Gen_2:8; Gen_2:10). **-** FSB

tree of life .. Paradise of God . . This is an allusion to the Garden of Eden (cf. Gen_2:9). As humans began in fellowship with God in a garden with the animals, so the Bible ends in the same manner (cf. Isa_11:6-9; Rev_22:2, Rev_22:14; Rev_22:19). The term "paradise" was a Persian word for a nobleman's walled garden which was used in the Septuagint to translate the Garden of Eden. It is one of the many references to the Messianic age that is found throughout the letters to the seven churches.

The term "paradise" is used in two senses: (1) in Luk_23:4 it may refer to the righteous part of *Sheol/Hades*. Jesus tells the repentant thief that he would be with Him there that day (Jesus did not return to heaven for 40 days, cf. Joh_20:17) and (2) in 2Co_12:3 it refers to God's presence, God's heavenly throne room ("the third heaven"). - Utley

÷Rev_2:8
Rev_2:8

See **"Revelation-WG" Topic** notes for information on the seven churches of Asia.

Smyrna . . Smyrna, an important exporting city known for its beauty, was located on a protected harbor of the Aegean Sea next to a major road system. It was the home of a temple to the Roman emperor Tiberius and was a center of the Roman imperial religion. Smyrna is the first of two churches (Philadelphia is the other) that receive

no critique from the risen Christ. - FSB

Smyrna . . A harbor city (modern-day Izmir [It is the only city of the seven that has survived to this day. Present population is about 200,000.]) 35 miles (56 kilometers) north of Ephesus,... Smyrna was renowned for its beauty, civic pride, and claim to be Homer's birthplace. The city was an important center of emperor worship and home to a temple to the goddess Roma. - NIVSB

Smyrna. Smyrna means "myrrh," the substance used for perfume and often for anointing a dead body for aromatic purposes.

[It was also used in the anointing oil of the tabernacle, and in embalming dead bodies (cf. Exo_30:23; Psa_45:8; Son_3:6; Mat_2:11; Mar_15:23; Joh_19:39). While the Christians of the church at Smyrna were experiencing the bitterness of suffering, their faithful testimony was like myrrh or sweet perfume to God.]

Called the crown of Asia, this ancient city (modern Izmir, Turkey) was the most beautiful in Asia Minor and a center of science and medicine. Always on the winner's side in the Roman wars, Smyrna's intense loyalty to Rome resulted in a strong emperor-worship cult. Fifty years after John's death, Polycarp, the pastor of the church in Smyrna, was burned alive at the age of 86 for refusing to worship Caesar. A large Jewish community in the city also proved hostile to the early church. - MSB

the first and the last . The phrases identifying Christ here reflect Rev_1:17-18 - FSB

died and came to life again . . Thus, Jesus comforts and secures suffering believers. The city itself had "died" (600 BC) and been magnificently restored (290 BC). - NIVSB

To a church already suffering "slander" (Rev_2:9) and soon to face persecution "unto death" (Rev_2:10), Jesus identifies himself as Israel's eternal Redeemer who prepared the way through death to resurrection life (Rev_1:17-18). - ESVSB

÷Rev_2:9
Rev_2:9

Who is the **real Israel today**?

God's ***Israel*** today is not that nation in Palestine called by that name, but His people who live by faith in Him and His Son Jesus Christ. Rom_2:28-29; Rom_4:12-14; Rom_9:4-8; Gal_3:27-29; Rev_2:9; Rev_3:9; 1Co_10:18

I know your affliction and poverty The believers in Smyrna likely faced harsh treatment and scarcity of employment.

When cities had large concentrations of artisans and craftsmen, trade guilds or unions were established. These guilds often required their members to participate in certain pagan activities. The believers' unwillingness to participate in these activities resulted in exclusion from the guilds and financial hardship. - FSB

afflictions . . ("suffer persecution"). Includes economic hardship, verbal abuse, and marginalization, likely because they refused to participate in idolatrous trade guilds. - NIVZSB

your poverty— yet you are rich! . . This church is materially poor yet spiritually prosperous—the antithesis of Laodicea (Rev_3:17). Cf. 2Co_8:2, 2Co_8:9; Jas_2:5. - NIVZSB

slander . . This is literally the term ***blasphemy***, which had an OT connotation of "*to revile*" and was usually used in connection with verbal attacks on YHWH (cf. Lev_24:13-23). - Utley

slander of those who call themselves Jews . . This church not only faced pressure from the pagan world but

also found themselves in conflict with the synagogues. - FSB

who say they are Jews and are not . . A very similar phrase is used in Rev_3:9; there it is obvious that they are racial Jews who claim to be God's people but really are not (cf. Joh_8:44; Rom_2:28-29; Gal_3:29; Gal_6:16). From Acts and Galatians we know that the Jews caused great opposition to the proclamation of the gospel (cf. Act_13:50; Act_14:2, Act_14:5, Act_14:19; Act_17:5) - Utley

Jews . . The fact that Jews were prominent in this book in the persecution of Christians is an evidence that the book was written before **AD 70** when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed and they had no leverage in the Roman empire. cf. Rev_3:9; See Rev_1:1 "***Reasons For Holding to the Early Date"***

a synagogue of Satan . . As opposed to being involved in the activities of God, they were doing the work of His adversary. - FSB

synagogue of Satan . . Smyrna's large, influential Jewish population persecuted Christians, possibly slandering them in Roman court, thereby aligning with Satan against God's purposes (cf. Rev_3:9; Joh_8:44-47; Act_13:10). - NIVZSB

> ***Jews*** who had no faith are condemned for aligning themselves with ***Satan*** in hostile opposition to the Christian faith (Rev_3:9; see Joh_8:44; Act_14:2-5; Act_17:13; Act_18:6; Act_20:3; Gal_5:11; 1Th_2:14-16). At the Jewish council of Jamnia, the Jews excluded Christians as unholy heretics. John was not anti-Semitic; he was a Jew describing the actions of fellow Jews against Jewish and Gentile Christians. - NLTSB

Rev_2:10
Rev_2:10

Do not be afraid . . Lit. *stop being afraid.*

those things which thou shalt suffer . . Probably refer primarily to a persecution immediately impending; but they are no doubt meant to apply also to the subsequent persecutions of the Church there, especially to the famous one, under the Antonines, in which Polycarp the Bishop suffered martyrdom, in a.d. 155. It will depend on the date assigned to this Book, whether Polycarp can have been Bishop at the time of this message. It is to be noted that the Jews were specially active in urging his execution, though officially it was the act of the pagan magistrates. - CBSC

Behold . . (*"indeed" "I tell you"*) signals an oracular declaration (cf. Rev_2:22; Rev_3:8, Rev_3:9, Rev_3:20) - Constable

the devil . . John saw ***the devil*** as the sources of human hostility against Christian. - NLTSB
devil. The Gk. name for God's archenemy means "accuser." - MSB

that you may be tested . . This term is used in two senses:

> (1) believers are tested so as to show their true faith and grow stronger (cf. Rev_2:10; Act_14:27; Rom_5:3-4; Rom_8:17-19; Heb_5:8; Jas_1:2-4; 1Pe_4:12-19) and
>
> (2) unbelievers are tested to show their unbelief and deserved judgment (cf. Rev_3:10). In Revelation the Christian's trials are called "tribulations," while the unbelievers are subjected to "the wrath of God."
>
> There were two Greek terms translated "test," "try," or "tempt." One had the connotation of "to test with a view toward destruction" (*peirasmos, peirasmo*). The other terms (*dokimos, dokimazo*) were used with the connotation of "to test with a view toward approval." Satan tempts to destroy; God tests to strengthen (cf.

1Th_2:4; 1Pe_1:7; Gen_22:1; Exo_16:4; Exo_20:20; Deu_8:2, Deu_8:16; Deu_13:3; Jdg_2:22; 2Ch_32:31). - Utley

ten days . . A round number, reminiscent of Dan_1:12; Dan_1:14. Their testing might literally last for 10 days, or the number may be figurative and indefinite. - FSB

The period of their suffering would be ***ten days,*** symbolizing a limited time of persecution (see 1Pe_1:6). - NLTSB

crown of life . . Refers to eternal life as a reward, not a literal crown or wreath. - FSB

The **crown of life** (i.e., eternal life) is the laurel wreath of victory that God promises to those who love him (1Co_9:25; 2Ti_4:6-8; Jas_1:12). **-** ESVSB

"Crown" here does not refer to the kind royalty wear, but to the wreath awarded winning athletes. - MSB

unto death . . Apparently up to this time none had died, but this could be expected. Later Polycarp, [a pupil of John] having become the bishop of the church in Smyrna, was martyred, and undoubtedly others were also killed. - BKC

be faithful unto death . . This ... emphasizes the believer's need to continue in faith even if it means physical death (cf. Mat_2:13; Mat_12:11; Mat_10:22; Mat_24:13; Luk_12:4; Gal_6:9). - Utley

the crown of life . . This was the victor's crown called the "*stephanos*" (cf. 1Co_9:25). It was the reward of Christian martyrs. We learn from Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, 4:15, that there were many martyrs, including Bishop Polycarp of Smyrna. There are also other crowns (rewards) mentioned in the New Testament (cf. 2Ti_4:8; Jas_1:12; 1Pe_5:4; Rev_3:11). - Utley

life as your victor's crown . . Athletic imagery fitting for Smyrna and Philadelphia (Rev_3:11), famed for their games. Jesus promises honor, victory, and life to maligned believers facing potential death (cf. 2Ti_4:6-8; Jas_1:12). - NIVZSB

Rev_2:11
Rev_2:11

He who has an ear, let him hear . . This is a recurrent admonition for spiritual attention and discernment (cf. Rev_2:7, Rev_2:11, Rev_2:17, Rev_2:29; Rev_3:6, Rev_3:13, Rev_3:22; Rev_13:9). - Utley

shall not be hurt of the second death . . Those who win the victory shall live forever. To die the second death is to be sent from the judgment throne into hell. See Rev_20:14 - PNT

the second death . . The first death is only physical; the second is spiritual and eternal (cf. 20:14). - MSB

The "second death" referred to hell or eternal separation from fellowship with God (cf. Rev_20:6, Rev_20:14; Rev_21:8). - Utley

second death . . The lake of fire, eternal death (Rev_20:6, Rev_20:14; Rev_21:8) - NIVZSB

the second death See note on Rev_20:14

the second death . . This event, which is described here as occurring at the final judgment, is experienced by personified Death and Hades and people who have not accepted Jesus (Rev_20:15). It is called a second death because those who have already died bodily now die spiritually (Rev_20:12-13; compare Dan_12:1-4). - FSB

The one who conquers by faithfulness in the face of death is immune from the **second death** (see

Rev_20:4-6). - ESVSB

Rev_2:12
Rev_2:12

Pergamos -- the northern most of the seven churches in Asia Minor; noted for its vast library of 200,000 volumes. The art of preparing animal skins for writing manuscripts was perfected at Pergamos, and "parchment" came into use from the name of the city. **Pergamum** was about 20 miles inland from Smyrna. Like Ephesus and Smyrna it was a wealthy city, but it was wicked.

Pergamos . . Pergamos lit. means "citadel" and is the word from which we get parchment—a writing material developed from animal skin, which apparently was first developed in that area. Pergamos (modern Bergama [population about 14,000, of which about 3,000 profess to be Christians]) was built on a 1,000-foot hill in a broad, fertile plain about 20 mi. inland from the Aegean Sea. It had served as the capital of the Roman province of Asia Minor for over 250 years. It was an important religious center for the pagan cults of Athena, Asklepios, Dionysius (or Bacchus, the god of drunkenness), and Zeus. It was the first city in Asia to build a temple to Caesar (29 b.c.) and became the capital of the cult of Caesar worship. - MSB

> "It is interesting that Pergamum was a city to which Rome had given the rare power of capital punishment (*ius gladii*), which was symbolized by the sword. The Christians in Pergamum were thus reminded that though they lived under the rule of an almost unlimited *imperium*, they were citizens of another kingdom—that of him who needs no other sword than that of his mouth . . ." - Constable

Pergamum . . A magnificent city of 100,000 located 70 miles (113 kilometers) north of Smyrna and 16.5 miles (26.5 kilometers) inland (see map, p. 2581). Pergamum was an important intellectual city with a library holding 200,000 volumes; it was Asia's leading religious center, the foremost city for emperor worship, and home to a 40-foot-high (12 meters) altar to Zeus (king of the gods). - NIBZSB

> The letter to ***the church in Pergamum*** portrays Christians who are tempted to compromise their morality and their loyalty to God. The city of Pergamum was the earliest capital of the Roman province of Asia. It contained a famous library, and its citizens developed the use of animal skins as writing materials. - NLTSB

> Pergamum was built on terraces leading up the only accessible slope of its acropolis. It was an important center for pagan and imperial religion, but there are also indications of Jewish religion (e.g., Cicero, *For Flaccus* 28; Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 14.247–255). - ESVSB

Rev_2:12 ADDRESS Angel = messenger

DESCRIPTON OF THE SPEAKER - Rev_1:16 "***two-edged sword***"

sword . . See note on Rev_1:16. Symbolizes Jesus' ultimate authority to exercise judgment - NIVZSB

> The *two-edged sword* was the Roman symbol of authority, which typified Pergamum as capital of the province. If the church failed, the true governor of the city (Christ) would turn his authority against them. - NLTSB

> See **"Revelation-WG" Topic** notes for information on the seven churches of Asia.

Rev_2:13
Rev_2:13

3. WHAT IS RIGHT WITH THE CHURCH

Jesus is acquainted with the conditions which existsmin the churches.

Satan's throne . . ("seat"). There were many heathen temples in Pergamos, including a temple for emperor-worship. Asclepias was the god of healing, and symbolized by a serpent (Today the medical symbol of a serpent intertwined around a pole)

Pergamum hosted temples dedicated to "the divine Augustus and the goddess Roma" and to Asklepios (the god of healing, symbolized by serpents), and a large altar dedicated to Zeus. The worship of the emperor as a god was also strongly emphasized, even required, in the province of Asia, and it was a major problem for Christians at the time. All of this qualifies Pergamum to be called the site of **Satan's throne**. - ESVSB

At **Pergamos** in BC 29 a temple was built to Augustus and emperor worship became a prevalent practice there.

The ***throne*** of ***Satan*** might refer to the altar of Zeus on the mountain above the city or to emperor worship at the temple of Augustus. For many years, the Roman proconsul had his throne there, and the great temple of Athena and other shrines were also located in Pergamum. Its description as ***Satan's city*** might also refer to the temple of Asclepius, whose symbol was coiled snakes. The city was dedicated to the Roman pantheon and emperor worship. - NLTSB

where Satan's throne *is* . . The headquarters of satanic opposition and a Gentile base for false religions. On the acropolis in Pergamos was a huge, throne-shaped altar to Zeus. In addition, Asklepios, the god of healing, was the god most associated with Pergamos. His snake-like form is still the medical symbol today. The famous medical school connected to his temple mingled medicine with superstition. One prescription called for the worshiper to sleep on the temple floor, allowing snakes to crawl over his body and infuse him with their healing power. - MSB

where Satan's throne is . . There have been several possible interpretations of this phrase: (1) it could refer to the large throne of Zeus which was located in Pergamum; (2) it could refer to the god of healing, Asclepios, whose symbol was a serpent; (3) it seems that the whole city looked like a giant throne because of the Acropolis which stood hundreds of feet above the city itself; or (4) it could be a reference to the Concilia, the local organization to promote emperor worship, which was very powerful in Pergamum. Because of the historical context, either #1 or #4 seems best. - Utley

you hold fast My name . . This ... It shows the significance of the name as representing the character of a person. Believers trust by calling on His name (cf. Joh_1:12; Joh_3:18; Rom_10:9-13) and worship by calling on His name (cf. Gen_4:26; Gen_12:8; Gen_26:25) and persevere by calling on His name (cf. Joh_17:11-12). - Utley

Antipas my faithful witness . . [**Antipas** means "against all"] Little is known about this martyr, Antipas is heralded by Christ Himself.

faithful martyr . . Tradition [Tertullian] says Antipas was burned to death inside a brass bull. "Martyr," a transliteration of the Greek word, means *witness*. Because so many of the witnesses faithful to Christ were put to death, the word "martyr" developed its current definition. - MSB

÷Rev_2:14

Rev_2:14

teaching of Balaam . . The prototypical unethical teacher whose compromise proved fatal to Israel (see Num_25:1-2; Num_31:16). - FSB

Balaam . . The Gentile prophet who blessed Israel when Balak (the Moab king) asked him to curse them (**Num 22–24**); he advised Balak to use Moabite women to seduce Israel into sexual immorality and idolatry (Num_25:1-2; Num_31:16; cf. Jud_1:11). - NIVZSB

Balaam showed Balak how to lead the children of Israel astray. See Num. 25:2, and 31:16. In the same way there were false teachers at Pergamos who taught that Christians might join the idol feasts and in heathen fornication. - PNT

because you have there some who hold to the teaching of Balaam . . Balaam was a true prophet of God (cf. Num_24:2) who was lured into helping to compromise the people of Israel (cf. **Num. 22–25** and Num_31:16). He is condemned in both the OT and the NT (cf. Num_31:16; 2Pe_2:15; Jud_1:11). - Utley

It is possible that the name Balaam in Hebrew meant "conqueror of the people" and the name Nicolaitans may have meant the same thing in Greek (Nicodemus of John 3 also has a similar meaning). This would identify these two groups as to their immoral practices (cf. Jezebel, Rev_2:20). - Utley

things sacrificed to idols . . See Act_15:19-29

to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit *acts of* immorality . . These two sins involved pagan worship practices. Not only were there pagan meals where the food was sacrificed to idols (cf. 1Co_8:1-13) but often sexual immorality was the normal and expected worship practice at these pagan assemblies. Human sexual activity was a supposed means of assuring the health and fertility of herds, crops, and society. - Utley

÷Rev_2:15

Rev_2:15

the teaching of the Nicolaitans . . In conjunction with Rev_2:14, this may indicate the Nicolaitans' teaching: compromise with pagan religious practices (see Rev_2:6 and note). - FSB

Apparently the teaching of the Nicolaitans were following the same behavior as Balaam's schemes, as well also the teachings of "Jezebel" (Rev_2:20). All of these were promoting pagan, idolatrous worship practices.

likewise the Nicolaitans . . though opposed in Ephesus, were spreading sexual and spiritual infidelity at Pergamum (see Rev_2:6). - ESVSB

which thing I hate . . Instead of these words read **in like manner**. This correction makes it certain that we are not to suppose two immoral sects prevailing at Pergamum, those who held the doctrine of Balaam and those who held that of the Nicolaitans: but one sect holding the doctrine taught by Balaam of old and the Nicolaitans now. The sense is, "thou hast with thee followers of Balaam: he taught God's people to fornicate and to communicate in idol-worship, and the Nicolaitans with thee teach the same." - CBSC

÷Rev_2:16

Rev_2:16

Repent . . The church must turn away from immorality and false teaching to avoid imminent judgment (Rev_2:5; Rev_3:3; Rev_3:19)

If not, I will come to you soon . . Jesus' threat to come soon refers not to the second coming but to his intervention through providence, as at Corinth (1Co_11:30-32). - ESVSB

> The coming could refer to temporal judgment against the church or to the Second Coming of Christ to judge the world. It is significant that the church as a whole was called on to repent (cf. 2Ch_7:14) because of the sins of some; if they did not, the consequences were corporate discipline! - Utley

> He promised that the judgment would come "soon" (*tachys*) ... (cf. Rev_1:1; Rev_22:7, Rev_22:12, Rev_22:20). Christ would contend with them, using the sword of His mouth (cf. Rev_1:16; Rev_2:12; Rev_19:15, Rev_19:21). This again is the Word of God sharply judging all compromise and sin. - BKC

I will make war . . Although not everyone compromised, the church as a whole was guilty of indifference to those who had. Christ Himself would wage war against them, proving the deadly nature of Balaam's teaching. - FSB

the sword from my mouth . . See Rev_1:16 and note; Rev_2:12.

> They would die by the sword proceeding from Christ's mouth. Balaam had died, ironically, by the Israelites' sword (Num_31:8). This judgment would be by the unyielding standard of God's revealed Word that clearly condemns such behavior. Having taken sides with the enemy they could expect God to oppose them in His war against evil. - Constable

÷Rev_2:17
Rev_2:17

overcomes . . *See note on* Rev_2:7

hidden manna . . Heavenly nourishment, in contrast to the food sacrificed to idols in v. 14 (compare Exo_16:32-34; Joh_6:31-35)

hidden manna . . Recalls Exo_16:32-34, where the Lord commands Moses to preserve an omer of manna for future generations. Jesus, the "living bread" from heaven (Joh_6:51), promises everlasting food (cf. Rev_19:9) to this church tempted by idolatrous Roman feasts (Rev_2:14). - NIVZSB

hidden away in heaven . . During the Exodus, a jar of manna was placed in the Ark of the Covenant (Exo_16:33-36). Jewish tradition said that at the coming of the Messiah, the Ark would reappear and manna would be eaten at the messianic banquet. Jesus is the bread from heaven and the bread of life (Joh_6:32-35; cp. Exo_16:4-21). - NLTSB

> *the hidden manna*] The reference is to the pot of manna kept in the Tabernacle, in or before the Ark (Exo_16:34; Heb_9:4), and therefore "hidden" in the unapproachable Sanctuary. The Jews appear to have cherished an opinion that the Ark of the Covenant, and other sacred objects which were wanting in the Second Temple, had not perished with the First, but were concealed before its destruction (see e.g. 2Ma_1:19 sqq., 2Ma_2:4 sqq.), and were preserved somewhere in earth or heaven, to be revealed in the days of the Messiah. But we are not to understand that this Book sanctions the first part of this belief, when Rev_21:22 contradicts the second: passages like Rev_11:19 do not imply that the earthly Temple or its contents have been removed to Heaven, but that, whether the earthly Temple stands or falls, there remains in Heaven the archetype from which it was copied, according to the revelations made to Moses and (through David) to Solomon. See Exo_25:40, Exo_26:30; 1Ch_28:12; Heb_8:5, Heb_9:23 sq. - CBSC

white stone . . White symbolizes purity and victory (see note on Rev_3:5) and recalls the description of manna in Exod 16:31. White stones were associated with acquittal in court and admission to special feasts for athletic victors or members of a guild; - NIVZSBA

white stone . . was often given to victors at the games, and it was common for special banquets or festivities to use a white stone for admission. It therefore suggests acceptance and victory. -NLTSB

and I will give him a white stone . . This stone, also called "Tessera," had many usages in the ancient Near East (1) it could be used for a ticket to special banquets; (2) it could be used to vote for acquittal by a jury; (3) it could be used as a symbol of victory for an athlete; and (4) it could be used to show the freedom of a slave. In this context, #1 seems to be the best ... - Utley

will give him a white stone . . Among the Greeks a white stone was a symbol of acquittal, as a black stone was of guilt. The white stone implies justification, innocence and victory. - PNT

a new name written . . All conjectures concerning this new name are idle. It is only given to those who have finally overcome and cannot be known to us here, but implies their new relation to God and the Lamb in their triumphant state - PNT

and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it . . This new name seems to be a symbol of the New Age or a title for the Messiah (cf. Exo_28:36 ff; Isa_56:5; Isa_62:2; Isa_65:15). This new name is mentioned often in the book of the Revelation (cf. Rev_3:12; Rev_14:1; Rev_19:12-13, Rev_19:16; Rev_22:4). - Utley

on the stone a new name written . . Possibly refers to an invitation to partake in the banquet of the Lamb (Rev_19:9). This would contrast the pagan ceremonies of v. 14; believers had greater festivities awaiting them and did not need to compromise. See Rev_2:7. - FSB

> The ***new name*** probably refers to the recipient's transformed nature in Christ (see Gen 17:5; 32:28; John 1:42). - N:TSB

new name . . A personal message from Christ to the ones He loves, which serves as their admission pass into eternal glory. It is so personal that only the person who receives it will know what it is. - MSB

> The historical parallel to the church in Pergamum is the period following Constantine's legalization of Christianity in A.D. 313 that lasted for about 300 years. When Christianity became the official religion of the empire, paganism overwhelmed it. It became hard to distinguish true Christians because people claiming to be Christians were everywhere. Many of them were practicing pagans who indulged in immoral festivals and all kinds of behavior inconsistent with the teachings of Christianity. Many writers have noted that "Pergamum" comes from the Greek word *gamos* that means marriage. This letter pictures a church married to the world rather than to Christ. - Constable

÷Rev_2:18
Rev_2:18

Thyatira . . A commercial town about 40 miles (64 kilometers) southeast of Pergamum known for its many influential trade guilds, each with a patron deity. Lydia was "a dealer in purple cloth" from Thyatira (Act_16:14). - NIVZSB

Thyatira . . This was probably the least significant city of chs. 2–3, but its letter is the longest. Thyatira was a

center of manufacturing and trade, and the city's commerce was linked to an assortment of religious practices—posing a threat to the Christians who resided there. - FSB

> **Thyatira**, the smallest of the seven cities but the one that received the longest letter, lay about 45 miles to the southeast of Pergamum. [The first three cities were near the coastline, listed south to north; but the next cities are interior and listed north to south.] It was famous for its textiles, especially the production of purple dye (cf. Act_16:14), and its trade guilds. - Constable

Thyatira . . Located halfway between Pergamos and Sardis, this city had been under Roman rule for nearly 3 centuries (ca. 190 b.c.). Since the city was situated in a long valley that swept 40 mi. to Pergamos, it had no natural defenses and had a long history of being destroyed and rebuilt. Originally populated by soldiers of Alexander the Great, it was little more than a military outpost to guard Pergamos. Lydia came from this city on business and was converted under Paul's ministry (Act_16:14-15). - MSB

Son of God . . Occurs only here in Revelation. The other phrases identifying Christ in this verse reflect Rev_1:14-15. - FSB

> The flaming ***eyes*** of the ***Son of God*** indicate penetrating perception; the solid ***feet*** portray Christ's stability, in vivid contrast to the nearby Colossus of Rhodes, which had once been thought to be firmly planted until an earthquake destroyed it. - NLTSB

> Christ's **eyes like a flame of fire** and **feet … like burnished bronze** (cf. 1:14–15) evoke images familiar to Thyatiran metalworkers, as well as echoing OT visions of God's glory (Ezek. 1:27). With fiery eyes, Jesus "searches mind and heart" (Rev. 2:23), and his feet will crush his enemies. - ESVSB

Son of God . . This is not one of the descriptive phrases from chapter 1. This term, like "virgin-born," was used sparingly by NT authors probably because of the possible misunderstanding of pagan hearers, who would immediately relate these terms to their usages in the pagan pantheons. The Homeric gods and goddesses often were sexually active with humans, producing special offspring. - Utley

feet are like burnished bronze . . The words "burnished bronze," which describe His feet, translate a rare Greek word *chalkolibanō*, also used in Rev_1:15. It seems to have been an alloy of a number of metals characterized by brilliance when polished. The reference to His eyes being "like blazing fire" and the brilliant reflections of His feet emphasize the indignation and righteous judgment of Christ. - BKC

Rev_2:19
Rev_2:19

I know . . Christ emphasizes knowing and seeing all things as he praises the Thyatirans. - NLTSB

love and faith . . Essential Christian virtues (cf. 1Th_1:3) - NIVZSB

last works are greater than the first . . Their love for God and one another increased, in contrast to the church in Ephesus (Rev_2:4-5) - FSB

> Thyatira's strengths and weaknesses are the inverse of those at Ephesus. This church is strong in **love** evidenced in **works**; but it lacks discernment and tolerates heresy. - ESVSB

> This verse is Jesus' acknowledgement of the ministry of the believers at Thyatira. They were active in kingdom work and getting even more active. This affirmation, however, did not excuse the heresy of v. 20. - Utley

Rev_2:20
Rev_2:20

Jezebel . . The name of the murderous wife of King Ahab (e.g., 1 Kgs 18:4). Like Balaam, Jezebel is one of the villains of the Bible. Her indictment is probably similar to the one against the Balaamites in Rev_2:14. - FSB

Jezebel . . A false prophet who deceived church members by leading them into moral and religious compromise. Her symbolic name alludes to King Ahab's wife, who promoted unprecedented Baal worship, sorcery, and evil in Israel (1Ki_16:31-32; 1Ki_21:25-26). - NIVSB

> The mention of ***Jezebel,*** who led Israel into pagan idolatry and immorality (1Ki_16:31-33; 1Ki_21:5-26), indicates a serious problem. Like the OT queen who led the pagan cult of Baal (see 1Ki_16:31; 1Ki_18:4; 1Ki_19:1-3), this unknown Jezebel called ***herself a prophet*** but was leading God's people into various forms of ***immorality,*** including sexual misconduct and straying from God into idolatrous alliances and actions (Exo_34:15-16; Psa_106:39; Isa_57:7-8). - NLTSB

> Many scholars think "**Jezebel"** represented an actual woman "***prophetess"*** who was leading people astray in the church of Thyatira. In any case, she symbolizes the prostitute Babylon, who seduces through pleasure and luxury as well as ruthless violence (**Revelation 17**). ESVSB

Jezebel . . Probably a pseudonym for a woman who influenced the church in the way Jezebel influenced the OT Jews into idolatry and immorality. (cf. 1Ki_21:25-26)- MSB

> The church in Thyatira may have first heard the gospel from Lydia, converted through Paul's ministry (Act_16:14-15). Interestingly now a woman, a self-claimed "prophetess," was influencing the church. Her name "**Jezebel**" suggests that she was corrupting the Thyatira church much like Ahab's wife Jezebel corrupted Israel (1Ki_16:31-33). - BKC

> Who "Jezebel" was—whether a real woman, or a personification of a sect,—is almost equally doubtful on any view: but it seems simplest to suppose a real person. - CBSC

sexual immorality … food sacrificed to idols . . Gentile Christians faced pressure to participate in these practices associated with pagan temple worship and guild feasts. Cf. v. 14; Act_15:29; 1Co_8:1. - NIVZSB

sufferest that woman Jezebel . . Either a person or a party of which the wicked wife of Ahab was a type. As a woman in Revelation is a symbol of the church, true or false, I believe this symbol is used to designate a faction in the church at Thyatira of an idolatrous spirit. This faction had teachers who claimed the gift of prophecy. They taught the doctrine of Balaam named in Rev_2:14. - PNT

> Evidently a woman claiming to be a prophetess (cf. Luk_2:36; Act_21:9; 1Co_11:5) had been influencing some in this church to join the local trade guilds without which a tradesman could not work in Thyatira. This meant participation in the guild feasts that included immoral acts and the worship of idols. Her name may or may not have been Jezebel. I think it was not.[128] However her behavior reflected that of wicked Queen Jezebel (**1 Kings 16-2 Kings 9**) who led Israel into immorality and idolatry by advocating Baal worship (cf. Rev_2:14; Act_15:28-29).
>
> > "With her Nicolaitan orientation the prophetess could suggest that since 'an idol has no real existence' (1Co_8:4), believers need not undergo the privation which would follow from unwillingness to go along with the simple requirements of the trade guild." [Mounce, p. 103]- Constable

÷Rev_2:21
Rev_2:21

I gave her space (time) to repent. The long suffering and mercy shown in the delay of judgment are here pointed out. - PNT

> The Lord has given the "prophetess" (v. 20) **time to repent**, or the church time to bring her to discipline. Neither has occurred - ESVSB
>
> Through messengers such as John, Christ had given this false prophet opportunity to ***repent*** of her sinful teachings and actions, but like many, she had refused (cp. Rev_9:20-21). NLTSB
>
> God had not brought judgment on her previously so she might repent (2Pe_3:9). Since she refused to change her ways, God would judge her and her followers unless they repented. - Constable

÷Rev_2:22
Rev_2:22

I will cast her . . Judgment is imminent for Jezebel and her unrepentant followers, whether the sickbed is physical or symbolic. cf. 1Co_11:29-30.

I will cast . . lit. 'I am casting' i.e. am about to cast. Cf. 'I ascend', Joh_20:17. - CBSC

sickbed . . Lit. "bed." Having given this woman time to repent, God was to judge her upon a bed. Since she used a luxurious bed to commit her immorality, and the reclining couch at the idol feast to eat things offered to false gods, He was to give her a bed in hell where she would lie forever. - MSB

unless they repent of her deeds . . This is a THIRD CLASS CONDITIONAL which referred to potential future action but with an element of contingency. - Utley

Rev_2:22-23 **. .** Christ's judgment on this "Jezebel" and her followers comes in three stages: (1) Jezebel is ***on a bed of suffering*** (literally *a bed*); (2) her followers ***will suffer greatly***; and (3) ***her children*** will die (cp. Act_5:5, Act_5:10; 1Co_11:30). This judgment echoes the plagues on Egypt that ended with the deaths of Egypt's firstborn sons (see Exo_12:29-30). - NLTSB

> But if Jezebel be understood to mean a sect rather than an individual woman, it will be possible to distinguish her "adulteries" as metaphorical from the literal "fornication" which she encouraged: if so, her paramours are the false teachers, her children their disciples. - CBSC

÷Rev_2:23

Rev_2:23

her children . . Refers to those who follow in her teaching. - FSB

This does not refer to literal children, but to her followers (cf. Rev_2:22; 2Jn_1:1). - Utley

Her children are the adherents; those who perpetuate the immoral practices. The threat implies that they shall come to certain destruction. - PNT

her children . . The church was about 40 years old as John wrote, and her teaching had produced a second generation, advocating the same debauchery. - MSB

I will kill . . May allude to 2Ki_10:1-11, where Jehu kills the descendants of Ahab, Jezebel's husband. - FSB

and all the churches will know . . This shows that the seven letters were to be read and the truth applied by all the churches, then and now. - Utley

And all the churches shall know . . By reason of the judgments inflicted.

Some have strongly urged that by "Jezebel" is meant a Sybil, half heathen, half Christian, claiming prophetic powers, who is known to have lived in Thyatira. - PNT

I am He who searches the minds and hearts . . The Bible asserts that God knows the motives and thoughts of all humans (cf. Psa_7:9, Psa_26:2; Psa_39:1; Pro_24:12; Jer_11:20; Jer_17:10; Luk_16:15; Act_1:24; Heb_4:12-13; Rom_8:27). - Utley

who searches the minds and hearts . . God has perfect, intimate knowledge of every human heart; no evil can be hidden from Him (Psa_7:9; Pro_24:12; Jer_11:20; Jer_17:10; Jer_20:12). - MSB

he who searches hearts and minds . . Recalls the Lord's self-description in Jer_17:10. - NIVZSB

God sees ***thoughts and intentions*** (see Jer_17:10; Act_1:24; Heb_4:12-13), and he gives whatever sentence people ***deserve*** (see Rev_22:12; Jer_17:10; Mat_16:27). - NLTSB

according to your works . . Always the basis for future judgment (Rev_20:12-13; Mat_16:27; Rom_2:6). - MSB

÷Rev_2:24

Rev_2:24

the rest of you in Thyatira . . After His condemnation, Christ extended a word of exhortation to the godly remnant who existed in the church in Thyatira, implying that the rest of the church was apostate. - BKC

the deep things of Satan . . Jezebel claims secret knowledge, but her teaching comes from Satan and results in death and destruction. - FSB

Satan's so-called deep secrets. Like early Gnostics [See note below on *Gnosticism*], the false teachers may have claimed esoteric insight into "the deep things of God" (1Co_2:10 b) or advocated that believers' superior "knowledge" allowed them to continue to participate in pagan idolatry (cf. 1Co_8:4). Such deep "knowledge" is satanic (cf. Rev_2:9). - NIVZSB

Gnosticism is a term used to designate a variety of beliefs, fundamental to which was a dualistic view of reality. The spiritual world was regarded as good, while the material world, including human bodies, was

regarded as evil. Gnostic views are found reflected in various literary sources, including the works of early church fathers who rejected such Gnostic teaching. - (Introduction to 1John "Gnosticism) - NIVZSB

depths of Satan . . might be a striking reference to the Gnostic god named "Depth" (*Bythos*), who with his partner "Silence" (*Sigē*) formed a philosophic godhead. Gnosticism placed great emphasis on secret knowledge. - NLTSB

Jesus' eyes distinguish sincere believers from those who abandon God's Word to search elsewhere for **the deep things of Satan**, deceptive promises of secret spiritual knowledge through false religions. Those content with the gospel have nothing to fear and no **other burden**, as long as they **hold fast**. - ESVSB

the deep things of Satan . . There are several theories relating to this phrase. It could refer (1) to a catch-phrase of Jezebel and her followers; (2) to the gnostic false teachers' emphasis on knowledge; (3) to the initiation rites of the mystery religions of the Roman Empire; or (4) in an antithetical way, to "the deep things of God" (cf. Rom_11:33; 1Co_2:10; Eph_3:18). - Utley

I place no other burden on you . . This is an affirmation of the true believers in the city of Thyatira. They had an active, aggressive faith (cf. Rev_2:19). - Utley

no other burden . . Yet it is a question whether we may not understand the sentence as if the construction were "I will put on you no other burden *than to* hold fast that which ye have till I come." [cf Rev_2:25] - CBSC

÷Rev_2:25
Rev_2:25

hold fast until I come . . Christ's followers must persevere in the truth. Gal_6:9; 2Th_3:13. WG

On this godly remnant He imposed one simple instruction: **only hold on to what you have until I come**. Perhaps because the church was small, Christ did not command them to leave it but to remain as a godly testimony. Judgment on Jezebel and her followers would come soon and would purge the church. In modern times Christians who find themselves in apostate local churches can usually leave and join another fellowship, but this was impractical under the circumstances in Thyatira. - BKC

÷Rev_2:26
Rev_2:26

overcomes . . "Him who overcomes" probably refers to all Christians (cf. Rev_2:2-3; Rev_2:10 c; Rev_2:13; Rev_2:19; Rev_2:25; Rev_3:3; Rev_3:8; Rev_3:10; 1Jn_5:4-5). The promises given to overcomers in all seven letters and in Rev_21:7 bear this interpretation out. **-** Constable

Also, think of the blessings afforded those who ***overcome***. They inherit all things and realize intimate fellowship with God (Rev_3:20; Rev_21:7). They have God's promise to be with them (Mat_28:20; Heb_13:5-6; Rev_13:10; Rev_14:13). God promises that, if fellowship with Him results in the death of His saints, they will be blessed, rest from their labors (Rev_14:13), continue to live and reign with Christ (Rev_20:4), and the second death will have no power over them (Rev_20:6). What greater security could we desire? - Ogden

I will give him authority over the nations . . cf. Mat_5:5; 1Co_6:3; . The prominence of God's people among the various nations is a common feature of the Scriptures, cf. Psa_2:8-9; Rev_1:6; Rev_20:4;

nations . . The use of this term from the OT implies that ... It becomes a way of referring to godless, wicked peoples (cf. Rev_2:26; Rev_5:9; Rev_10:11; Rev_11:2, 9, 18; Rev_12:5; Rev_13:7; Rev_14:6, 8; Rev_16:19; Rev_17:15; Rev_18:3, 23; Rev_19:15; Rev_20:8). - Utley

power (authority) . . Christ's word, the gospel, is the absolute authority in the world determining what is good, ethical, moral, and just. No matter what the "nations" or world may want to assert.

power . . [authority] . . The word in v. 27 translated "rule" (*poimanei*) means "to shepherd". The quote in verse 28 refers to Christ's rule, his shepherdling. The shepherd has an "iron" staff or club to smash the wolves, or enemies of his flock, and will "dash them to pieces." - WG

÷Rev_2:27
Rev_2:27

v. 27 . . A quote from Psa_2:9.

rule . . The word translated "rule" (*poimanei*) means "to shepherd". This quote from Psa_2:9 (the Septuigent) refers to Christ's rule, his shepherding. The shepherd has an "iron" staff or club to smash the wolves, or enemies of his flock, and will "dash them to pieces." - WG

rule them with a rod of iron . . Lit. "shepherd them with an iron rod." - MSB

2:26–28 . . Christ promises that those who are obedient will share ***authority*** with him, as symbolized by the ***iron rod*** that will ***smash*** the opposition ***like clay pots*** (quoting Psa_2:8-9, Greek version; cp. Rev_12:5; Rev_19:15). NLTSB

I also have received authority from my Father . . Jesus has already been given all authority (cf. **Ps. 2**; Mat_28:18; Php_2:9-11). - Utley

÷Rev_2:28
Rev_2:28

the morning start . . The ***morning star*** is the planet Venus, which signals the coming of a new day. Here it refers to the promise of resurrection at Christ's return (Rev_22:16; 2Pe_1:19). - NLTSB

the morning star . . In Rev_22:16, this refers to Jesus. It is probably an allusion* to Num_24:17, where it is associated with the tribe of Judah. - FSB

> * *allusion* A figure of speech that makes an implied or indirect reference to literature, culture, history, etc., leaving the reader or hearer to make the connection.

morning star . . Christ (Rev_22:16). Balaam identified a star and scepter as Messianic symbols (Num_24:17). - NIVZSB

> [This knowledge and understanding by the "wise men from the east" Mat_2:1-2 that brough them to Jerusalem, then to Bethlehem, seeing the one who was born king. WG]

the morning star . . The Scriptures do not explain this expression but Jesus use the similar express later Rev_22:16 as a reference to himself. - WG

÷Rev_2:29
Rev_2:29

hear what the Spirit says . . The letter to Thyatira closes with the familiar exhortation to **hear what the Spirit says to the churches**. Unlike the earlier letters, this exhortation follows rather than precedes the promise to overcomers, and this order is followed in the letters to the last three churches. - FSB

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches . . This admonition is repeated throughout the letters to the seven churches (cf. Rev_2:7, 11, 17, 29; Rev_3:6, 13, 22). It was a phrase that came from the words of Jesus (cf. Mat_11:15; Mat_13:9, 43). Spiritual truth must be responded to by mind and hand. This is similar to the Hebrew term *shema*, "hear so as to do" (cf. Deu_5:1; Deu_6:4; Deu_9:1; Deu_20:3; Deu_27:9-10). - Utley

÷Rev_3:1

Rev_3:1

Chapter 3 - The Epistles continued

Sardis, vv. 1-6
Philadelphia, vv. 7-13
Laodicea, vv. 14-22

Rev_3:1 ***Sardis*** -- see WG's PowerPoint sermon on "Sardis - Church of the Living Dead". http://home.hiwaay.net/~wgann ; See **Jas_5:19** note on APOSTASY

angel . . "*messenger*"; perhaps a reference to the congregational "reader" who read this to the church, Rev_1:3. WG

Sardis . . nearly 50 miles (80 kilometers) east of Smyrna on the southeast highway from Pergamum and Thyatira, was home to a large colony of prosperous Jews, called "Sephardic" after the city's ancient name. Its fortified acropolis gave its inhabitants an overconfident sense of security. - NLTSB

> **Sardis . .** Sardis's capture twice in its history while watchmen neglected their duty became a cautionary tale of misguided complacency and lack of vigilance (see note on vv. 2–3). Although Jesus' rebuke identifies no specific source of attack, this congregation was similarly asleep, at death's door. Most of the impressive Roman-era remains now visible at Sardis were constructed after the tragic earthquake of a.d. 17. The emperor Tiberius helped sponsor reconstruction efforts, earning greater local renown for himself. In John's day the civic structures included a theater, a stadium, a central marble road, and multiple temples (esp. the monumental temple of Artemis). Many Jewish inscriptions also exist in Sardis, confirming the multiple references in Josephus to Sardis's Jewish population (*Jewish Antiquities* 14.235, 259–261; 16.171). - ESVSB

Sardis . . A military stronghold in antiquity, Sardis had a reputation for being impregnable, though in fact it had been conquered twice in its history. Archaeologists have uncovered a massive temple there dedicated to Artemis. - FSB

seven spirits . . Three principle interpretations: **1)** a reference to the fullness of the Holy Spirit, (See note on "seven spirits" Rev_1:4); **2)** a reference to the seven churches, just as Jesus has the seven stars in his hands, Rev_1:20. **3)** an allusion to the seven angels who stand before God [Rev_8:2; Rev_8:6; Rev_15:1; Rev_15:6; Rev_15:7; Rev_15:8; Rev_16:1; Rev_17:1; Rev_21:9;] - WG

the seven spirits of God . . (cf. note on Rev_1:4). A figurative description of the one Holy Spirit, who issues an edict to each of the seven churches (Rev_2:7; Rev_2:11; Rev_2:17; etc.). He will also appear as the Lamb's seven eyes, sent throughout the earth (Rev_5:6). - ESVSB

He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars . . This phrase is another allusion to the glorified Christ (cf. Rev_1:4; Rev_1:16; Rev_1:20). The seven stars refer to the churches and her leaders in Rev_1:20; the seven spirits may be a related metaphor because in Rev_4:5 they are related to the seven lampstands, which are also mentioned in Rev_1:20 as referring to the churches. - Utley

seven spirits .. The "seven Spirits" probably refer to the seven principle angels of God (cf. Rev_1:4). The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches (Rev_1:20). Christ also reminded the readers of His lordship over the churches (the "seven stars," Rev_1:20; Rev_2:1). - Constable

[cf *the seven angels who stand before God,* . Rev_1:20; Rev_8:2; Rev_8:6; Rev_15:1; Rev_15:6; Rev_15:7; Rev_15:8; Rev_16:1; Rev_17:1; Rev_21:9;]

and the seven stars . . Cf. Rev_2:1. We find the "Spirits" and the "stars," i.e. Angels, mentioned coordinately, a further argument against identifying the Spirits with Angels, even angels other than these. These attributes of Christ are mentioned, because He speaks as Judge of the Churches: cf. 1 Cor. 2:15 for the conception of *judgement* as the Spirit's work. - CBSC

you are dead . . Although they appear alive, they are spiritually dead. This church receives the harshest censure among the seven. - FSB

Sardis believers are spiritually complacent and deceived by their reputation. They must stir to action, repent, and embrace a new identity and way of life. - NIVZSB

This was a devastating revelation. They thought they were right with God, spiritually pleasing to Him (cf. Isa_29:13; Rom_2:19-20; Col_2:16-23; 2Ti_3:5), but they were not! - Utley

÷Rev_3:2

Rev_3:2

Wake Up . . Though Sardis had a reputation as an impregnable military stronghold (a defensive acropolis), twice it fell because of sleeping watchmen (to forces of Cyrus 546 BC and to Antiochus III, 218 BC the watchmen on the walls failed to detect an enemy army sneaking up its supposedly impregnable cliffs and walls).

The church at Sardis (and today) must awake from spiritual slumber.

Be watchful . . Literally "*Become watching*" or "awake and watch" - cf. CBSC

strengthen the things that remain . . This is an AORIST ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. They were to act now and continue to act to preserve what remained of their dying faith. - Utley

the things which remain . . The elements of goodness, or means of goodness, which thou hast not yet lost. - CBSC

about to die . . Because the believers in Sardis were complacent and lacked spiritual vigilance, they were close to death. - FSB

perfect .. complete .. "mature, perfect, equipped for the assigned task." Lit. *fulfilled*, as we say "up to the mark."

before God . . Some Gk MSS read "***before my God"*** The Church *had* name of being alive among men: but its works needed to come up to ***God's*** standard.

Rev_3:3
Rev_3:3

remember . . repent . .

keep . . or *hold fast.* The word is the same as in Rev_1:3, where see note. Here the sense is more like 1Co_11:2; 1Ti_6:20, where however the Greek verb used is different: 1Ti_6:14, where it is the same as here, bridges the interval between the two. -CBSC

remember what you have received and heard . . This relates to the gospel which they ***heard*** and continued to ***receive***. Christianity is not a decision only, but a lifestyle relationship. - Utley

come like a thief . . The NT often uses this analogy for Jesus' second coming (Rev_16:15; Mat_24:42-44; Luk_12:39; 1Th_5:2; 2Pe_3:10). Here Jesus warns that he will come like a thief in judgment if the church refuses to repent. - FSB

come upon you as a thief . . Here the reference is not to Christ's second coming (cf. Rev_16:15; 1Th_5:2; 2Pe_3:10), but to His sudden and unexpected coming to His unrepentant, dead church to inflict harm and destruction. - MSB

...but here plainly of a particular judgement upon this one Church. - CBSC

Rev_3:4
Rev_3:4

garments . . The putting on and taking off of clothing was used as a metaphor of the Christian life (cf. Eph_4:22, Eph_4:24, Eph_4:25, Eph_4:31; Col_3:8, Col_3:10, Col_3:12, Col_3:14; Heb_12:1; Jas_1:21; 1Pe_2:1). Some believers had not compromised with pagan culture. - Utley

who have not defiled their clothing . . Christ offers encouragement to those few in Sardis who had not compromised with the surrounding culture. The use of clothing imagery may allude to Sardis' prominent garment industry. - FSB

Sardis was famous for its textile industry, but most in the church had "soiled" or defiled spiritual garments (cf. Rev_14:4; Jud_1:23). - NIVZSB

soiled … **clothes . .** represent an impure life (Zec_3:4), while ***white*** clothes depict purity (see Rev_6:11; Rev_7:13-14; Rev_22:14). - NLTSB

who have not defiled their garments . . Defiled means "to smear, to pollute," or "to stain," and garments refer to character. There were a few whose character was still godly (cf. Jud_1:23). - MSB

Garments which were cleansed (Rev_1:5; Rev_7:14) by the Blood of Christ, but may be defiled again by deadly sin. See 1Jn_1:6-7

walk . . expresses how a person lives (see Gen_17:1; Psa_81:13; Psa_82:5; Rom_8:4; Gal_5:16). - NLTSB

they will walk with me in white . . This is language of purity. It also symbolizes victory: Citizens would wear white clothing in a Roman triumphal procession. - FSB

"The reference was to the day of a Roman triumph. All work ceased and the true Roman citizen donned the pure white toga. The specially privileged few—usually the civic authorities and sometimes relations or friends of the victorious general who was being honoured—had a part in the triumphal procession. Clad in white, these Sardian believers were also to walk in triumph with their Captain in the day of His triumph. They had remained loyal to Him and would share His honour in the day of His glory."
(Ramsay, pp. 386–88; Colin J. Hemer, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting*, p. 147; J. Massyngberde Ford, *Revelation*, p. 413.)

Their unsoiled **garments** symbolize consistent obedience and courageous faith. Christ promises them the conqueror's reward: communion with himself (**walk with me**) and the **white** raiment of victory (cf. note on Rev_2:17; also Rev_7:14). - ESVSB

in white . . The white garments of all the redeemed (cf. Rev_6:11; Rev_7:9, 13; Rev_19:8, 14), speak of holiness and purity.
Such white robes are reserved for Christ (Mat_17:2; Mar_9:3), holy angels (Mat_28:3; Mar_16:5), and the glorified church (Rev_19:8, 14). In the ancient world, white robes were commonly worn at festivals and celebrations. - MSB

Rev_3:5
Rev_3:5

He who overcomes . . Four things will be given to the one who overcomes: (1) he will walk with the Messiah, v. 4; (2) he will be clothed in white; (3) his name will never be blotted out of the book of life; and (4) the Messiah will acknowledge him as His own in the presence of the Father and His angels. - Utley

overcomes . . The one who is victorious. See note on Rev_2:7. **white**. Contrasts with soiled clothes. People wore white garments for festivals, sacred ceremonies, and Roman celebrations; here they signify purity, cleansing, and end-time victory (Rev_3:18; Rev_7:9; Rev_19:14; Isa_61:10).

he who overcomes . . clothed . . Their unsoiled **garments** symbolize consistent obedience and courageous faith. Christ promises them the conqueror's reward: communion with himself (**walk with me**) and the **white** raiment of victory (cf. note on Rev_2:17; also Rev_7:14). - ESVSB

the book of life . . The record of those who will inherit eternal life (Rev_20:12; Exo_32:32-34; Dan_12:1). See also Dan_7:12; Rev_17:8; Php_4:3; Luk_10:20.
Believers in Jesus will have eternal (Joh_3:16-17).
For God to ***erase*** a name implies condemnation and eternal death (see Exo_32:32-33; Psa_69:28).

confess . . Jesus will confess their name before the Father, since they have confessed Jesus in hostile circumstances (Mat_10:32).

Rev_3:6
Rev_3:6

The one who has an ear . . Recalls Jesus' exhortation throughout the Gospels (e.g., Mat_13:9; Mat_13:43): Hear, understand, and respond accordingly. This is reflected in the closing of each message to the seven churches (Rev_2:11, Rev_2:17; Rev_2:29; Rev_3:6; Rev_3:13; Rev_3:22). - FSB
Echoes similar exhortations in the Gospels (Mat_11:15; Mar_4:9) and the Prophets (Isa_6:9-10;

Eze_3:27) to hear and respond to God's Word. - NIVZSB

what the Spirit says .. The one who addresses the churches (Rev_2:7) and inspires prophecy (Rev_19:10) and speaks directly in (Rev_22:17), confirming the exhortation and promise in Rev_2:12-13. - NIVZSB

÷Rev_3:7

Rev_3:7

See "Revelation-WG" Topic notes for information on the seven churches of Asia.

Philadelphia . . An important commercial and agricultural city (modern Alashehir, Turkey) 30 miles (48 kilometers) southeast of Sardis. The city was an important commercial stop on a major trade route called the Imperial Post Road, a first century mail route. It was home to temples to Zeus and the emperor. Following the devastating earthquake of AD 17, Philadelphia (meaning "*brotherly love"*) was temporarily renamed Neocaesarea (meaning "Caesar's new city") out of gratitude for the emperor's aid. - NIVZSB

Although Scripture does not mention this church elsewhere, it was probably the fruit of Paul's extended ministry in Ephesus (cf. Act_19:10).

holy … true . . A common description in this book (Rev_4:8; Rev_6:10; Rev_15:3; Rev_16:7; Rev_19:2, Rev_19:11). Christ shares the holy, sinless, pure nature of His Father (Psa_16:10; Isa_6:3; Isa_40:25; Isa_43:15; Hab_3:3; Mar_1:11, Mar_1:24; Joh_6:69; Act_3:14); that is, He is absolutely pure and separate from sin. "True" can refer both to one who speaks truth, and who is genuine or authentic as opposed to fake. - MSB
key of David . . It describes one who has the right (authority) to rule.

The "key of David" seems to refer to Isa_22:20-23 where Hezekiah's servant, Eliakim, received authority over David's house including access to all the king's treasures (2Ki_18:18)

Jesus claimed to have God's full administrative authority to distribute or not distribute all God's resources according to His will. - Constable

Quote from Isa_22:22. Illustrates that this prophecy Isaiah spoke regarding Eliakim had a second application to Christ as having the "Key of David."

key of David … opens … shuts . . Alludes to Isa_22:22. The Jews probably excluded Philadelphian Christians from the synagogue (cf. Rev_3:9), but Christ stresses his supreme authority to "open" and "shut" the doors of the kingdom (cf. Matt 16:19). - *NIVSB*

In Rev_1:18 He is pictured holding the keys to death and hell—here, the keys to salvation and blessing. - MSB

the one who opens and no one can shut . . Indicates Christ's authority to admit or exclude. In light of Rev_3:8 and Rev_3:12, this may refer to the new Jerusalem (ch. 21). -FSB

As the gatekeeper of heaven, Jesus has authority to ***open*** and ***close*** the way to heaven (cp. Mat_16:19; Joh_14:6 . - NLTSB

÷Rev_3:8

Rev_3:8

I know your works . . Commendation. Christ's common refrain throughout these letters (see Rev_2:2; Rev_2:19; Rev_3:1; Rev_3:15).

an open door . . the Christians there apparently were not prosperous, and they lacked status and power. But Christ had ***opened a door*** for them (see Rev_3:7) to claim his status and authority. In spite of their weakness, the Philadelphia church ***obeyed*** Christ's ***word*** and ***did not deny*** him under pressure. - NLTSB

an open door . . An opportunity for ministry (Col_4:3) or more likely, access to God's kingdom as in Rev_3:7 (Act_14:27). - NIVZSB

For Paul, open doors were opportunities for ministry (1Co_16:9; 2Co_2:12; Col_4:3). That sense is possible here; but since these Christians, excluded by the synagogue, would become pillars in God's temple (Rev_3:12), probably Jesus sets before them the "door standing open" into God's heavenly sanctuary (Rev_4:1). - ESVSB

door that no one is able to shut . . May indicate that the believers in Philadelphia had been excommunicated from the local synagogue. The "synagogue of Satan" reference in the following verse, contrasted with the believer's establishment as permanent fixtures in the temple of God in Rev_3:12, supports this conclusion. - FSB

Probably the false Jews mentioned in the next verse denied the title of the Christians in Philadelphia to the privileges of brotherhood—whence we may suppose that they were mostly Gentiles. Christ answers, that He would grant what they refused. - CBSC

little strength . . The congregation was probably small and of little importance in the city, yet they remained faithful.

have not denied my name . . Alludes to Mat_10:32-33; cf. Rev_2:13.

÷Rev_3:9
Rev_3:9

synagogue of Satan . . See Rev_2:9 and note.

who say they are Jews . . Who is the **real Israel today**? Rom_2:28-29; Rom_4:12-14; Rom_9:4-8; Gal_3:27-29; Rev_2:9; Rev_3:9; 1Co_10:18. God's ***Israel*** today is not that nation in Palestine called by that name, but His people who live by faith in Him and His Son Jesus Christ.

say that they are Jews . . but instead they are serving as God's enemy as they persecute Christians. This refers to Jewish opposition to the gospel, for they had rejected the Messiah. The church, not unbelieving Jews, is the true people of God, and the real Israel of today.

who say they are Jews . . This is another indication of the early date (AD 66-69) of this letter. It was written before the fall and disgrace of the Jewish nation. After AD 70 the Jews had little influence to persecute the Christians. Persecution after AD 70 came from the Roman authorities and pagans.

I will make them come and kneel . . The church would be vindicated before nonbelieving Jews in the city (compare Isa_60:14). - FSB

The church's human enemies will ultimately ***acknowledge that*** Christians ***are the ones*** God loves. - NLTSB

fall down at your feet. Jesus' followers will be vindicated before their Jewish persecutors - NIVZSB

The fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple in AD 70 vindicated Jesus' prophecy of Mat_24:1-2 ff, and Mar_13:1-4 and following. This is another indication that this Revelation is before the events of AD 70. (Eze_36:23)

to know that I have loved thee . . The pronoun "I" is emphatic. The final fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple in AD 70 was a "sign" to the Jews that the Messiah had come already and they had put him to death, but He was now in heaven just as the Christians taught.

(See note on Mat_24:30, where you should note the word order in the Greek is as it is in the KJV and the RSV; here many modern translations miss the Greek word order and give a misinterpretation due to the story of Constantine seeing a sign of the cross in the sky and legalizing Christianity in the empire in 4th century AD.)

Rev_3:10
Rev_3:10

you have kept the word . . To those who **have kept** his word, Christ promises, "**I will keep you**" from the coming **hour of trial**, which will put **those who dwell on the earth** to the test.

The coming wrath of God is described in detail throughout chaps 6-19, and features the unleashing of divine wrath in judgments as expressed in the seals, trumpet, and bowls.

Jesus is not promising to keep His church from persecution because in the letters to the seven churches persecution, even death, was occurring.

It is crucial to distinguish between the "tribulations" believers endure in faith and "the wrath of God" that falls on an unbelieving world.

I will keep you . . Jesus will ***protect*** Christians who ***persevere*** through trials (cp. Isa_43:2-4; Joh_10:27-28; 1Co_10:13; Heb_6:18-19). - NLTSB

which is about to come . . Rev_1:1-3 indicates the judgment of which this book is about, was to come ***soon***, for the ***time is at hand***. The Jews who were the great merchants and bankers of the world and spread through out the Roman empire would soon be brought low, as well as the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem.

the whole world . . the Roman Empire (Luk_2:1; Act_11:28).
Rev_3:11
Rev_3:11

I am coming quickly . . To the church at Philadelphia this was not a threatening judgment, but a hopeful promise that the church there would be delivered out of the hour of trial. (Heb_10:25)

I am coming quickly . . Rev_1:1-3**;** It is a Revelation about ***things that must shortly come to pass*** Rev_1:1; Rev_1:3; Rev_22:6; Rev_22:10

Note that when John finishes the book the Lord says he is ***coming quickly***, that is, to bring about the judgment of which he speaks in this book. Rev_22:20 .

If the book is about the final coming of the Lord and the final great day of jument, then John is wrong ***OR*** the judgment of which John writes about, did come soon, for the *time was at hand* when John wrote this.

Some who would say the judgment is about the fall of the Roman empire in the 5th century A.D. However, that interpretation does not fit in either with all the specification that the event was *soon*, would come *quickly*, and *was at hand*.

that no man take thy crown . . i.e. rob thee of it: the image of a race or other contest. See Rev_2:10.

crown . . This is another reference to the *stephanos* crown mentioned in Rev_2:10. It was a reward for faithfulness.

Rev_3:12
Rev_3:12

who overcomes . . Victorious.

a pillar . . Used of chief men in the Church in Gal_2:9, and perhaps 1Ti_3:15. All Christians are living-stones in the Temple (Eph_2:20 sqq., 1Pe_2:5), - CBSC

a pillar . . The temple was the dwelling place of God. Paul refers to believers, both individually and corporately, as the temple of God (1Co_3:16-17). The language here describes the believer's permanent residence in the abode and presence of God. - FSB

pillar in the temple . . Contrasts with pagan temples felled by the earthquake and perhaps with the Jerusalem temple destroyed in AD 70. Victorious believers will never be excluded from God's presence in the new Jerusalem (Rev_21:2-4). For the church as God's temple, see note on 2Co_6:16. - NIVZSB

I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God . . Philadelphia was in an earthquake area; the metaphor of a pillar conveyed the concept of stability. Prominent citizens' names were inscribed on the pillars of the temples in Philadelphia. The term "temple" here is a term (*naos*) from the verb "to dwell" and was used of the place where deity's very presence dwelt. The overcoming believers will never have to leave God's presence (cf. Psa_23:6; Psa_27:4-6). - Utley

go no more out . . Always dwell there. - PNT

I will write on him . . As a means of identification and belonging (compare Isa_62:2; Eze_48:35). The rewards for endurance and perseverance throughout Revelation all point to an abiding presence and relationship with God and Christ (see Rev_21:3-5). - FSB

my new name . . Philadelphia had taken on Caesar's name after the city's destruction (see note on Rev_3:7), but Jesus promises them a new identity (cf. Rev_2:17; Rev_14:1; Rev_22:4) and citizenship in a glorious, eternal city (Rev_21:2; Php_3:20; Heb_11:10, Heb_11:16; Heb_12:22). - NIVZSB

name of My God . . In biblical times, one's name spoke of his character. Writing His name on us speaks of imprinting His character on us and identifying us as belonging to Him. - MSB

new Jerusalem . . the new abiding place with God, His church. Note that the "new Jerusalem" is not heaven, for it ***comes down out of heaven.*** Rev_21:2

Rev_3:13
Rev_3:13

See note on **Rev_3:6**

Rev_3:14
Rev_3:14

Laodicea . . Located in the Lycus River Valley Laodicea was situated about 42 miles (65 kilometers) southeast of Philadelphia and 80 miles east of Ephesus, and was the economic and judicial center of a metropolitan region that included Colosse and Hierapolis. Laodicea had a famous medical school and was notable for its eye salve.

After a severe earthquake (AD 60), Laodicea refused aid from Rome and rebuilt their city themselves

(Tacitus, *Annals* 14.27), making it very beautiful.

Apparently Paul never visit Laodicea. Epaphras likely evangelized Laodicea and nearby Colossae and Hierapolis (Col_1:7; Col_4:13). All three of these churches are named by Paul in the Colossian letter, and an epistle, now probably lost, was sent to Laodicea. [Many believe the epistle to the Ephesians was a circular letter intended to be read by all the churches in that area and that this is the letter mentioned in Colossians. Col_4:16.]

the Amen . . A common biblical expression signifying certainty and veracity (cf. Isa_65:16, "the God of truth"). According to 2Co_1:20, all the promises of God are fulfilled in Christ; that is, all God's promises and unconditional covenants are guaranteed and affirmed by the person and work of Jesus Christ. - MSB

the Amen . . Isa_65:16 is specially noticeable, where "the God of *truth*" is in the Hebrew "the God of Amen" - CBSC

Faithful and True Witness . . He is a completely trustworthy and perfectly accurate witness to the truth of God (Joh_14:6). - MSB

[Only the Apostle John supplied information bilingually in the New Testament (cf. Joh_1:38, Joh_1:42; Joh_4:25; Joh_6:1; Joh_9:7; Joh_11:16; Joh_19:13, Joh_19:17, Joh_19:20; Joh_20:16; Rev_1:7; Rev_3:14; Rev_9:11; Rev_12:9).]

faithful and true . . The description of Christ as ***the faithful and true witness*** declares that he knew them as they really were: Though wealthy and proud of their status and accomplishments, they were not measuring up to God's expectations. - NLTSB

the Beginning of the creation . . Jesus' self-designation as *the beginning of God's creation* does not mean that he is God's first creation (cf. notes on Col_1:15-17) but that he is the one who began God's creation (cf. note on Joh_1:3).

In Revelation, "the beginning" with its complement "the end" is an expression for God's eternity (cf. Rev_21:6; Rev_22:13), and here it signifies Christ's sovereign rule over the created order. - ESVSB

the originator of God's creation . . The Greek word used here to describe Christ can mean "ruler" or "originator." Compare Joh_1:1-5; Col_1:15-18. - FSB

He is the "Beginning" (lit. "beginner, originator, initiator") of creation (cf. Joh_1:3; Joh_3:14) and the "firstborn of creation"; that is, the most preeminent, supreme person ever born (Col_1:15). - MSB

the beginning . . Or *the ruler,* or *the source.* - NLTSB

the beginning of the creation of God . . Exactly equivalent to Col. 1:15 - CBSC

÷Rev_3:15
Rev_3:15

I know your deeds (works) . .

you are neither cold nor hot . . This imagery alludes to the water system at Laodicea. It had cold water piped in from the eastern mountains (8 miles), and water piped in from the hot springs toward Hierapolis (5 miles). Both were good and enjoyable for their purpose. But when mixed they produced a nauseous lukewarm mixture.

Like the water, the church at Laodicea was neither refreshing (like cold water) nor healing (like hot

spring water).

[Some speakers think the "cold" water represents indifference and that the "hot" represents a zealous fervent spirit to be imitated. But actually both the "cold" and "hot" were good. It was the "***lukewarm***" that was criticized. Rev_3:16]

neither hot nor cold . . The hot springs in Hierapolis were famous for their healing qualities. Colossae was equally famous for its cold, refreshing springs. In contrast, the water available in Laodicea was smelly and ***lukewarm***. Such water is distasteful; Jesus was saying that the church's indecisive commitment to him was revolting. - NLTSB

Rev_3:16
Rev_3:16

lukewarm . . tepid. Nearby Hierapolis was famous for its hot springs, and Colosse for its cold, refreshing mountain stream. But Laodicea had dirty, tepid water that flowed for miles through an underground aqueduct. Visitors, unaccustomed to it, immediately spat it out. The church at Laodicea was neither cold, openly rejecting Christ, nor hot, filled with spiritual zeal. Instead, its members were lukewarm, hypocrites professing to know Christ, but not truly belonging to Him (cf. Mat_7:21 ff.). - MSB

because thou art lukewarm . . The image is of course taken from the tendency of lukewarm water to excite vomiting. It is *intended* to be an offensive one, interfering with the self-satisfied refinement to which it is addressed. - CBSC

neither hot nor cold . . The hot springs in Hierapolis were famous for their healing qualities. Colosse was equally famous for its cold, refreshing springs. In contrast, the water available in Laodicea was smelly and ***lukewarm***.

Such water is distasteful; Jesus was saying that the church's indecisive commitment to him was revolting. - NLTSB

cold nor hot . . Cold and **hot** water represent something positive, for cold water refreshes in the heat, and hot water is a tonic when one is chilly. - ESVSB

I will vomit you out of My mouth . . Just like the dirty, tepid water of Laodicea, these self-deceived hypocrites sickened Christ. - MSB

I will . . Rather, **I shall soon**, or, **I am likely to** …: the word used does not necessarily imply that the intention is final, and Rev_3:19 shews that it is not. - CBSC

Rev_3:17
Rev_3:17

I am rich . . Thanks to its banking industry, Laodicea was a wealthy city. Like the city, the church there had convinced itself that it was self-sufficient—but was deceived about its true spiritual state. - FSB

Although Christians in Laodicea felt prosperous and self-sufficient, Jesus accurately saw their ***wretched and miserable and poor*** spiritual condition. - NLTSB

Worldly prosperity had, probably, made the church indifferent. - PNT

This church received no commendation, a fact that makes this letter unique compared to the other six. - Constable

I am rich, and increased with goods . . The words in the original are cognate, as it were, *"I am rich, and have gotten riches."* If there be any distinction of sense between them, the second expresses pride in the riches being his own acquisition, in addition to self-complacency in the enjoyment. - CBSC

I am rich . . Recalls Israel's boast in Hos_12:8 and Laodicea's decision to decline imperial assistance and fund its own rebuilding after the earthquake in AD 60. The church boasted of its self-sufficiency and overlooked its need for God's help. - NIVZSB

> Verses 17 and 18 are a historical allusion to Laodicea as a center of banking, a center for dyed wool, and a center for eye salve. The tragedy of their prosperity was that they thought they had so much when they had so little (Rev_3:1). - Utley

that thou art wretched . . Inadequate: read **that thou art the wretched and miserable one**, &c.: the one person truly to be called so, above all others—at least, above all the other six Churches. - CBSC

knowest not that thou are wretched . . Because rejected by the Lord. **Poor.** Destitute of the true riches. **Blind.** Blinded by the god of this world. - PNT

Rev_3:18
Rev_3:18

I counsel you . . Jesus' prescription for Laodicea required a complete change of attitude from self-reliance to dependence on God. - NLTSB
"In Christ are all the treasures of wisdom" (Col_2:3).

I counsel thee . . "There is deep irony in this word. One *who has need of nothing*, yet needs counsel on the vital points of self-preservation." - CBSC

gold … white clothes … salve . . The church's spiritual destitution contrasts with the city's reputation for banking, fine wool, and medicine. They must "buy" from Jesus true spiritual resources (cf. Isa_55:1-3) [where God's offer was free, but described as a cost] . - NIVSB

buy gold from me . . Materially, they could buy whatever they wanted, but they needed to acquire the treasures of heaven so they would have spiritual riches through faith in Christ. - NLTSB

> Since they considered themselves to be rich but were spiritually poor Jesus urged them to "buy," implying self-sacrifice, the things they really needed (cf. Isa_55:1). Instead of real gold they should buy "gold refined by fire," namely, pure spiritual riches (cf. Psa_66:10; Pro_17:3; Zec_13:9; Luk_12:21; 1Ti_6:18; Jas_1:3; Jas_2:5; 1Pe_1:7; 1Pe_4:12). - Constable

gold refined by fire . . Describes true wealth, as opposed to the money the Laodiceans made from commercial pursuits. This is a metaphor for removing sin (e.g., Job_23:10; Pro_27:21). - FSB

purified by fire . . While material wealth will not withstand God's purging *by fire* (cp. 1Co_3:12-15), spiritual wealth has eternal value. - NLTSB

white garments . . represent spiritual purity. Black wool cloth and garments were prized exports of the city of Laodicea. This famous black wool cloth was a source of Laodicea's material wealth; it probably represents the Laodiceans' proud and unredeemed spiritual condition. - NLTSB

Instead of the black garments that were popular in Laodicea they should buy "white garments" that symbolize righteous conduct (Rev_19:8) - Constable

***that* the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed . .** In the OT nakedness was a sign of defeat, judgment, and poverty. - Utley

eye salve . . The Laodicean medical school was known for producing eye salve. Christ prescribes His salve as the cure for spiritual blindness. - FSB

Laodicea's material prosperity was also due to their well-known Phrygian eye ***ointment,*** which may have been used there in the eye clinic associated with the famed physician Demosthenes Philalethes. The Laodiceans needed to buy *ointment* from Christ through faith. Only his eye salve would enable them to ***see*** their sin and repent. - NLTSB

Instead of the eye salve that the Laodiceans produced and sold they should purchase spiritual "eye salve," probably a reference to the Word of God that enables us to see life realistically (cf. Joh_9:6; 1Jn_2:20, 1Jn_2:27).

Rev_3:19
Rev_3:19

I love . . The pronoun **"I"** stands emphatically at the beginning of the sentence ...
—as it were, "My way with those ***I love*** (the word is a strong one, expressing affection, not simply charity), is to shew them their faults," not to "prophesy smooth things," and encourage the self-complacent temper that was destroying the Laodiceans.
In every other case, the Lord has noted both the good and the evil in the Church, and generally the good first: here He does nothing but find fault, but He adds in effect, "Do not suppose from this that I do not love you." - CBSC

As many as I love . . Alludes to (Pro_3:11-12; Heb_12:5-6) Christ will ***correct and discipline*** those whom he loves; (2Ti_2:13).
Like a loving father, [φιλῶ] Christ will **reprove** those whom he loves (cf. Pro_3:12), calling them to repent before he intervenes in judgment. - ESVSB

rebuke . . This Greek term *elegchō* is used in the sense of "to expose and thereby to heal or correct" (cf. Joh_3:20; Eph_5:11-14). - Utley
The word "rebuke" is more often rendered "reprove:" see e.g. Joh_16:8; Eph_5:11; Eph_5:13; its meaning here is exactly what we express by "working conviction of sin." - CBSC

chasten .. (discipline) . . Being disciplined by God is a sign that we are members of His family (cf. Job_5:17; Pro_3:12; Psa_94:12; Heb_12:6). - Utley

be zealous . . (Pres. Act .Imp.)It is from the same word root as "hot" or "boiling" (*zestos*) used in Rev_3:15-16. Knowing and serving God must be a flaming passion and lifestyle. - Utley

repent . . (A. Act. Imp.) There is a recurring insistence throughout these seven letters that Christians.

Rev_3:20
Rev_3:20

I stand at the door and knock . . not as a homeless transient seeking shelter but as the master of the house, expecting alert servants to respond immediately to his signal and welcome his entrance (Luk_12:35-36; Jas_5:9). - ESVSB

I stand at the door and knock . . This is a PERFECT ACTIVE INDICATIVE, "I stand and continue to stand at the door" followed by a PRESENT ACTIVE INDICATIVE "and continue to knock."

Although this church received no word of praise, it did receive a warm invitation. This is not the invitation to become a Christian, but rather an invitation to return to vital fellowship with Christ. This verse is often used out of context to refer to evangelism. - Utley

I stand at the door and knock . . Describes a request for a renewal of fellowship (e.g., Son_5:2). In their self-sufficiency, the church in Laodicea had locked Christ out. He wants them to repent and, ultimately, take part in the coming messianic banquet (Rev_19:9). - FSB

A person or a church must ***hear*** Jesus knocking and ***open the door*** to him. Christ provides a pattern of revival for a church that has grown spiritually weak and out of fellowship with him. Simply opening the door can renew their former bond. - NLTSB

stand … knock. Suggests the return of a lover (Son_5:2) or master (Luk_12:36). Jesus addresses complacent church members, not primarily individuals outside the church. - NIVZSB

Rather than allowing for the common interpretation of Christ's knocking on a person's heart, the context demands that Christ was seeking to enter this church that bore His name but lacked a single true believer. This poignant letter was His knocking. If one member would recognize his spiritual bankruptcy and respond in saving faith, He would enter the church. - MSB

hear My voice . . It is implied that anyone is sure to hear His knock, and be roused to ask who is there: but only those who love Him will know His voice (as Rhoda did St Peter's, Act_12:14) when He says "It is I." - CBSC

come in and eat . . In the ancient world, a meal invitation to an estranged person opened the way for reconciliation. Jesus offers to accept and renew intimate fellowship with those who repent ...(Rev_19:9). NIVZSB

We will share a meal . . A shared meal symbolizes acceptance, deep friendship, and a covenant relationship (Rev_19:9; see Gen_18:1-5, Gen_18:16-19; Exo_12:1-31; Exo_18:12; Mat_26:26-30). - NLTSB

To the one who **opens the door**, Christ will **come in** and will **eat with him**, a picture of close personal fellowship. - ESVSB

:Rev_3:21
Rev_3:21

To him that overcometh . . The construction is as in Rev_2:26, Rev_3:12, "He that overcometh, I will give him." For the sense, compare the former of these passages; but the promise of sharing Christ's inheritance (Rom_8:17) is even more fully expressed here. - CBSC

him who overcomes .. (The one who conquers, ESV) .. The one who endures in faith and following Christ. See note on Rev_2:7.

sit with me . . The reward for ***victorious*** and obedient faith is to ***sit with*** Christ on his ***throne***. Christians do not become divine, but they share in Christ's victorious reign (Rev_20:4, Rev_20:6; Rev_22:5; Col_3:1-4; 2Ti_2:12). - NLTSB

sit with me on my throne . . Jesus shares his Father's throne as Messianic king and judge (Rev_22:3; Psa_110:1; Heb_1:3; and believers share in his reign (Rev_5:10; Rev_20:4; Rev_22:5; 2Ti_2:12; cf. Mat_19:28). - NIVSB

A figurative expression meaning that we will share the privilege and authority that Christ enjoys as we reign with Him (Rev_1:6; Mat_19:28; Luk_22:29-30). - MSB

as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne . . It is wonderful to know that Jesus has already overcome the world (cf. Joh_16:33; Eph_1:21-22) and that He is already seated at the Father's right hand (cf. Eph_1:20; 1Jn_2:1 and Rev_22:1) and that He wants us to join Him in His victory! - Utley

As I also overcame . . As the result of his overcoming "God exalted him to be a Prince and a Savior," and "to sit at the right hand of the Majesty of the heavens." As he was exalted, so he will exalt all his brethren who win the victory over sin and temptation. - PNT'

Rev_3:22

Rev_3:22

He who has an ear . . Each church is instructed to ***"hear what the Spirit says***" (Rev_2:7; Rev_2:11; Rev_2:17; Rev_2:29; Rev_3:6; Rev_3:13; Rev_3:22;). The message of truth was complete. (Jud_1:3) The churches were instructed to appeal to the message revealed by the Spirit as their guide for proper conduct (2Ti_3:16-17, 2Pe_1:21).

Rev_4:1

Rev_4:1

Section 2: The Heavenly Apocalypse (chapters 4-11)

4:1–11 Verses 1–11 introduce the throne-room vision of chs. 4 and 5. These chapters form one scene in which John is invited to behold future events which must shortly take place, for the time was at hand (Rev_1:1).

He depends heavily on Moses, Ezekiel, and Daniel to describe the wonders he witnessed. The vision in these chapters includes the introduction of the Lamb and leads to the seal judgments in ch. 6.

It builds on the visions of Isa_6:1-4, Eze_1:4-28, and Dan_7:9-10, where God is seen enthroned in power and majesty. God's throne dominates Revelation, and the worship in the rest of the book flows from this scene.

Chapter 4 - The Old Testament Throne Scene

John's Visionary Posture, Rev_4:1-2 a
The Throne, Rev_4:2-7
Heavenly Praise, Rev_4:8-11

Chapter 5 - The New Testament Throne Scene

The Search for One Worthy to Open the Book, Rev_5:1-5
The Lamb At the Right Hand of God, Rev_5:6-7
The Subjection of Heaven and Earth To the Lamb, Rev_5:8-14
- - - - - - - -
Rev_4:1 The Eternal Throne. God as Creator, Rev_4:11. The throne is in Heaven.
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After these things . . Refers to the reception of the letters to the seven churches. The phrase used here indicates that John received this vision after the previous one.

I looked . . Better, **I beheld, and lo!** as Rev_5:6, Rev_5:11 &c.; Dan_7:6, Dan_7:11 &c. The purport of the word is rather that he *continued* looking at what he had seen before, than that he looked in another direction. There *is* a transition: henceforth he goes to another point of view, and sees no more the Son of Man in the midst of the seven candlesticks. - CBSC

opened--"standing open"; not as though John saw it in the act of being opened. Similar to other biblical visions (Eze_1:1; Mat_3:16; Joh_1:51; Act_10:11) ; Cf. Rev_19:11 ("heaven standing open").

This is another way of expressing God's revelation of Himself to mankind.

and the first voice which I had heard, like *the sound* of a trumpet . . At first this implied Jesus speaking, but because chapters 4 & 5 are a literary unit and Jesus is not introduced until Rev_5:5, Rev_5:9-10, 12, 13, this may refers to a revealing angel.

An angel and a trumpet blast are related in Paul's description of the Second Coming (cf. 1Th_4:16).

Come up hither--through the "open door." A summons to behold the visions (compare Eze_3:12; Eze_11:1).

things which must take place after this . . According to Rev_1:1, Rev_1:3; Rev_22:6, Rev_22:10, things which must shortly come to pass, for the time was at hand.

÷Rev_4:2
Rev_4:2

Imediately . . ευθεως immediately G2112 ADV at once, straightway.

I was in the spirit . . See note on Rev_1:10 **(**Rev_17:3**;** Rev_21:10**) cf.** Eze_11:1**;**

This may be similar to what happened to Ezekiel in Eze_8:1-4; Eze_11:1, to Philip in Act_8:39-40, and to Paul in 2Co_12:1-2. Whether this is a spiritual trance or a physical transportation is uncertain. - Utley

It is implied that he was caught up through the open door into Heaven, and saw what was going on above. - CBSC

behold .. ιδου behold G2400 V-2AAM-2S **lo,**

a throne set in heaven . . Reflects aspects of Ezekiel's and Isaiah's visions of God (***Ezekiel 1; Iaiah 6***).

Not so much a piece of furniture, but a symbol of sovereign rule and authority (Rev_7:15; Rev_11:19; Rev_16:17-18; cf. Isa_6:1). It is the focus of chap. 4, occurring 13 times, 11 times referring to God's throne. - MSB

One sat on the throne . . the Lord God Almighty, **(**Rev_4:8**;** Rev_4:11**).** cf. Isa_6:1-5; Eze_1:26-28**.**

throne . . The term "throne" (*thronos*) is used over 47 times in this book. God's reign is the central motif of this heavenly vision (chapters 4 & 5).

The throne is a symbolic, apocalyptic way of showing that YHWH is in control of all history. God is a spiritual, eternal, personal spirit; He does not sit on a throne! One purpose of the genres of prophecy and apocalyptic is God's knowledge and control of future events. All history is known and purposeful (*telos*, cf. Mat_24:14; 1Co_15:24-28). The throne is described as "was standing." This IMPERFECT TENSE can have two meanings: (1) it has always stood; or (2) it was just set up. This may be an allusion to Dan_7:9, "thrones were set up." - Utley

It is intimated, though with an intentional vagueness, that the Divine Presence was symbolised by a human Form, as in Isa_6:1, Isa_6:5; Eze_1:26 sq.; Dan_7:9: contrast Deu_4:12, but compare Exo_24:10-11, Exo_33:23. Apparently God revealed Himself by such symbols to men whom He had educated to such a point that they should not imagine them to

be *more* than symbols. Therefore perhaps to attempt to include representations of the Father in the range of Christian art is rather of dangerous boldness than *ipso facto* illegitimate: see on this question Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, Part III. Sec. ii. Chap. v. § 7. - CBSC

Rev_4:3

Rev_4:3

"Jasper" ..clear like crystal (Rev_21:11) Probably referring to a diamond reflecting all the colors of the spectrum in wondrous brilliance. MSB

"Sardine" .. red. A fiery bright ruby stone named for the city near which it was found. - MSB

"Emerald" .. green. A cool, emerald-green hue dominates the multi-colored rainbow surrounding God's throne (cf. Eze_1:28). - MSB

John suggests precious stones of luminous colors to describe God's glory and radiance (Rev_21:11, Rev_21:18-20).

But John avoids precise description of the Almighty's visible features, perhaps because he knew no language to describe what he saw.

The jewels of this book (cf. Rev_21:19-20) are not meant to be interpreted individually but together signify the splendor and majesty of God. - ESVSB

Ezekiel describes Yahweh in a similar way (Eze_1:26-28). In Exo_24:10, Moses also describes the divine presence of Yahweh using precious stones. Like Ezekiel and Isaiah, John does not attempt to give a precise description of God. Instead, he describes the overall effect of His glorious presence. - FSB

rainbow . . (Gen_9:8-17; Eze_1:28) to suggest God's qualities. The rainbow speaks of God's grace his protection, and the assurances of His promises as it recalls God's covenant with Noah.

Rev_4:4

Rev_4:4

24 elders = May symbolize the 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 apostles, together representing the whole people of God. If true, this would fit with the context of Rev 2–3 of shared rulership for believers (see note on 2:7). - FSB

The ***twenty-four elders*** on their ***thrones*** probably represent all of God's people. They might correlate to the twelve tribes of the old covenant and the twelve apostles of the new (see Rev_21:12-14), although some have identified them with the twenty-four divisions of the Israelite priesthood (1Ch_24:1-19). In the drama, they act as an antiphonal chorus (alternating groups of speakers or singers). - NLTSB

twenty-four elders . . May designate the whole company of God's people in heaven but most likely refers to an exalted order or to angels who continually worship and serve God around his throne (Rev_4:10-11; Rev_5:8; Rev_11:16; Rev_19:4). Their number probably reflects Israel's 12 tribes together with the 12 apostles (cf. Rev_21:12; Mat_19:28), though it also parallels the orders of OT priests who served God in the temple (1Ch_24:4-19) - NIVZSB

Their joint rule with Christ, their white garments (Rev_19:7-8), and their golden crowns (Rev_2:10) all seem to indicate that these 24 represent the redeemed (Rev_4:9-11; Rev_5:5-14; Rev_7:11-17; Rev_11:16-18; Rev_14:3; Rev_19:4). - MSB

Some interpreters believe that these elders are angels, and that therefore they do not include themselves among the redeemed in Rev_5:8-10. - ESVSB [See Utley's arguments against them being angels.]

white garments . . Symbolizes purity and holiness (see note on Rev_3:5).

crowns of gold . . στεφανους crowns G4735 N-APM Represents a victorious or royal status; (cf. Rev_4:10.)

÷Rev_4:5
Rev_4:5

lightenings . . thunder . . This seems to be God's call to attention (see Rev_8:5; Rev_11:19; Rev_16:18).
A display of the terrifying splendor of God's glory and judgment as displayed at Mount Sinai. Exo_19:16; Exo_20:18.

seven . . Typified by the seven lamps of the candlestick in the Tabernacle, and represented by the "seven golden candlesticks" of the Church on earth: see on Rev_1:20. The significance of the seven-branched candlestick in relation especially to the *Spirit* is suggested in **Zech. 4**. (Zec_4:1-3 ff) - CBSC

seven lamps . . Alludes to Eze_1:13 signifying God's presence.

Seven lamps of fire . . These bright light-giving lamps symbolize the Holy Spirit in the fulness of its manifestation, - PNT

seven spirits of God . . See the extensive notes on Rev_1:4

÷Rev_4:6
Rev_4:6

sea of glass . . (Psa_104:3; Eze_1:22, Eze_1:26; Eze_10:1); cf. Rev_15:2.
There is no sea in heaven (Rev_21:1), but the crystal pavement that serves as the floor of God's throne stretches out like a great, glistening sea (cf. Exo_24:10; Eze_1:22). - MSB

clear as crystal . . Ancient glass was semi-opaque; this heavenly sea perfectly reflects and radiates God's perfect holiness. Cf. Rev_21:1; Eze_1:22.

in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne . . It is not quite clear how they are placed—whether with their bodies partly *under* the Throne, or only so far "in the midst" of it, that each of the four was in (or opposite to) the middle of one of its four sides. In Eze_1:22 we see that the Cherubim *support* the Throne of God, which points to the first view. - CBSB

four living creatures . .[*Zoa,* "living forms."] Possibly an allusion to the cherubim described in **Ezek 1 and 10**, or the seraphim of Isa_6:2-3. The number four often represents the entire created order (e.g., Rev_7:1; Jer_49:36). Thus, these creatures may represent all living things worshiping God. - FSB

four living creatures . . Heavenly angels nearest the throne who lead in worship (Rev_4:8; Rev_5:14) and initiate God's judgment (Rev_6:1). These beings represent all created life and ever live to worship and glorify God, who "lives" forever (vv. 9–10). John's depiction combines allusions to Isa_6:2-3; Eze_1:5-14 - NIVZSB
Four living creatures exhibit features of cherubim (**full of eyes**; **lion**; **ox**; **man**; **eagle**) and seraphim (**six wings**; "**Holy, holy, holy**") glimpsed by previous prophets (Isa_6:2-3; Eze_1:10, Eze_1:18). - ESVSB

four living creatures. Lit. "four living ones or beings." These are the cherubim (sing., cherub), those angels frequently referred to in the OT in connection with God's presence, power, and holiness. Although John's description is not identical to Ezekiel's, they are obviously both referring to the same supernatural and indescribable beings (Psa_80:1; Psa_99:1; *see notes on* Eze_1:4-25*;* Eze_10:15). - MSB

full of eyes . . *covered with eyes* . . This phrase probably indicates that they had knowledge or understanding. In the ancient world, figures were covered with a particular feature to emphasize that quality (e.g., statues of Artemis were covered with breasts to emphasize fertility). Cp. Eze_1:18. - NLTSB

full of eyes . . Although not omniscient—an attribute reserved for God alone—these angels have a comprehensive knowledge and perception. Nothing escapes their scrutiny (cf. v. 8). - MSB

[See Utley for a summary of this verse.]

Rev_4:7
Rev_4:7

living creature was similar to a lion . . While John and Ezekiel both describe four living creatures in their visions, the descriptions vary. In Ezekiel 1 (Eze_1:5 ff.) all four creatures are identical.

In Revelation, each has only one face and resembles a different creature: A lion, an ox, a human, and a flying eagle.

Ezekiel's creatures have four wings, but John's have six, like the seraphim in Isa 6:2.

John's creatures are full of eyes, but the eyes in Ezekiel are on the wheels that move the creatures. - FSB [Comparable to CBSC]

These four creatures symbolize four types of beings: ***a lion*** represents wild animals, ***an ox*** represents domesticated animals, ***a human*** represents humanity, and ***an eagle*** represents the birds (cp. Ezek 1:10). These four figures are drawn from Ezek 1 (cherubim) and Isa 6 (seraphim). - **NLTSB**

lion … ox … man … eagle . . Represent the noblest, strongest, wisest, and swiftest created beings. - NIVZSB

first … like a lion . . In what is obviously intended as symbolic language, John compares these 4 beings with 4 of God's earthly creations. Ezekiel indicates that every cherub has these 4 attributes. The likeness to a lion symbolizes strength and power. **second … like a calf.** The image of a calf demonstrates that these beings render humble service to God. **third … face like a man.** Their likeness to man shows they are rational beings. **fourth … like a flying eagle.** The cherubim fulfill their service to God with the swiftness of eagles' wings. - MSB

lion … calf … eagle" In rabbinic literature these animals are listed as the strongest of the different orders of God's creation. Irenaeus in the early in the Church used these four different faces to describe the four Gospel writers (church tradition finally settled on John, eagle; Luke, human; Mark, ox; Matthew, lion) but this is too speculative and allegorical. These composite creatures are symbolic, not literal. Knowing the OT emphasis on maintaining God's orders of creation, a composite human and animal creature would be Levitically unclean. This is not historical narrative of actual things and events, but a highly symbolic genre seeking to describe ultimate, spiritual truths; in this case God as the ever living One (vv. 8, 9) the Holy One (v. 8), and the creator of all things (v. 11). - Utley

The first creature was like a lion. It looked *like* a lion, but was not a lion. It had other characteristics. **Like a calf.** Had a body similar to that of the ox. **Had the face of a man.** Otherwise its structure differed from that of men. **Like a flying eagle.** It will be seen that four departments of animated nature are represented. That of the wild beasts of prey; that of domestic animals, the human species, and the fowls of the air. Each is represented by what, in the eyes of a Hebrew, would be regarded as its highest type. - PNT

Rev_4:8
Rev_4:8

six wings . . Used by the seraphim in Isa_6:2 to cover their eyes and feet and to fly. - NIVZSB

And the four living creatures, having each of them six wings, are full of eyes round about and within . . i.e. the statement of Rev_4:6, that they are "***full of eyes before and behind***," is extended to tell us that they are covered with eyes, not only on the parts ordinarily visible, but when they spread their wings (and the Eagle at least was in the attitude of flight) it is seen that the inside of the wings, and the parts beneath it, are full of eyes too. - CBSC

eyes all around . . Represent alertness and knowledge (cf. Eze_1:18; Eze_10:12). - NIVZSB

[cf. "*no rest day or night"* Rev_14:11]

day and night . . The four beings ceaselessly praised God's basic characteristics: his holiness, his power (***the Almighty***), and his eternity (see note on 1:4). - NLTSB

Holy, holy, holy . . This echoes the song of the seraphim in Isa_6:2-3, and is the highest worship affirmation in Scripture. To double something makes it emphatic; to triple it makes it ultimate. -NLTSB

holy, holy, holy . . The living creatures are repeating the song of the seraphim in Isa. 6:2, 3. This is the first of many hymns that are found in the book of the Revelation (cf. Rev_4:8, Rev_4:11; Rev_5:9-10, Rev_5:12, Rev_5:13; Rev_7:12; Rev_11:17-18; Rev_12:10-12; Rev_15:3-4; Rev_16:5-7; Rev_18:2-8; Rev_19:1-3, Rev_19:6-7).

Often the hymns area means of interpreting the visions. Another symbol like the sea of glass, it functions as a Hebrew superlative of the ultimate holiness of God. - Utley

***the* Lord God, the Almighty . .** These were OT titles for God (cf. Rev_1:8): (1) Lord = YHWH (cf. Exo_3:14; Psa_103:1); (2) God = *Elohim* (cf. Psa_104:1); and (3) the Almighty = *El Shaddai*, the patriarchal name for God (cf. Exo_6:3). - Utley

was … is … is to come . .. Recalls God's self-disclosure as "***I am***" in Exo_3:14; cf. Rev_1:8; Rev_4:8; Rev_11:17. This speaks of God's eternal presence who is not limited by time. (Psa_90:2)

÷Rev_4:9
Rev_4:9

4:9–11 This is one sentence in Greek, which shows that ultimate worship is due Him who sits on the throne and lives forever. - Utley

when . (whenever) . .

And when the living creatures shall give glory and honor and thanks to him that sitteth on the throne. Shall utter such praises as are given in verse 8 . Then the twenty-four elders also join in swelling the anthems. It will be noted that these two classes, whatever they signify, are both about the throne, and both engaged in harmonious praise of the Almighty. - PNT

the One sitting on the throne . . is typical Jewish indirection to avoid speaking God's name. - NLTSB

÷Rev_4:10
Rev_4:10

9, 10. And when the living creatures shall give glory and honour and thanks to Him that sitteth upon the Throne, to Him that liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders shall fall down before Him that sitteth …, and shall worship Him …, and shall cast.…" The meaning of the futures is doubtful: some take it as "implying eternal repetition of the act." Or the meaning may be (if one may say so reverently) a sort of stage direction: "during the future course of the vision, these (who never leave the scene) are to be understood to be thus employed." But it is always a question in this Book whether the use of tenses be not accommodated to the rules of Hebrew rather than Greek grammar: the sense may after all be merely frequentative. - CBSC

cast down .. lay ... The phrase describes submission.

> Aware that God alone is responsible for the rewards they have received, they divest themselves of all honor and cast it at the feet of their King. - MSB
>
> There are four elements in this worship: (1) They fall down; (2) they adore; (3) they cast their crowns before the throne, an act of homage which gives Him who sitteth there all the glory of their crowns; (4) they offer ascriptions of praise. **- PNT**

twenty-four elders fall down ... **cast their crowns before the throne . .** offering worship and expressing submission to God's authority. - ESVSB

÷Rev_4:11
Rev_4:11

Lord . . In Revelation, ***Lord*** creation affirms that God is in sovereign control of the world (see Rev_3:14; Rev_10:6; Rev_14:7; Rev_21:1). - NLTSB

[Pushing the late date, the FSB comments:
our Lord and God Domitian (who ruled from ad 81–96), who may have been the Roman emperor during John's exile on Patmos, demanded that his subjects call him "our lord and god." John sets up a clear contrast between the true king and the one whose rule will eventually be done away with. - FSB]

for . . Introduces a reason to praise God: he is the all-powerful Creator (cf. Rev_10:6; Psa_148:5; Rom_1:25). - NIVSB

You created all things . . The elders and living creatures praise God as the Creator, Sustainer and Provider of all things. This is the theological emphasis of the name *Elohim* (cf. **Job. 38–41**; **Ps. 104**). This chapter uses the theological meaning of the two most used names for God to describe His actions. The progressive revelation of the NT makes it clear that Jesus was the Father's agent of creation (cf. Joh_1:3; 1Co_8:6; Col_1:16 and Heb_1:2). - Utley

for thy pleasure . . KJV; Perhaps better, ***because of Thy will.*** **-** CBSC [See MSS evidence]

they exist because you created what you pleased . . God had a purpose for everything that he created. - NLTSB

they are and were . . [they exist, NKJV] *"they had their being,"*—as the simple verb substantive is very well translated in Act_17:28. - CBSC

÷Rev_5:1

Rev_5:1

Chapter 5 - Continues The New Testament Throne Scene

The Search for One Worthy to Open the Book, vv. 1-5
The Lamb At the Right Hand of God, vv. 6-7
The Subjection of Heaven and Earth To the Lamb, vv. 8-14

Ch 5 title: **"Worthy Is the Lamb"**

The Revealer of the Sacred Book "The Scroll and the Redeemer"

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the right hand . . represents God's gracious authority and power (see Rev_1:17, Rev_1:20). - NLTSB

in the right hand . . Lit. **on the right hand**—lying on the open palm. - CBSC

and I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne . . A better translation of this phrase would be "***on the right hand of Him"*** (Peshitta translated into English by Lamsa and the Amplified Bible). It is not the idea of God holding tightly to the book, but God holding it out for someone to take and open. The phrase "*the right hand of Him*" is a biblical anthropomorphism to describe God's power and authority. God does not have a physical body; He is a spiritual being (cf. Joh_4:24), uncreated and eternal. - Utley

book . . The Greek term is "*biblion*" which later was used to refer to a codex (book). Most commentators agree that books did not appear until the second century, so what we have here is a papyrus or parchment scroll (NKJV, NRSV, TEV and NJB). - Utley

There are several theories as to the meaning of this book: (1) the book of woes found in Eze_2:8-10; and Rev_10:8-11; (2) the events of the end-time (cf. Dan_8:26); (3) a Roman last will or testament, which was traditionally sealed with seven seals; (4) the book of life which is mentioned so often in the book of the Revelation (cf. Rev_3:5; Rev_17:8; Rev_20:12, Rev_20:15); (5) the Old Testament (cf. Col_2:14; Eph_2:15); (6) the heavenly tablets of 1 Enoch 81:1-2.In my opinion a combination of #1 and #2 seems to be best; the scroll is a book of the destiny of mankind and God's culmination of history. - Utley

written within . . A complete full book. This seems to be Daniel's book Dan_12:4; Dan_12:9; Rev_5:9 (Dan_7:13-14)

written inside and on the back . . This was very unusual in the ancient world because of the difficulty of writing on the back side of papyrus, although it is mentioned in Eze_2:8-10 and Zec_5:3. - Utley

written ... sealed . . Both of the PARTICIPLES (***written*** and ***sealed***) that describe this scroll are PERFECT PASSIVES. The first is a special grammatical form used to describe Scripture as being inspired (i.e. Mat_5:45; Mat_8:17; Mat_10:34, etc). The second is a way of expressing that the scroll was protected, preserved, and reserved by God. - Utley

In John's vision of the throne of God, John saw ***"in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals"*** (Rev_5:1). This is interesting. God had a scroll in His hand that was completely full. It was sealed with seven seals signifying His complete and full approval of the scroll and its content. Jesus Christ, the Lamb found worthy to open the book and loose its seals, came to the right hand of God and received the scroll. All of heaven and earth then bowed before Him in honor and praise of Him. - Ogden

sealed . . Contents unrevealed. Daniel sealed it, but Jesus "unsealed" it. Dan_12:4 ; Dan_12:9 ; Rev_5:9.

Seals authenticate a document. Roman law provided for wills to have 7 seals of 7 witnesses.

#Isa_29:10-11; Eze_2:9-10; Dan_12:4 (Mat_24:15)
Daniel sealed the book, but Jesus un-seals it (Rev_5:9).

Seals . . have been used throughout history as indicators of authority, identity, and approval. The earliest known seals date from the fourth millennium bc. They often took the form of necklaces or rings and were closely guarded. The seals were impressed upon wet clay or hot wax. The images on each seal were unique to their owners and served to identify property, safeguard against fraudulent transactions, and ratify official documents and rulings. - FSB

Why sealed? What are the seals upon the book? Consider the words of Jesus on the night of His betrayal. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now" (Joh_16:12). Jesus gave His chosen apostles the words of God during His ministry (Joh_17:8; Joh_17:14), but He had not given them all of it. The Holy Spirit, whom Jesus would send from the Father, would complete the revelation of God's word (Joh_14:16, Joh_14:26; Joh_15:26). Jesus said, "*Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you*" (Joh_16:13-15). - Ogden

sealed with seven seals . . Modeled after the doublesided scroll containing "words of lament and mourning and woe" in Eze_2:9-10 and the sealed books in Isa_29:11; Dan_12:4. - NIVZSB

ascroll written within and on the back . . is like the scroll given to Ezekiel (Eze_2:9 –**3:3**) but is atypical of most ancient manuscripts, since the irregular texture of the reverse side of either vellum (leather) or papyrus made them hard to inscribe. However, such a doubly inscribed scroll would resemble a Roman will or contract deed, with the contents written in detail inside and summarized briefly outside, then **sealed with seven seals**. The scroll John sees could symbolize a will that is to be opened and its contents executed; - ESVSB

written inside and on the back . . This is typical of various kinds of contracts in the ancient world, including deeds, marriage contracts, rental and lease agreements, and wills. The inside of the scroll contained all the details of the contract, and the outside—or back—contained a summary of the document. - MSB

sealed with seven seals . . Romans sealed their wills 7 times—on the edge at each roll—to prevent unauthorized entry. Hebrew title deeds required a minimum of 3 witnesses and 3 separate seals, with more important transactions requiring more witnesses and seals. - MSB

÷Rev_5:2
Rev_5:2

st**rong . .** = mighty in Rev_10:1 and Rev_18:21

strong angel . . The identity of this angel is uncertain, but it may refer to the angel Gabriel, whose name means "strength of God" (Dan_8:16). - MSB

Some see a connection etymologically to the name Gabriel, which means "God's strong man." Another strong angel is mentioned in 10:1 and 18:21. Angelic mediation is common in Jewish intertestamental apocalyptic literature. - Utley

proclaiming with a loud voice . . He was addressing all creation. - Utley

worthy . . Speaks of ability and spiritually worthy. We sing it also, "Worthy of praise is Christ our Redeemer."

Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals? . . The term ***"worthy"*** is a commercial term relating to a pair of scales. It came to mean "that which corresponds to." Something is put on one side of the seals and what is put on the other is equal. It could be used in a negative or positive sense.

Here, it is the inestimable value of the sinless Savior. Only Jesus was equal to the task of redemption.

Only Jesus was equal to the task of consummation. Only Jesus is worthy (cf. Rev_5:7; Rev_5:9-10; Rev_5:12). - Utley

÷Rev_5:3
Rev_5:3

5:2–3 At first, no one in the entire universe seemed to have the divine authority or power to answer the angel's call.

No one in all creation had authority to open the sealed message [Cf the promise of Rev_4:1] in the scroll.

No created being (cf. Php_2:10) had authority to break the seals or even to learn of God's plans contained in the scroll—no one in heaven, on earth, or in the place of departed spirits.- Constable

heaven or on the earth or under the earth . . A common biblical expression denoting the entire universe and not intended to teach 3 precise divisions.- MSB

neither to look thereon . . Which would have enabled him to read some fragments of its contents, viz. as much as was written on the outer fold of the back of the roll. - CBSC

÷Rev_5:4
Rev_5:4

"***I***" . . - John.

Do we weep and hunger to know God's will?

And I . . The pronoun is emphatic: "no one could open it: I for my part wept for the impossibility." Why he wept will be variously explained, according to the view taken of the meaning of the Book. If it be the Book of Life, the reason is obvious: if it be the future purposes of God, the impossibility of opening it threatened to disappoint the promise of Rev_4:1. - CBSC

wept . . John laments like the OT prophets (Isa_22:4; Jer_9:1). - NIVZSB

I began to weep greatly . . This meant "loud wailing," so characteristic of the ancient near east. - Utley

I began to weep loudly . . If the scroll could not be opened, John would not be able to see the events that were to come (see Rev_4:1). - FSB

John wept because even though the revelation had been promised to him, he thought he would be denied knowledge of the divine script—God's plan for history (Rev_4:1; see Rev_10:4). John's weeping highlights the significance of the anticipated revelation. - NLTSB

÷Rev_5:5
Rev_5:5

Identity is by an Old Testament description of Jewish Messiah. Heb_7:14; Gen_49:9; Jer_23:5-6; Luk_3:31; Rom_15:12

Some people say Revelation is all literal? Lion and Root in heaven?

one of the elders said to me . . Here we find one of the elders acting in the role of an angelic interpreter, as in the book of Daniel. - Utley

do not weep . . John is occasionally corrected or rebuked by bystanders (e.g., Rev_19:10). - FSB

Stop weeping . . This is a PRESENT IMPERATIVE with the NEGATIVE PARTICLE which meant to stop an act which is already in process. - Utley

the tribe of Judah . . The royal tribe, or the tribe from which Israel's rulers would come (Gen_49:9-10). - FSB [cf. 2 Esdras 12.31 NRSVA]

the root of David . . An allusion to the prophecy of Isa_11:1, Isa_11:10 (see Rev_22:16). - FSB
OT metaphors for the Messiah (see Jer_23:5; Jer_30:9; Joh_7:42). - NLTSB

Jesus is not only the royal descendant (Rev_22:16) but also the source of David's rule (Mar_12:35-37; cf. "root of Jesse," Rom_15:12). The Lion is worthy to **open the scroll** because he **has conquered**. The OT promise of a conquering Lion is fulfilled in the NT reality of one who is also the slain Lamb (Rev_5:9). - ESVSB

prevailed . . = overcome, Rev_3:21
Because Jesus ***won the victory*** at the cross (Joh_16:33), he is the only one ***worthy to open the scroll*** and reveal God's purposes (Rev_4:11; Rev_5:2, Rev_5:12). God's plan for history centers around Jesus and what he has done. His relationship to the scroll indicates his control of history. -NLTSB

has overcome . . This is an AORIST ACTIVE INDICATIVE, which implies it was an accomplished fact. Notice that the Lion is not going to conquer by His power, but by His sacrifice (cf. Rev_5:6). - Utley
÷Rev_5:6
Rev_5:6

Lamb standing as though slaughtered . .[Isa_53:7; Act_8:32**]** John hears about a lion, but turns to see a lamb. Lamb imagery relates to Jesus' death on the cross.
The tradition of viewing His death as a sacrifice—like the sheep sacrificed in the ot—arises out of Isa 53 (see Isa_53:4-8, Isa_53:10-11). The early church applied the title "Lamb of God" to Jesus, understanding His death to substitute for their sin (e.g., Joh_1:29, Joh_1:36; 1Pe_1:19). The victory spoken of in Rev_5:5, then, was brought about through sacrifice. This concept would have instilled hope in those being persecuted; victory for them would likewise come through sacrifice. - FSB

Lamb . . The Jews expected the Messiah to appear as a conquering lion. Instead, Jesus came as ***a Lamb*** (Joh_1:29, Joh_1:6; Act_8:32-35; 1Co_5:7; 1Pe_1:19). [the suffering prophet - Jer_11:19; Luk_11:50]
The Lamb that ***had been slaughtered*** but ***was now standing*** refers to Jesus' death and resurrection. - NLTSB

as though it had been slain . . The scars from its slaughter are still clearly visible, but it is standing— it is alive. -MSB

as it had been slain . . The true construction calls attention to the paradox, a Lamb appearing with its throat cut, yet not lying dead or dying, but standing. It serves to typify "Him that liveth and was dead, and is alive for evermore" (Rev_1:18). The risen Christ bore, and doubtless bears, the wounds of His Passion unaltered—unhealed, though apparently not bleeding, Joh_20:25, Joh_20:27. - CBSC

horns . . = Zec_1:18-20; authority, (omnipotence) Mat_28:18 all authority and all knowledge.
The Lamb's **seven horns** symbolize great power (Psa_18:2; Dan_7:24; Zec_1:18-21). - ESVSB

seven horns . . In Scripture, horns always symbolize power, because in the animal kingdom they are used to exert power and inflict wounds in combat. Seven horns signify complete or perfect power. Unlike other defenseless lambs, this One has complete, sovereign power. - MSB

seven horns and seven eyes . . Horns symbolized power and eyes symbolized wisdom. Christ is completely powerful and wise. - FSB

The Lamb's ***seven horns*** represent his complete power, and the ***seven eyes*** represent his complete knowledge (see Zec_4:10). - NLTSB

"Christ the Power of God and the Wisdom of God" (1Co_1:24) unities both. - CBSC

seven eyes . . = Zec_3:9; Zec_4:10; (Joh_3:34)

seven eyes, which are the seven spirits . . His **seven eyes**, identified with God's "seven spirits" (cf. note on Rev_1:4-6; also Zec_4:10), show that the Lamb's knowledge extends through **all the earth**. - ESVSB
Heb_1:7 "*maketh his angels spirits*" - ministering angels, 7 angels of God, OR an indication of the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

seven eyes . . refers to God's omniscience (cf. Rev_4:6; Rev_4:8; Eze_1:18; Eze_10:12; Zec_3:9 and Zec_4:10). This symbolism is similar to Dan_7:13-14. - Utley

which are the seven Spirits of God . . See note at Rev_4:5.
The Lamb also had seven eyes representing the fullness of His divine wisdom and discernment (Zec_4:10). His eyes are the seven Spirits of God (i.e., the seven principle angels of God). That is, they communicate to Christ all that transpires. The Lamb is, nonetheless, omniscient as well as omnipotent. - Constable

÷Rev_5:7
Rev_5:7

right hand ... on the throne . . God's right hand. Mar_16:19.

5:7 Next John saw God the Father on the throne and the Lamb (evidently now in human form) coming and taking the scroll out of His right hand. Clearly this symbolizes a transfer of authority from the Father to the Son to reveal the future and to execute judgment (cf. Rev_1:1).

"It has been frequently recognized that the vision of chapter 5 gives us a Christian prophet's version of the enthronement ceremony known to the ancient world, when its potentates ascended their thrones. Here the king is the Christ, his domain the universe, and his throne the throne of God [cf. Php_2:6-11]. . . . The steps of the ancient enthronement are commonly described as exaltation, presentation, enthronement. If we apply these to chapter 5, the exaltation must be seen in the conquest of the Lamb referred to in Rev_5:5, the presentation in verse 6, and the bestowal of authority in verse 7." - Constable

÷Rev_5:8
Rev_5:8

book ... (scroll) . . Rev_5:1-2; Rev_1:1

fell down before the Lamb . . The crucified and risen Christ has divine authority to initiate the events of this age; he is fully worthy of worship. - NLTSB

fell down before the Lamb . . When the Lamb receives the scroll, **the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders**, who had praised God for his perfection and his creation, now sing a **new song** that celebrates the Lamb's redemption. As they had previously fallen before God's throne (Rev_4:10), now they prostrate themselves in worship before the Lamb, an affirmation of his deity. **- ESVSB**

While the four living creatures and 24 elders prostrated themselves in worship, only the elders had harps (lyres) and bowls. They used the harps to praise God in song (Psa_33:2; Psa_98:5). - Constable

harps .. A common instrument used in Old Testament temple worship, Psa_33:2; 1Ch_25:6; 2Ch_9:11; Psa_43:4; Rev_14:2; Rev_15:2; [cf also 1Sa_10:5]

Harps . . - each one had one. OT picture of praise to God.

[If this sanctions instrumental music in the church, then **each one** must have one.]

This symbolizes those around the throne as taking their praise and prayers before the Lord.

bowls full of incense . . These golden, wide-mouth saucers were common in the tabernacle and temple. Incense was a normal part of the OT ritual. Priests stood twice daily before the inner veil of the temple and burned incense so that the smoke would carry into the Holy of Holies and be swept into the nostrils of God. That symbolized the people's prayers rising to Him.

golden bowls full of incense . . Here and elsewhere, incense symbolizes the prayers of God's people (e.g., Rev_8:3-5; Psa_141:2). - FSB [Luk_1:10]

lncense ... prayers . . = Psa_141:2

The ***prayers of God's people*** become a significant basis for the judgments and plagues which God dramatically answers in Rev_6:9-11; Rev_8:2-5 Rev_15:7-8;

... their pleas for relief are heard and will be answered in God's providential judgments (Rev_8:3-5). - ESVSB

prayers of the saints . . Specifically, these prayers represent all that the redeemed have ever prayed concerning ultimate and final redemption. This becomes a major theme throughout the book (cf. Rev_11:17-18; Rev_13:7; Rev_13:9-10; Rev_14:12; Rev_16:6; Rev_17:6; Rev_18:20, 24; Rev_19:8; Rev_20:9). - MSB

John explained that the bowls contained the prayers of God's people that are as the fragrant aroma of burning incense to Him (cf. Psa_141:2; Luk_1:10). In the Old Testament the offering of incense was a priestly prerogative (Num_16:6-7), so these angels were functioning in a priestly capacity. The Jews believed that angels carried human prayers to God (cf. Rev_8:3).

The prayers offered are probably all those as yet unanswered petitions that people have prayed asking God to judge unrighteousness including, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven" (cf. Rev_5:10; Rev_6:10; Rev_8:3-5; Mat_6:10; Luk_18:7-8). - Constable

which are the prayers . . If the strict grammar of this sentence is to be pressed, it is the "vials" not the "odours" which are identified with the "prayers." - CBSC

[The metaphor however refers to the contents of the bowls, just as when there is a reference to the "cup"

in the Lord's supper the reference is to the "contents" and its symbolic meaning. Luk_22:20; 1Co_10:21; 1Co_11:26] - WG

÷Rev_5:9
Rev_5:9

When the Lamb receives the scroll, **the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders**, who had praised God for his perfection and his creation, now sing a **new song** that celebrates the Lamb's redemption.

5:9–10 The whole created order joins in ***a new song*** of praise to the Lamb (cp.Rev_5:11; Rev_14:1-5;

new song . . = cf. Rev_4:11, Song of Redemption. cf Rev_5:11 ff. The OT is filled with references to a new song that flows from a heart that has experienced God's redemption or deliverance, Psa_33:3; Psa_40:5; Psa_46:1; Psa_96:1-2; Psa_144:9-10; Psa_149:1; Isa_42:10). 1Pe_1:18; Act_20:28

And they sang a new song . . (cf. Rev_14:3). In the OT there are many allusions to the new song (cf. Psa_33:3; Psa_40:3; Psa_98:1; Psa_144:9; Psa_149:1 and Isa_42:10). At every major event in the OT, the people of God were encouraged to sing a new song praising God's activity. This is the ultimate song about God's revealing Himself in the Messiah and the Messiah's work of redemption on behalf of all believers (cf. vv. 9, 12, 13). - Utley

The gospel is for all. ; 1Co_6:20

You are worthy . . Answers the question in Rev_5:2 and echoes praise to God in Rev_4:11 (cf. Rev_5:12). - NIVZSB

One popular commentary on Revelation is titled *"Worthy is the Lamb"*

worthy . . The Lamb is ***worthy*** because, through his sacrifice, he won the right to ***break*** the ***seals*** of the ***scroll*** and enact God's purposes in history. • The song summarizes the implications of the Good News about Jesus (1Pe_1:18-25). - NLTSB

Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals" This is a fivefold description of the worthiness of the Lamb: **(1)** substitutionary death (cf. 5:6, 12; 13:8; 1Pe_1:18-19); **(2)** redemptive price paid (cf. 14:3–4; Mark 10:45; 1Co_6:19-20; 1Co_7:23; 1Ti_2:6); **(3)** purchased men from every nation (cf. Rev_7:9; Rev_14:6); **(4)** made the believers a kingdom of priests (cf. Rev_1:6) and **(5)** they will reign with Him (cf. Rev_3:21; Rev_5:10; Rev_20:4). - Utley

purchased . . Commercial metaphor for emancipating slaves (cf. Rev_14:3-4; 1Co_7:23). - NIVZSB

every tribe and language and people and nation . . God's universal people transcend ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and national boundaries (Rev_7:9; Dan_7:14); contrast the nations' false worship in Rev_13:3-8; Dan_3:4-5. - NIVZSB

This is a recurrent metaphor of universality (cf. Rev_7:9; Rev_11:9; Rev_13:7; Rev_14:6).

5:9–10 There is a significant *Greek manuscript variant* related to the pronoun "us." The NKJV has the pronoun "us" in Rev_5:9, "have redeemed us to God," and in Rev_5:10, "and have made us kings and priests to our God." Most modern translations (NASB, NRSV, TEV, NJB) omit "us" in both verses. If "us" is present in both verses then Jesus' sacrificial death includes the twenty-four elders who seem to be angelic creatures. Nowhere in the Bible is Jesus' death related to angelic redemption. Also, the presence of "them"

(*autous*) in Rev_5:10 grammatically excludes the possibility of "us" being original. The United Bible Society's fourth edition rates its omission as certain. - Utley

The Common Version [KJV] is incorrect, as is now admitted by all scholars. The song does not sing of what Christ has done for those who are singing, but of what he has done for men. The singers are not of those redeemed. - PNT

÷Rev_5:10

Rev_5:10

kings and priests . . The description of God's people as ***a Kingdom of priests*** who will enjoy ultimate victory and will ***reign*** with Christ reflects the images of Jesus as both King (Rom_1:3) and High Priest (Heb_6:20). - NLTSB

This terminology is now used for the Church, the new evangelistic people of God (cf. Rev_1:6; Rev_20:6; 1Pe_2:5, 1Pe_2:9). - Utley

Kings were anointed by the Prophets, Jesus was anointed of the H.S. 2Co_1:21. The Greek = a kingdom of priests. Exo_19:6; Isa_61:6; 1Co_4:8; 1Pe_2:9; Rom_5:17; Rev_1:6; 2Ti_2:12; Rev_3:21; As priests, Christians are now a royal priesthood serving God and offering their sacrifices, 1Pe_2:5 1Pe_2:9; Rom_12:1-2;

When are Christians said to reign as kings? Rev_1:6 ; Rev_20:4; Mat_5:5;

reign on the earth . . Christians reign by overcoming Rev_3:21; 2Ti_2:12; 1Co_4:8; Rom_5:17;

they . . not "we", as in the KJV.

they will reign . . Some manuscripts read *they are reigning*. - NLTSB

they will reign upon the earth . . Some translators see this in a future sense and some see it as a present reality. There is a Greek manuscript variant between the FUTURE TENSE in MS à and the PRESENT TENSE in MS A. If it is in a PRESENT sense it is similar to Rom_5:17 and Eph_2:6. If FUTURE it possibly deals with the reigning of the people of God with Christ (cf. Mat_19:28; Luk_22:30; 1Co_4:8; 2Ti_2:12; Rev_3:21; Rev_5:10). - Utley

we shall reign . . Authorities are nearly evenly divided between the readings "they reign" and "they shall reign." Perhaps the present is to be preferred, . . . If we accept the present, it can hardly be used *for* a future, every one must feel that Rev_2:22, &c. are not really parallel: rather, we may say that the faithful on earth are, even in their exile, kings *de jure*, as David was "when he was in the wilderness of Judah" (Psa_63:1 ff Psa_63:11. cf. title). - CBSC

÷Rev_5:11

Rev_5:11

I beheld . . = saw and heard. See on Rev_4:1.

The sense is, of course, that he saw the Angels whose voice he heard. - CBSC

round about . . We cannot tell if they formed a complete circle round the Throne, or a semicircle between it and the Seer, or a semicircle on the side away from him. But though we cannot answer these questions, it is worth while to ask them: for it is plain that St John did see a definite picture. - CBSC

many angels . . This verse lists three groups of angels: (1) many angels; (2) living creatures; or (3) elders; or

possibly just two (cf. Rev_5:14). **-** Utley

ten thousand times ten thousand . . Lit. "myriads of myriads." The number is to express an amount beyond calculation. The Gr. expression can also be translated "innumerable" (Luk_12:1; Heb_12:22). **- MSB**

myriads . . = 100,000,000 + , NASV
Psa_68:17 ; Dan_7:10 ; Heb_12:22 ;

their number . . Rather than taking this as a precise number, this was probably John's way of saying they were innumerable (compare Dan_7:10).- FSB

A huge angelic ***chorus*** numbering ***thousands and millions*** provides an antiphonal response; all heaven responds to creation's confession of Christ's sacrifice. - NLTSB

The choir expands to include **myriads of myriads** (hundreds of millions) and **thousands of thousands** of angels, who acclaim the Lamb worthy of sevenfold tribute (**power**, **wealth**, **wisdom**, **might**, **honor**, **glory**, **blessing**). The worship of the Lamb in this chapter testifies to his deity. - ESVSB

:Rev_5:12
Rev_5:12

A third song
Rev_5:12 ; Song of a Universal Chorus (Rev_4:11 ; Rev_5:9) Three songs are mentioned. Notice there are seven traits or qualities ascribed to the Lamb.

Both the Lamb and God (Rev_7:12) receive sevenfold praise. - NIVZSB

This doxology ascribes to Jesus divine honors that are reserved for God alone (see Rev_4:11; Rev_5:13; Rev_7:12). - FSB

[The] angels, who acclaim the Lamb worthy of sevenfold tribute (**power**, **wealth**, **wisdom**, **might**, **honor**, **glory**, **blessing**). The worship of the Lamb in this chapter testifies to his deity. - ESVSB

The repetition of "and" (Gr. *kai*) between each quality brings special emphasis to each one individually. This is a literary device called polysyndeton. It "produces the impression of extensiveness and abundance by means of an exhaustive summary" (F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, par. 460 [3]).- Constable

the Lamb that was slain to receive power . . "Was slain" is a PERFECT PASSIVE PARTICIPLE (cf. Rev_5:6; Rev_13:8), which implies "slain in the past" with the marks of the slaying remaining.

When we see Jesus He will still have the marks of the crucifixion. They have become His badge of honor! The concept of the cross is implicit and central in Revelation (cf. Rev_1:5; Rev_5:12; Rev_7:14; Rev_12:11; Rev_13:8; Rev_14:4; Rev_15:3; Rev_19:7; Rev_21:9, Rev_21:23 and Rev_22:3).

The concept of a purchased redemption is a recurrent NT truth (cf. Mar_10:45; 1Co_6:20; 1Co_7:23; Gal_3:13; Gal_4:5; 1Ti_2:6; 1Pe_1:18-19).
In this verse seven attributes are given unto the Lamb: (1) power; (2) riches; (3) wisdom; (4) might; (5) honor; (6) glory; and (7) blessing. All creation (the largest choir possible) blesses the Father and the Son (cf. Rev_5:14; Psa_103:19-20; Php_2:8-11). - Utley

÷Rev_5:13
Rev_5:13

And every creature . . All animated creation gives glory to the Lamb. - PNT

every creature . . cf. Php_2:10; Everyone magnifying God.

The second antiphonal response resounds from ***every creature,*** even those ***under the earth*** (the place of the dead) and ***in the sea*** (usually associated with evil), possibly implying a mandatory response even by those in rebellion against God (Isa_45:23-25; Rom_14:11; Php_2:10-11). - NLTSB

Eventually, every knee "in heaven, on earth, and under the earth" will bow and "every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Php_2:11). - ESVSB

under the earth . . See Rev_5:3. It seems harsh to understand the words of an *unwilling* cooperation of the devils in glorifying God and His Son, - CBSC

such as are in the sea . . Read simply **on the sea**: including those in ships, and marine animals: see Psa_104:26. - CBSC

In his vision John saw every creature giving praise to God and to the Lamb. The creatures in view must be intelligent beings who can appreciate God and the Lamb, not the stars, planets, and animals. This probably involved a forward (proleptic) look to the end of the history of planet earth when every creature will bow the knee to Jesus Christ (cf. Rev_5:10; Php_2:8-11). - Constable

In these two chapters [4 and 5], the sequence of hymns shows that the first two are addressed to God, the next two to the Lamb, and the last one to both. There is also a gradual enlargement in the size of the choirs. The internal movement also builds as the last hymn is sung by 'every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth' to 'him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb' (5:13)." - Constable [quoting Johnson.]

÷Rev_5:14
Rev_5:14

Lesson: Jesus is Divine. No angel or good creature ever accepted worship.
Parallel to Rev_4:10

And the four living creatures said, Amen . . They, then, though they may be in sympathy with, are different from the animated creation. Four orders join in these honors to the Lamb: (1) The Living Creatures; the Cherubim; (2) the Twenty-four Elders; (3) the Angels; (4) all Animate Creation. - PNT

Amen . . Their ***Amen*** affirms the truth of what John had seen, as ***the twenty-four elders*** prostrate themselves in worship. - NLTSB

And the four and twenty … for ever and ever . . We should read simply, "and the elders fell down and worshipped"—in silence. The brevity of the phrase, imitating their silent adoration, is really grander than the completer sentence of the A. V. - CBSC

The worship culminated in John's vision with the four creatures saying "Amen" repeatedly after the vast crowd fell silent. The elders worshipped by prostrating themselves before God's throne (cf. Rev_4:10).

These chapters (4–5) present heaven, God's dwelling place, as a real place. John saw God receiving great honor there surrounded by innumerable angelic worshippers. Even though John saw a vision, it was a vision of something that truly exists. We may be able to see it and the individuals said to be there someday. - Constable

[In **chapters 4-20** John described what he saw in heaven and on earth. Ch 4 &5 seen "in Heaven" But take note where the following chapters are seen. See Constable's notes, but note his premillennial view on ch. 19-20 in his chart.]

÷Rev_6:1

Rev_6:1

Chapter 6 - The Opening of the First Six Seals

The First Seal, vv.1-2
The Second Seal, vv. 3-4
The Third Seal, vv. 5-6
The Fourth Seal, vv. 7-8
The Fifth Seal, vv. 9-11
The Sixth Seal, vv. 12-17

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Rev_6:1 The opening of the six seals.

I saw . . (or **I watched) . .** John was an eyewitness of this revelation that came to him as action scenes in a film rather than as words from the pages of a book. - Constable

the Lamb opened . . Christ was the only One found worthy to open the little scroll. As he breaks the 7 seals that secure the scroll, each seal unleashes a new demonstration of God's judgment on the earth.

The seventh seal contains the 7 trumpets; the seventh trumpet contains the 7 bowls.

one of the four living creatures . . Each of the four living creatures summons one of the riders as the first four seals are broken. - FSB

voice like thunder . . This voice, like thunder, is also mentioned in Rev_14:2 and Rev_19:6. A deep, impressive, awe-inspiring sound.

Presumably the Lion, as the other voices are described as those of the second, third, and fourth. But the voice (so the word "noise" should be rendered: cf. 10:3, 4) like thunder does not refer to the lion's roaring: no doubt the other three voices were as loud. ***- CBSC***

"Come" . . = imperative, present.Cf. vv. 3, 5, 7; 22:17, 20. Does this command refer to John to "***come and see"*** or to the rider on the white horse to "***come***"?

When the Lamb broke the first of the seven seals on the scroll that He had taken from God, one of the four creatures invited someone to "Come." This was probably an invitation to the first horseman rather than to John or to Christ. The angel gave this command (Gr. imperative) four times (vv. 1, 3, 5, 7), and each time a horseman on a horse came forth. - Constable

Come and see . . [Or only **Come**!] This term means either "come" or "go forth." The text of the ancient Greek uncial manuscript Sinaiticus (à) adds "**and see**" (cf. KJV), but Alexandrinus (A) has only "**come**." In context this command (PRESENT IMPERATIVE) does not refer to John or the church, but to the four horsemen (cf. Rev_6:3; Rev_6:5; Rev_6:7). - Utley

Pattern of Seals and Trumpets, etc. 4 - 2 - 1.

1. White horse
2. Red Horse
3. Black Horse
4. Pale Horse
5. Spirits under the altar
6. Great earthquake
7. Silence for 30 minutes.

   (or it includes the next seven.)

÷Rev_6:2
Rev_6:2

The White Horse

The "***Horse***" in the scripture is always connected with war.
Some mistakenly think this white horse rider is Christ. [It seems highly unusual that an angel could command Jesus to come.] Christ is the rider of the white horse in Rev_19:11, but not here.

white . . victory. The Romans, and Persians, etc. would ride a white horse in victory parades. It symbolizes conquest.

The four colored horses allude to Zec_1:8-10 ff; Zec_6:1-8 ff; Zec_6:8 ; Rev_9:7; Rev_9:9

The "***bow***" is the heavy war bow. The ***bow*** was typical Graeco-Roman military hardware; here it is a symbol of war.

a crown was given . . This rider is given a crown (a symbol of victory, a winner) by God to execute His judgments. This word refers to the kind of laurel wreath awarded winning athletes.

It "***was given to him"***, so apparently he comes into view armed with the bow, either that of a honoured soldier or of a king, is given to him afterwards perhaps as his title to the dominion he conquorers. - CBSC

But the phrase "***was given***" is from Dan_7:4, Dan_7:6, Dan_7:14: which may indicate that it is not necessary to suppose that the Seer actually saw some one crown him.

The "***crown***" is the stephanos, or victor's crown Rev_4:10.

conquering . . = Present, participle of "*overcoming*"

to Conquer . . = subjunctive.

win many battles … gain the victory . . [NLT] The double use of the Greek word *nikaō* (conquer) confirms that this political rider is powerful. The focus is on war and conquest.

He represents the most powerful military and political power "bent on conquest," the Roman empire. ... probably symbolizes political and military leaders' destabilizing quest to expand their realms, leading to war (red horse), famine (black horse), and epidemic disease (pale horse). - ESVSB

÷Rev_6:3
Rev_6:3

Second Seal. -- The Red Horse.
Bloodshed.
The second creature.

÷Rev_6:4
Rev_6:4

The Red Horse

fiery red . . War, blood shed. (Mar_13:7-8; Mat_24:10) Represents bloodshed from violence (cf. Zec_1:8; Zec_6:2).

it was granted . . Passive, someone else gave permission and permitted him to take peace from the earth. (1st Aorist, indictive)

The red horse probably symbolizes bloodshed and war. The rider of this horse removes peace from the earth and begins war. There do not seem to me to be sufficient similarities between this red horse rider and the one in Zechariah 1:7 to identify them as the same individual. The one in Zechariah is probably the Angel of the Lord. - Constable

Although peace was what the Roman empire promised (the *pax Romana*), war, slaughter, including civil upheavals and ethnic cleansing was soon coming upon the Jewish nation and Jerusalem.

should kill one another . . The phrase "*to make men slaughter one another*" is interesting because in the OT this is one of the means YHWH used to judge His enemies (cf. Jdg_7:22; 1Sa_14:20; 2Ch_20:22). - Utley

a great sword . . It was a "***sword***" for killing sacrifices, not a battle sword. The violence against the Jews included their violence and persecution of the church, Rev_2:9-10; Rev_3:9; Act_12:1-3; Rev_6:9-10;

The "sword" is the word used in the LXX for the knife Abraham used to almost kill Isaac. It is the knife used in killing a sacrifice. Many early saints were martyred because of their faith. These where like sacrifice to God, Mar_13:9-12; Rev_6:9;

Psa_45:3-6;

÷Rev_6:5
Rev_6:5

The Third Seal -- The Black Horse

the third living creature . . The four living creatures are each opening one of the first four seals.

Come and see . . cf. note on Rev_6:1; This seems to be a call for the revelation of the third seal to come forth, for a statement directed to John.

black . . Mournful. Famine is the key to this imagery, Rev_6:6; Mar_13:8; Mat_24:7; Also consider: (Eze_4:17) Jer_4:28 ; and Jer_8:21 . Distress and Dilemma - Mat_24:7

The ***black horse*** represents economic and social dysfunction, indicated by ***scales*** used in commerce. Rampant inflation is shown by the cost of the staples of life: - NLTSB

black horse. Symbolizes mourning from famine caused by war (cf. 2Ki_6:24-33; Zec_6:2). - NIVZSB

The rider on the **black horse** carries **scales** for measuring grains and their prices. A heavenly voice comments on the scales' significance, citing inflated grain prices (8 to 10 times normal). Siege and disruption of commercial routes will produce scarcity, driving prices up (see Deu_28:49-57; 2Ki_6:24-25; 2Ki_7:1-2). - ESVSB

had a balance scale in his hand . . The scale will aid in rationing out food and drink at exorbitantly high prices. Supplies left over after war (see Rev_6:2) will need to be carefully apportioned. - FSB [cf. Lev_26:26; Eze_4:16. WG]

a pair of scales . . Symbolize commerce.
:Rev_6:6
Rev_6:6

heard a voice . . Apparently the voice of God ??? One in the midst of the four living creatures.

A quart of wheat for a denarius . . Suggestive of someone rationing out supplies in a government food line and selling them at inflated prices (compare 2Ki_6:24-25). A denarius, the coin mentioned here in the Greek text, was a day's wage earned by a common laborer. Such rations could feed only one person, so a worker would not have been able to afford to feed his family. The result would have been widespread hunger and starvation. - FSB

a penny . . = a day's wage. (This would means these commodities would cost about 12 times the regular cost.)

wheat ... barley . . Primary food staples in Israel Deu_8:8. The famine prices are inflated 8 to 16 time the normal rate. NIVZSB
Barley was usually fed to animals or ate by the poor as it is low in nutrients and cheaper than wheat.

the olive oil and the wine . . The necessities (wheat and barley) are sold for exorbitant prices, but luxury items (oil and wine) are unaffected. This may point to the role greed can play in intensifying the effects of a famine. - FSB

A loaf of wheat bread or three loaves of barley will cost a day's pay . . (Greek *A choinix* [1 quart or 1 liter] *of wheat for a denarius, and 3 choinix of barley for a denarius.* A denarius was equivalent to a laborer's full day's wage). Yet the prices of luxuries such as ***oil and wine*** would remain unchanged. It is an image of social and economic imbalance. - NLTSB

do not damage the oil and the wine . . Sets limits on the rider's destruction. Olive trees and vines are not immediately impacted by drought, suggesting a limited shortage rather than a severe famine as in Joe_1:10-11. - NIVZSB

don't harm . . NLT "don't waste". Because of the feminine and the need to cook the grain, be very cautious and don't wase the oil and wine.

oil and the wine . . Although the point could be that these foods will not be affected by the famine, a more

straightforward meaning is that bare staples -- ***oil*** was used in the preparation of bread, and ***wine*** was considered necessary for cooking and purifying water -- suddenly will become luxuries that have to be carefully protected. - MSB

> The fact that these were not hurt shows a limited famine. This limitation can also be seen in Rev_6:8. God limits His judgment so that unbelievers will have time to repent (cf. 16:9). It is also possible that both of these were used for medical purposes. - Utley

÷Rev_6:7
Rev_6:7

The fourth Seal - <u>The Pale Horse</u>

Pattern of Seal, Trumpets, etc. 4 - 2 - 1.

1. White horse
2. Red Horse
3. Black Horse
4. Pale Horse
5. Spirits under the altar
6. Great earthquake
7. Silence for 30 minutes.
   (and it includes the next seven.)

voice of the fourth living creature . .

"Come and see" . .
÷Rev_6:8
Rev_6:8

a pale horse . . = a pale green-yellowish color (corpse like). In the ancient world, ***pale green*** was the color for depicting a corpse. This presents a picture of the horrible conditions during the destruction of Jerusalem - Mat_24:6-7.

pale green horse . . May indicate pestilence and death, as its rider signifies. Expanding on Mark's version of Jesus' apocalyptic discourse, Luke adds "plagues" to famines (see Luk_21:11; compare Lev_26:25; Eze_14:19; [Eze_14:21; 2Ki_17:25 ff]. - FSB

> **Death** and **Hades** ride the **pale** horse (Gk. *chlōros*, "pale green"; either yellowish green or grayish green, the color of corpses). Their authority to kill is limited to **a fourth of the earth**: - ESVSB

> **"Pale,**" the Gr. word from which the English word ***"chlorophyll***" comes, describes the pale, ashen-green, pallor characteristic of the decomposition of a corpse. - MSB

that sat on him . . Alford remarks on the fact that the phrase for "upon him" is different from that used of the previous riders, and may be rendered "on the top of him," perhaps taking it to suggest that the spectre (or skeleton, or demon?) did not ride astride and manage his horse, but simply sat clumsily on his back. - CBSC

named Death . . This personification of death is in direct contrast to the life offered by the Lamb, Jesus (Rev_7:14).

he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades was following . . This is an OT allusion to Pro_5:5 or Hos_13:14. It is a personification of the terms for termination of physical life. They are used together quite often in the Revelation (cf. Rev_1:18; Rev_20:13-14). - Utley

"***Hades***" What follows war and famine? Plagues and pestilences.

Physical, bodily death is connected to the netherworld of Greek mythology— the place where people go after their bodily death. This personification, along with the personification of death, is likely meant to evoke the idea that these two evil powers are at work in the world—physical death and the spiritual death that can follow it (compare Hos_13:14). - FSB

the grave . . NTL Greek *Hades.* In Greek thought, Hades was the underworld abode of bodiless beings. The Hebrew idea of *Sheol,* the place of the dead (1Sa_28:15), was similar. - NLTSB

a fourth of the earth . . Severe, yet restrained, judgment. - NIVZSB

The death of "*a fourth of the earth"* would be a "*great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now"* (Mat_24:21) - ESVSB

[Does this mean that a fourth of the world's Jews were killed in the Judean invasion and conquest 67-73 AD led by Vespasian and Titus? See the estimates given by Josephus.]

kill with the sword, with hunger, with death, . . This fourfold set of woes (***sword and famine and disease and wild animals;*** cp. Eze_14:21) summarizes the tragedies [of war] - NLTSB

to kill with . . These four horsemen represent the OT covenant judgments (cf. Lev_26:21-26; Jer_15:2; Jer_24:10; Jer_27:8; Jer_19:7-8; Jer_32:24, Jer_32:36; Jer_34:17; Eze_5:12, Eze_5:17; Eze_14:21; Amo_4:6-10).

The term for "sword" is different from v. 4. This refers to the large battle sword. All 4 of the OT judgments of war, famine, plague, and wild animals are listed in Lev_26:21-26 and Eze_14:21. These covenant judgments are clearly discussed in Deu_27:1-29.

Remember, originally their purpose was to cause Israel to repent and turn back to YHWH. They function in that same redemptive sense here (cf. Rev_11:13; Rev_14:7). - Utley

and by the beasts of the earth . . In addition to the tactics of the second and third horsemen, Death and Hades also employed wild animals (see Lev_26:22; Eze_14:15). - FSB

God's "four dreadful judgments" against Israel (Eze_14:21; cf. Deu_32:24-26; Jer_24:10). NIVZSB

The same parallel prediction was made by Ezekiel against Jerusalem, Eze_14:21. Another tie-in with Revelation being about a judgment of God against Israel and Jerusalem in particular. See the note on Rev_18:24;

:Rev_6:9

Rev_6:9

Fifth Seal = v. 9-11; Beheaded souls under the altar - asking for avenging judgment. - Exo_39:39 ; Exo_40:29

See Rev_6:7 for Pattern of Seals, Trumpets, bowls, etc. 4-2-1.

The **fifth seal** reveals the Lamb's rationale for releasing combatants to devastate the earth. Under the altar in heaven, where sacrificial blood would pool (Exo_29:12), John sees the **souls** of believers who were **slain** (thus they are pictured as sacrifices) for bearing witness about Jesus (cf. Rev_20:4). - ESVSB

I saw underneath the altar . . There has been much discussion as to which altar this refers. The term "altar" is used quite often in Revelation (cf. Rev_8:3, Rev_8:5; Rev_9:13; Rev_11:1; Rev_14:18; Rev_16:7). Some believe that this refers to the sacrificial altar mentioned in Lev_4:7 and by Paul in Php_2:17, while others believe that it is the altar of incense in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle or temple of Rev_11:1. It is probably the altar of sacrifice because (1) the rabbis saw this as a place of great honor and (2) it is referring to death (i.e. blood) of the martyrs. **- Utley**

I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God. . These are clearly Christians who had suffered martyrdom. They had died "for the word of God." *They were under the altar.* ... The brazen altar stood at the door of the tabernacle, and at the bottom of it all the blood of the offerings was poured (Lev_4:7; Exo_29:12). Their position probably points out that their own blood was poured out for Christ. **- PNT**

altar . . This altar was evidently an altar of sacrifice rather than an incense altar (cf. Rev_5:8; Rev_8:3-5; Rev_14:17-18). Under this altar were the souls (Gr. *psyche*, lives) of people who had died for their faith in God and their faithfulness to Him Perhaps the idea is that the lives of these martyrs were sacrifices to God (cf. Php_2:17; 2Ti_4:6). The "and" (Gr. *kai*) is again probably ascensive (cf. Rev_1:2, Rev_1:9) meaning the word of God "even" the testimony they maintained.**- *Constable***

the souls of those who had been slaughtered . . The martyrs are under the altar: They were sacrificed because of their faith in Christ (see Rev_20:4) and implies violence. - FSB

the souls of those who had been slain . . These souls are the disembodied (between death and resurrection) martyred believers (cf. Rev_13:15; Rev_18:24; Rev_20:4). All Christians are called to be martyrs if the situation demands (cf. Rev_2:10, Rev_2:13; Mat_10:38-39; Mat_16:24). - Utley

souls . . There is undoubtedly here no distinction between the word for "soul" ψυχὰς (the mere principle of natural life) and "spirit", the immortal and heavenly part of man 1Co_15:44. See Act_2:41 for a similar interchange of the words.

slain . . = The term has a sacrificial significa**nce.**

those who had been slain . . Christian martyrs (Rev_20:4), who were "slain" like the Lamb and God's prophets (Rev_5:9; Rev_18:24). Like John (Rev_1:9), they suffered for their faithful "testimony." - NIVZSB

the souls of those who had been slain . . Christians martyred for their faith (cf. Rev_7:9, Rev_7:13-15; Rev_17:6; Mat_24:9-14; see also Mar_13:9-13; Luk_21:12-19). - MSB

for . . *dia* = Rev_1:9 "because of" or "on account of" : Rev_20:4 they had been "beheaded" for their testimony which they held.

÷Rev_6:10
Rev_6:10

cried with a loud voice . . The martyrs **shouted** to the Lord because they trusted in his power to redress their grievances. - NLTSB

How long . . This prayer often shows up in the midst of persecution (e.g., Zec_1:12; Psa_13:1-2; Isa_6:11; Hab_1:2).

God's answer is in a "little while" for "the time is at hand" and God's judgment would "shortly" be rendered, Rev_1:1-3; and Rev_22:6; Rev_22:10.

With the coming wrath of God on their enemies (the fall of Jerusalem, AD 70) the saints would see their vengeance, Rev_18:20.

John closes the book of Revelation with the Lord promising to "come quickly" to bring this avenging judgment, Rev_22:20.

how long . . Is God slow to act? Will justice be done? God does act decisively (see Rev_6:12-14); his wrath (Rev_6:16-17) must be understood in terms of justice, fairness, and righteousness (see Exo_34:5-7; Psa_103:8; Psa_145:8; Neh_9:17; Joe_2:13; Jon_4:2; Rom_2:6-11). - NLTSB

how long . . The rest of the book progressively shows how the Lord answers their prayers to avenge their deaths, beginning in Rev_6:15-17 with the very ones who had put them to death. - ESVSB

O Lord . . [Christ, "one who controls every thing"] This term "Lord" (*despotēs*) describes total authority. We get the English term "despot" from this Greek word. It is used of YHWH in Luk_2:29 and Act_4:24 and of Jesus in 2Pe_2:1 and Jud_1:4. - Utley

avenge our blood . . The Lord described the *Days of vengeance* for the saints whose blood had been shed as the time when Israel (with its leaders who rejected Christ and all God's prophets) and Jerusalem would be destroyed (AD 70) Rev_18:20 cf Luk_21:22 . See the **notes** on Mat_23:35 and Luk_21:22.

avenge our blood . . This cry for God's justice follows the pattern of OT imprecatory (vengeance) psalms (see "Prayers for Vengeance" at Psa_137:1, p. 1017; cp. Psa_6:3; Psa_74:10; Psa_79:5; Psa_80:4).

It also reflects the covenant curses of Deu_28:53-57; Deu_32:35 quoted in Rom_12:19.

avenge . . These people are not asking for vengeance, but for justice! This request follows Paul's admonition in Rom_12:19. - Utley

blood . . Similar to blood crying out - Gen_4:10 ; Heb_12:24; Heb_11:4

those who dwell on the earth . . This is a very common phrase in Revelation; it always refers to unbelievers (cf. Rev_3:10; Rev_8:13; Rev_11:10; Rev_13:8, Rev_13:14; Rev_17:8). - Utley

÷Rev_6:11
Rev_6:11

a white robe . . is symbolic of the martyrs' victory and of God's full acceptance. - NLTSB

white robe . . of victory and purity (cf. note on Rev_2:17; also Rev_3:4-5; Rev_7:9, Rev_7:14). - ESVSB

robes . . Greek *stole*, long festive dress for special occasions. Remember they are spirits without a body, so a **robe** is given to each one to cloth them. - WG

We see that the "souls" appeared in some visible form, like enough to bodies to wear garments: one of the considerations against regarding them as abstractions, not personal beings. - CBSC

The theological problem involved here is how a disembodied soul could wear a piece of clothing. Be careful of hyper literalism, especially when interpreting an apocalyptic drama! The fact that commentators even discuss this shows how much they misunderstand the genre of the book! Do not push the details in Revelation! - Utley

told they should rest . . The martyrs are to await God's justice. In ***a little while*** God will answer their pleads for justice.

wait . . translated "rest". cf. Rev_14:13 b**.**

yet for a little season , , Revelation is about things *"which must shortly come to pass."* Rev_1:1-3.

until fellow servants an brethren . . God's mercy in giving the saints' enemies time to repent. 2Pe_3:9. God allows certain things to happen though he is still in command.

God told these martyrs to be patient. More people would experience martyrdom before it would be God's time for Jesus Christ to return ... and judge their living adversaries. **-** Constable

brethren . . a generic term that refers to both male and female believers. NLTSB

should be killed . . = Gk *mellontes* = about to occur.

killed . . = slain or sacrificed.

÷Rev_6:12
Rev_6:12

The Sixth Seal - Destruction of Jerusalem, God's judgment.
Revelation of God's Day of Wrath.
This seal show's God's answer to the prayers of those pictured in Seal Five Rev_5:9-10; and reveals in graphic symbolic language like that of the Old Testament prophets the vengeance of God upon the enemy of His people

He . . The Lamb, Rev_6:1

earthquake = A symbol used in the scriptures of the shaking, upheaval, overthrow, of the persecuting powers. (e.g., Isa_13:4-6; Eze_32:7-8; Eze_38:19; Joe_2:10; Mar_13:8). - WG
On such a day when God's judgment and wrath is poured out on his enemies it is described in such cataclysmic signs and called "the day of the Lord.**"** (see Isa_13:4-12; Isa_34:1-4; Joe_2:10; Joe_2:30-31; Zep_2:1-3; Mar_13:1-37). **- WG**

sun black . . From Isa_50:3; Isa_13:10 ff. Isaiah used similar language to foretell Babylon's fall. Eze_32:7-8; Isa_34:4;

moon as blood . . From Joe_2:31; (quoted in Act_2:20)

** The western mind should not take these as literal events, but remember that the mid-east mind used such graphic pictures to speak of the overthrow of nations, the overthrow of their royal power (kings and princes, etc) , the lost of their military might, the loss of their economic base, and the overthrow of all facets of national and civil life. ***The powers that are referenced to can be seen in Rev_6:15.***

The darkening of the sun (cf. Isa_13:10; Eze_32:7-8; Joe_2:10, Joe_2:31; Amo_8:9; Mat_24:29; Mar_13:24-25; Luk_21:25), the reddening of the moon (cf. Joe_2:31; Act_2:20), and the falling of the stars to earth . - WG

÷Rev_6:13
Rev_6:13

stars fell ... as figs . . Isa_34:4. Context of Isa_34:4 is God's judgment of the Edomites. Not to be taken literally, but in the oriental mind-set of the picture of God's judgment and wrath. Mat_24:29.

Rev_6:12-16 pictures a nation suffering God's wrath to the utmost. It is a graphic picture of the overthrow of the Jewish nation, along with its government, and religious and civil leaders. This happened in AD 70 with Rome's destruction of Jerusalem.

[See Bible Study Text Books, p. 124 of Rev for sermon and illustration.]

See final **note** on Rev_6:12.

÷Rev_6:14
Rev_6:14

David Bradley "No Place to Hide" wrote of his experience in dropping the first atomic bomb on Japan.

sky receded . .

every mountain and island . . The continued picture of the effect of a cataclysmic earthquake and associated in Scripture with the day of the Lord, when God's judgment will overturn the whole created order (see Isa_13:4-12; Isa_34:1-4; Joe_2:1-32; Zep_2:1-3; Mar_13:1-37).

It continues to picture the upheaval in government, religious, economic, and civil life of a nation suffering God's wrath and vengeance (Rev_6:10). Vs

÷Rev_6:15
Rev_6:15

kings .. great men ... rich men .. commanders ... etc. These are the powers that are referenced to in Rev_6:12-14.

hide us . . Isa_2:10 Escape from God's wrath will be impossible.

* Josephus' *War of the Jews* reveals how the Romans put such a barrier around Jerusalem and allowed no escape from the city

÷Rev_6:16
Rev_6:16

Mountains and rocks . . The language comes from Hos_10:8; Luk_23:30

Wrath of the Lamb . . A paradox, a lamb is known for it gentleness, etc.

÷Rev_6:17

Rev_6:17

For . . because

great day of His wrath . . judgment, the day of his vengeance of the souls under the altar, Rev_6:10.

wrath = Zep_1:14; Joe_2:11 ; Isa_13:6-7 ; Nah_1:5-7 ; Mal_3:2

who is ale to stand . . The question about **Who Can Stand** (Joe_2:11; Mal_3:2) will be answered in the next chapter. Answer is also in Luk_21:36.

Parallel: Mat_24:4; Mat_25:1 ff Mar_13:5 thru v. 37 ; Luk_21:8 - 21; Luk_17:20-37

* The sixth seal show's God's answer to the prayers of those pictured in Seal Five Rev_5:9-10; and reveals in graphic symbolic language like that of the Old Testament prophets the vengeance of God upon the enemy of His people.

÷Rev_7:1

Rev_7:1

Chapter 7 - The First Interlude (Who Shall Be Able To Stand)

The restraining of the Four Winds, v.1
The Sealing of the Servants of God, vv. 2-3
The 144,000, v. 4-8
The Innumerable Multitude, vv. 9-17

- - - - -

7:1–17 Three interludes occur in chs 6–16 (7:1–17; 10:1–11:14; 12:1–14:20)

In this first interlude before the seventh seal is broken, two visions communicate how God protects his people from the coming wrath upon the wicked.

Rev_7:1 Answers the question to the last verse of **ch 6**, "*Who shall be able to stand?*" [The answer: "those who have the seal of God"]

And after these things . . = After the opening of the sixth seal. The phrase "after this" (Gr. *meta touto*) indicates that what follows is a new vision (cf. Rev_4:1).

holding the four winds . . Holding back, or keeping under control. Zec_6:1-8; Dan_7:12 ;

four winds . . The four opposite direction on the compass, N-S-E-W cf. Jer_49:36; Zec_6:1-5;

four winds . . Since the horsemen of Zechariah are called "winds" (or "spirits") in Zec_6:5, this image may refer to the four horsemen from Rev_6:1-8. - FSB

cf. four winds of Zechariah = 4 chariots = four horsemen = God's avenging spirits - Jer_49:36; Jer_23:19; Jer_4:11-12.

not blow . . Whether this is natural wind or the activities of the four horsemen, destruction and judgment are implied. - FSB

Rev_7:1-3 -- Preservation from harm is the message.

÷Rev_7:2

Rev_7:2

another angel . . Distinct from those mentioned in v. 1.

the east . . = "sunrising"

the seal . . = like an ink stamp to mark a letter, etc., at authentic or with authority.

the seal . . Rev_6:17 closed with the question "Who can stand?" The answer is, those "sealed" (Rev_7:4) with **the seal of the living God** (cf. Eze_9:4-6). Therefore John sees **four angels** charged to hold back those winds of judgment until all of God's servants have received his seal.

> ***"The seal of the living God"*** evokes a picture of a royal signet ring by which kings authenticated documents or marked ownership of an item (see note on Joh_6:27).
>
> This seal is the name of the Lamb and of God (Rev_14:1), a gift promised to all who conquer by faith (Rev_3:12).
>
> It is antithetical to the mark of the beast (Rev_13:16) and symbolizes God's ownership and protection of his people. Circumcision functioned as such a seal under the old covenant (Rom_4:11), and God's Holy Spirit seals God's people as his property under the new (Eph_1:13-14). ESVSB

t**o whom it was granted . . (given permission) . .** This Greek term is passive; their authority came from someone else—God.

to damage the earth and the sea . . Verse 1 and 7:3 adds "***trees***" to the list of wrath recipients.
÷Rev_7:3
Rev_7:3

sealed . . 1 Aorist active subjunctive = by a single act. A mark of identity. Eze_9:1-6 God's people are marked. 2Ti_2:19

sealed the servants . . The angel and his helpers ("we") mark those who are already servants of God.

seal . . "Seal" often refers to a signet ring used to press its image into wax melted on a document. The resulting imprint implied authenticity and ownership and protected the contents (cf. Rev_9:4; Eze_9:3-4). In this case, the mark is the name of God (Rev_14:1). - MSB

on the foreheads . . Reminiscent of Eze_9:4 and contrasts with the mark of the beast, Rev_13:16. God's name, indicating his ownership, is written on believers' foreheads in Rev_14:1; Rev_22:4.

until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads . . This is an allusion to Eze_9:4, Eze_9:6 (cf. Rev_9:4; Rev_14:1). The opposite of this sealing is Satan's sealing, the mark of the beast (cf. Rev_13:16-17; Rev_14:9, Rev_14:11; Rev_16:2; Rev_19:20; Rev_20:4). - Utley
÷Rev_7:4
Rev_7:4

heard the number . . The numbering of Rev_7:4-8 resembles military censuses from the ot; compare Num_1:3, Num_1:18; Num_26:2.

> **Verses 4–8** may echo the census in **Num 1–2**, numbering Israel's military force, though the tribe of Levi was excluded (Num_1:49). In this interpretation, John hears the census of God's end-time army warring against spiritual foes through faithful witness (cf. Rev_12:11). - NIVZSB

sealed by God . . perfect passive participle. God's people are marked.
Rev_14:1-4

Who are the 144,000? (Not J.W.'s see Rev_14:3-4)
1. Literal or figurative? Why understand the number is figurative:
   a. Strange that it is an even number of 12,000 from each tribe since some tribes were larger.
   b. There are all men.
   c. They are all un-married (virgins).

one hundred and forty-four thousand . . This same mysterious group is mentioned in Rev_14:1 and Rev_14:3. There has been much discussion about this number and who it represents. This number is symbolic, not literal, for the following reasons: (1) the number itself is a round number and all the tribes have an equal number; (2) the number is a multiple of twelve which is the biblical number of organization (or possible the people of God) and ten, which is the biblical number of completion; (3) chapter 7 is in apocalyptic language; and (4) the list of the tribes of Israel is slightly altered (Dan is omitted, and Ephraim is replaced by Joseph) so a Jew would know that it was not meant to be taken literally. - Utley

The NT often describes the Church in terms which were used of Israel (cf. Rom_2:28-29; Rom_4:11; Rom_9:6; Rom_9:8; Gal_3:29; Gal_6:16; Php_3:3) and particularly in the book of the Revelation where in Rev_1:6 the Church is addressed by a title used of Israel in Exo_19:4-6 (cf. 1Pe_2:5, 1Pe_2:9). In the books of James (cf. Jas_1:1) and I Peter (cf. 1Pe_1:1) the Church is also described as the "Diaspora," the name for scattered Jews who were not living in Palestine. - Utley

Who were they? (1) Probably refer symbolicly to the Jewish converts to Christ, Rev_12:11; (2) Ogden believers they stand for all the faithful OT Jews. (3) that it is the believing Jewish remnant (cf. **Rom. 9–11**); or (4) that it is a title for the NT Church. (5) The 144,000 that John ***hears*** in vs. 4-8, may be the same ones he ***sees*** in v. 9-12. They were the redeemed by the blood of the lamb Rev_12:11;

from every tribe of the sons of Israel . . The list begins appropriately with Judah (the royal tribe of Jesus) but substitutes Manasseh (one of the two tribes of Joseph) for Dan. The tribe of Dan fell into idolatry (Jdg_18:14-31; 1Ki_12:25-30). Ephraim, the other son of Joseph which became a tribe, is not added to the list.

of all the tribes of the children of Israel . . It is one of the most controverted of the minor questions of interpretation of this Book, whether Israel is here to be understood in the literal or the spiritual sense.

This vision of a certain number of Israelites, and the next of an innumerable multitude of all nations, are certainly correlative to each other: and the most obvious way of understanding them is, that among God's elect there will be many faithful Israelites, and yet few comparatively to the number of faithful Gentiles.

Others however understand these 144,000, and the innumerable multitude of *v.* 9, to represent the same persons regarded in two different aspects.

To God they are all His own people, all duly numbered and organized and marshalled as His army, and everyone known to Him by name: on the other hand, from a human point of view they belong to all nations, and. are too many to be counted. - CBSC

out of . . = ek

children . . Rom_9:8

continue in Rev_7:5
:Rev_7:5
Rev_7:5

Where are the 144,000? On earth.

Who were those? Those marked for escape. ***
The entire church - Jam_1:1 (Jewish church) Old Testament saints.

7:5–6 Judah . . Jacob's fourth son (Gen_35:23) but here listed first as the tribe of Israel's king (Rev_5:5; Gen_49:8-10).

Reuben . . Jacob's first son, like Judah, a son of Leah.

Gad … Asher … Naphtali. Sons from the servants Bilhah and Zilpah appear ahead of the other sons of Leah and Rachel. **Manasseh.** Joseph's firstborn, replacing Dan, a tribe notorious for idolatry (Jdg_18:29-30; 1Ki_12:29-30; Amo_8:14). - NIVZSB

from the tribe of Judah . . The list of tribes in v. 5 does not agree with any of the twenty-plus lists found in the OT. It especially does not agree with Eze_48:2-7, which lists the eschatological people of God.

Dan is omitted, Judah is listed first, Ephraim is left out, but Joseph is listed in its place and Levi is included with the other tribes. Any Jew would recognize that this list is irregular and meant to be taken symbolically. - Utley

÷Rev_7:6
Rev_7:6

* See note on Rev_7:5
÷Rev_7:7
Rev_7:7

* See note on Rev_7:5

Levi is included.

Dan is omitted (**Ephraim**, omitted as Ephraim but = **Joseph** in vs. 8)

Manasseh and **Joseph** included.
÷Rev_7:8
Rev_7:8

* See note on Rev_7:5

÷Rev_7:9
Rev_7:9

One paragraph = vs. 9-12

After these things . . 7:9–17 The interlude's second vision shows heaven with an innumerable crowd rejoicing because they are secure in Christ and all tears and sorrows have ended.

After these things I looked . . John hears the number in Rev_7:4, whereas he sees the multitude in Rev_7:9. He may be attempting to portray the surprising fulfillment of God's redemptive plan, just as he heard about a lion

and saw a lamb in Rev_5:5-6. - FSB

After this I looked . . In Rev_5:5-6, John hears OT Messianic promises (Lion of Judah, Root of David) and then sees a surprising NT fulfillment (slain Lamb); likewise here John's vision reinterprets nationalistic expectation with God's promise to multiply Abraham's descendants and bless all nations in him (Gen_22:18; Gen_26:4). - NIVSB

to great to count . . fulfilling God's promises to Abraham (Gen_15:5; Gen_17:4-5; Rom_4:16-24; Gal_3:29) - NLTSB

a great multitude . . As in Rev_5:4-5, where John first *heard* an OT title (the Lion of Judah) and then *saw* its NT fulfillment (the Lamb slain), so here John hears (Rev_7:4) the names of the sealed sons of Israel and then sees the NT fulfillment: a countless multitude **from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages** (cf. Rev_5:9), whom God has rescued from wrath through the blood of the Lamb (Rev_7:14). - ESVSB

> What race are these people? A four-fold description: nations, kindreds, people, tongues = completeness of the rest of the world = i.e. gentiles.

standing before the throne . . They stand there in heaven worshipping the Savior.

white robes . . = note their clothing, remember Rev_6:11 They wear the **white robes** of victorious martyrs (Rev_6:11; see note on Rev_2:17).

white robes . . Symbolize cleansing from defilement (v. 14; cf. Dan_12:10) as well as purity and end-time victory (Rev_3:4-5) - NIVZSB

palms . . = triumphal entry - Recall the Feast of Tabernacles - Lev_23:40-43; Joh_12:13 ;

with palm branches . . Indicative of victory in royal and military processions, as demonstrated by its connection with white robes and salvation or victory in Rev_7:10. Compare Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (e.g., Mar_11:8-10). - FSB

Viewpoint one: The **144,000** were the first-fruits, Jewish believers saved through Christ (Rev_14:4). The multitude from all nations were Gentile Christians; Act_14:1; Act_18:4; Act_19:10; Act_19:17; Act_20:21; 1Co_1:22; 1Co_1:23; 1Co_1:24;

Viewpoint two: The 144,00 John hear being sealed was spiritual Israel redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, then when John looked closely he seems they are a great multitude from every nation. Rev_7:14 and represent the full number of martyrs.

> The great multitude mentioned in this verse is obviously different from the one hundred forty-four thousand which are mentioned in v. 4. As the first group came from different tribes of Israel, this group comes from every tribe of the earth. It seems that these two groups represent the same group of people in two different senses. If vv. 1–8 refer to believing Jews, then v. 9 refers to the people of God of all people groups (cf. Rev_5:9; Rev_11:9; Rev_13:7; Rev_14:6; Rev_17:15).
>
> However, the fact that they are said to have come out of the great tribulation (Rev_7:14 [John participated in this tribulation also Rev_1:9]) and were standing before the throne (cf. v. 9) and they have white robes (cf. Rev_6:11) may identify them as the complete number of martyrs (cf. Rev_6:11; Rev_17:6; Rev_18:24; Rev_19:2; Rev_20:4). - Utley

÷Rev_7:10
Rev_7:10

crying with a loud voice . .

Salvation to our God . . The word "salvation" has the article, according to Hebrew usage, as, e.g. Psa_3:8 [Heb. 9], where the article may denote either "the promised salvation" or the salvation in all its fulness including *victory*. We must remember that "salvation" is in the Bible a positive conception—net only being saved *from* some evil, but being placed in a state of positive blessedness: and these words will thus be a confession that such blessedness not only is of God, but belongs by right to God. - CBSC

salvation . . The crowd praises God and the Lamb. See Rev_12:10; Rev_19:1.

salvation . . The Old Testament sense of "*victory*" Rev_12:10 ; Rev_19:1 ;

Salvation *belongs* to our God . . Salvation is the theme of their worship, and they recognize that it comes solely from Him. - MSB

and to the Lamb . . Notice that the Messiah is blessed in the same way as YHWH. This stresses the divine essence of the Son.

> **7:10–12** When the multitude extols God and the Lamb for **salvation**, angels and living creatures fall down and break out in a sevenfold doxology, almost replicating the sevenfold praise of the Lamb (Rev_5:12) - ESVSB

÷Rev_7:11
Rev_7:11

> **7:10–12** When the multitude extols God and the Lamb for **salvation**, angels and living creatures fall down and break out in a sevenfold doxology, almost replicating the sevenfold praise of the Lamb (Rev_5:12) - ESVSB

all the angels . . The angels participate in the same worship activity and posture as the 24 elders in Rev_4:10 and Rev_5:14.

> All the host of heaven ***worship*** God.

7:11–12 The ***angels***, ***elders***, and ***four living beings*** all prostrated themselves before God and responded together in a sevenfold (i.e., comprehensive) doxology to recognize God's eternal nature. The doxology is preceded and followed by ***Amen***—a powerful affirmation of God's victory. - NLTSB

÷Rev_7:12
Rev_7:12

> **Seven** *blessings* or praises.

all the angels . . The angels participate in the same activity and posture as the 24 elders in Rev_4:10 and Rev_5:14. - FSB

angels, elders, and four living beings . . all prostrated themselves before God and responded together in a sevenfold (i.e., comprehensive) doxology to recognize God's eternal nature. NLTSB

Amen . . a powerful affirmation of God's victory.

praise . . A sevenfold song of praise to God.

blessing, and glory &c. . . The seven words of praise have each the conjunction and article (καὶ ἡ) : see on Rev_5:12-13.
÷Rev_7:13
Rev_7:13

One Paragraph vs. 13-17

one of the elders . . See on Rev_5:5. There is no signifiance in which one. We have similarly "one (no matter which) of the seven Angels" in Rev_17:1, Rev_21:9, who come to speak to John.

answered saying . . addressed me .. Asking, asked me . . "*Do you know*?" Asking a Question that he might teach.

What are these? . . The questions are asked by the elder that he may teach. "These" refer to the vast multitude described in verse 9 - PNT

> Occasionally in prophetic visions a dialogue takes place involving one of the characters in the vision and the person receiving it (cf. Jer_1:11, Jer_1:13; Amo_7:8; Amo_8:2; Zec_4:2, Zec_4:5). Here one of the elders asked John a question anticipating the question that was in John's mind. This led to a clarification of the identity of the multitude in this vision (cf. Rev_5:5; Jos_9:8; Jon_1:8). - Constable

these ..in white robes . . Speaking of those in white robes (vv. Rev_7:9, Rev_7:13).
÷Rev_7:14

Rev_7:14

Sir . . = "*kurie*" = ***Lord***, -- John shows respect and reverence. The structure recalls Eze_37:3 ; Dan_10:16, Dan_10:17; Zec_4:5, Zec_4:13.

came out . . = Present participle "who are coming" John sees it as it is happening.

tribulation . . = NASB has the article "***the*** *tribulation*." Mat_24:21 ; Mat_24:29 ; John was in this tribulation with his fellow Christians, Rev_1:9.

> Jesus foretold of the "tribulations" (times of persecution, hardships, troubles) that would soon come upon his disciples before the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem. Mat_24:21; Mat_10:17; Mar_13:9;
>
> We begin to see Jesus' prophecy come to pass in the persecution of the church. Act_8:1, Act_5:41; Act_6:12; Act_12:1-3 ; Act_22:20; Rev_1:9; Rev_2:9-10; Rev_2:13; Rev_3:9-10; etc.

washed . . = 1st Aorist Act. Ind. - a single act, not a process. Baptism or persecution? 1Co_6:11 ; Rev_1:5 ; Isa_1:18 ; Rev_3:4 ; Eph_5:25-26 ;

made them white in the blood . . A paradox something like that of Rev_6:16 fin. For the image, cf. perhaps Rev_1:5 (but see note there); certainly Rev_22:14 (true text), and probably 1Jn_1:7. Heb_9:14, which is sometimes quoted, is less closely parallel: there the image seems to be taken from ritual rather than physical cleansing. - CBSC

"In modern thought, making anything white by washing it in blood is paradoxical and even shocking, but it was not so with John and those with an OT background. To them such washing denoted spiritual purity. Not just any blood would accomplish the cleansing. The blood of martyrs shed for the Lamb's sake would not even do it. It had to be the blood of the Lamb's great sacrifice to produce the whiteness (Rev_1:5; Rev_5:9; cf. Rom_3:25; Rom_5:9; Eph_1:7; Col_1:20; Heb_9:14; 1Pe_1:2, 1Pe_1:19; 1Jn_1:7) . . ." (Thomas, *Revelation 1–7*, p. 498. The *en* ("in") has instrumental force here; Christ's blood is what made their robes white. Contrast Rev_12:11 where *dia* ("because of") expresses the means of victory, namely, His blood and their faithfulness.)

Rev_7:15

Rev_7:15

Therefore ... (Because of this) . . Refers to their having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. - FSB

before the throne . . This indicates being in God's presence—the great hope to which all of Revelation points (see Rev_21:3-5). The themes in Rev_7:16-17 are repeated in Rev_21:3-5. - FSB

... as we have similar language about the most favoured Angels, Mat_18:10; Luk_1:19. - CBSC

serve . . = "*latreuo*" = "to render religious service or homage, to worship"

they serve Him day and night . . In the OT this referred to Levitical priests (cf. Psa_134:1; 1Ch_9:33). The access to God and the service of God has been expanded to (1) persecuted believers and (2) all believers. There is no longer a Jewish elite priesthood! - Utley

temple . . = Since there is no temple in heaven as the final resting place of man (Rev_21:22) it seems all the references to the temple in Revelation may be to the church? Parallel to Rev_3:12; Heb_9:8-9 (tabernacle); 1Co_3:16-17 "ye" plural, another reference to the church; 2Co_6:16 .

temple . . God's ***Temple*** symbolizes his presence (also Rev_11:19; cp. Rev_21:22). - NLTSB

in his temple . . as portrayed by the throne room in John's visions.

dwell among them . . = "*spread his tent*" Joh_1:14. A glorious picture of the church (cf Rev_21:1 ff).

dwell among them . . The preferred reading is that He "will spread His tent over them." - MSB

Rev_7:16

Rev_7:16

they will hunger no more, nor thirst anymore . . Verse 16 is an allusion to Isa_49:10. It is repeated often in the Gospels (cf. Mat_5:6; Joh_4:14; Joh_6:35; Joh_7:37). - Utley

hunger, thirst, etc. . . -- Jesus is the bread and water, Joh_4:14 ; For us now the **Rev_22:17** *"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."* Mat_5:6; Joh_4:14; Joh_6:35; Joh_7:37-38

If the temple (Rev_7:15) is here the church, then the bread and water are reference to the spiritual food which is now provided for the saints saying it is ample and complete. - cf. Eph_1:3; Jud_1:3;

The language is in fulfillment of Isa_49:10 -- where the O.T. prophet if speaking the same figurative language of God's spiritual blessing in the promised messianic age, that is, the Christian age.

Joh_7:37 ; Rev_22:14 ; Mat_5:6 ; Joh_4:6-14

hunger no more, neither thirst anymore . . As priests, they serve God in his temple, in which he will **shelter** them from **sun** and **scorching heat** (cf. Isa_49:10), spreading his tent over them and "dwelling" with them (cf. Eze_37:27; Joh_1:14). - ESVSB

Never … hunger … thirst . . Alludes to Isa_49:10; fulfilled in Rev_21:6; Rev_22:2. - NIVZSB

nor will the sun beat down on them; nor any heat . . This is an allusion to the shade provided by the shekinah cloud of glory during the 38 year wilderness wandering period (cf. Psa_121:5-7). - Utley

sun light . . Priests serving in the temple wee out of the sun, nothing bad happens to them, cf. Psa_121:6; Isa_49:10; a Jewish idiom.
÷Rev_7:17
Rev_7:17

the Lamb ... shall lead . . We have again the solemn paradox, that the Lamb is Shepherd (of course we are reminded of **St John 10**, but we ought to remember **Ps. 23** as well, and its many O. T. imitations, including **Isa_40:11** in all of which the Shepherd is the Lord God of Israel), and the men are His flock—cf. Eze_34:31, Eze_36:37-38. - CBSC

Lamb . . Christ's designation as the ***Shepherd*** of God's people (cp. Psa_23:1; Mat_15:24; Joh_10:3, Joh_10:11, Joh_10:14; Heb_13:20; 1Pe_2:25) means that he protects and provides for the sheep, bringing hope and salvation to his people (see Eze_34:11-16, Eze_34:23-24). - NLTSB

shepherd ... shall feed them . . An allusion from Eze_34:23 (in this passage the Messiah is referred to as "David.")
Religious and political leaders are often portrayed as either good or bad shepherds in the Bible (e.g., 2Sa_5:2; Joh_10:11-18;

> (In the Bible, leaders are often described with the shepherd motif (e.g., 1Ch_11:2; Psa_78:70-71; Isa_44:28). The patriarchs of Genesis (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), Moses, Saul, and David are all described in this way. The motif also is used in Psalms and in the Prophets, including Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Micah, Nahum, and Zechariah. Jesus employs this imagery in the Gospel of John (Joh_10:11-18), and NT authors refer to him in similar terms (e.g., Heb_13:20; 1Pe_2:25; 1Pe_5:4). - -FSB

and will guide them to springs of the water of life . . For desert people water has always been a symbol of abundance and life. This is an allusion to Isa_25:8, which is repeated at the close of the book in Rev_21:6; Rev_22:1. - Utley

fountains of waters . . they find refreshment in **springs of living water** (Psa_23:1-2), tasting the promised joys of the new Jerusalem even before its final descent from heaven (Rev_22:1), - ESVSB

Wipe away all tears . . A feast alluded to in Isa_25:6-9; and pictures metaphorically the blessings in the Christian or Messianic age. (cf. Rev_21:4.)

÷Rev_8:1
Rev_8:1

Chapter 8 - Seventh Seal; First Four Trumpets

Heaven's Reaction, Rev_8:1-2
The Prayers of Saints Ascend, Rev_8:3-4
The Prayer's Are Answered, Rev_8:5
The First Trumpet, Rev_8:6-7
The Second Trumpet, Rev_8:8-9
The Third Trumpet, Rev_8:10-11
The Fourth Trumpet, Rev_8:12
The Eagle's Warning, Rev_8:13

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Is the 7th seal (Rev_8:1) the silence (tranquility, rest), or it is introducing and including ALL of the 7 trumpets?

Mat_24:29-31 Luk_1:10 (Dan Jenkins - thinks the 7th seal is the silence.)

Is the action of Rev_8:2-6 subsequent to the silence, or contemporary?

[humor :) ***silence*** = Uho! There must be no preachers or women in heaven?! :)]

The silence period (seventh seal) . . Rev_8:1-6. The disclosures of the seventh seal consist in the signals of the seven trumpets, announced in the order of events by the seven angels. The trumpets sounded the beginning of the end of Jerusalem, of the Jewish temple, of Judaism and of all that constituted the Jewish state. It signaled the end of the world of **Mat_24:3**; **Mat_24:14** --not the inhabited world, but the Jewish world. As the seven trumpets of Jericho, borne and blown by the seven priests, signaled the fall of the Canaanite city standing in the way of Israel's conquest (**Jos_6:13-21**), so did the seven trumpets, sounded successively by the seven angels of Revelation, signal the fall of Jerusalem.

They signaled the end of the once **"faithful city, turned harlot"** (**Isa_1:21**); **"the great city, spiritually called Sodom and Egypt where also the Lord was crucified"** (**Rev_11:8**; **Rev_11:13**). It was the end of the apostate Jerusalem which stood in the way of the conquest of the gospel; the Jerusalem that refused the **"testimony"** which the martyrs under the altar of **Rev_6:9** had **"held";** the word of God which the same enthroned souls of **Rev_20:4** had **"witnessed."**

It was the Jerusalem of **Gal_4:25-26**, which was **"in bondage with her children."** The old Jerusalem was doomed to destruction before the advance of the **"Jerusalem above"** of **Gal_4:26**, and **"heavenly Jerusalem"** of Hebrews 12;23, and the **"new Jerusalem"** of **Rev_21:1** --the church of the new covenant, the **"holy city"** and **"temple"** of the Christ who was the Lamb of Revelation.

When the angel opened this **seventh seal**, before the momentous announcements were heard, a dread and awful silence was recorded. - Wallace

When the Lamb broke the seventh seal . . Jesus is the One who opens the seventh seal, but from this point on angels will be involved in announcing the seven trumpets and later the seven bowls. - Utley

there was silence in heaven . . In the ot, silence is indicative of God's impending judgment (see Hab_3:3-6; Zec_2:13 – Zec_3:2). There is a dramatic pause in the endless praises of the living creatures (Rev_4:8). - FSB

silence in heaven . . Dramatic pause in the unceasing heavenly praise (4:8); the angels and redeemed anticipate God's further acts of judgment (cf. Hab_2:20; Zep_1:7; Zec_2:13). NIVZSB

there was silence in heaven for about half an hour . . There have been several theories connected with this

silence: (1) the rabbis relate it to a period of silence to let the prayers of the saints be heard; ... (3) others relate it to several OT passages where humans are to be silent in the presence of God (cf. Hab_2:20; Zep_1:7; Zec_2:13); and (4) some relate it to dramatic effect for the coming intense judgment on unbelievers. - Utley

There was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour . . There has been a great effort among commentators to interpret the meaning of this silence. I think that it is a hush of awe before the march of the awful judgments about to come, the calm before the storm breaks forth, the oppressive silence before the burst of battle. It is designed to emphasize the events that follow. - PNT

> The purpose of the silence is to prepare for what is about to happen by heightening expectation of God's awesome judgments to follow (cf. Hab_2:20; Hab_3:3; Zep_1:7-8, Zep_1:15, Zep_1:17-18; Zec_2:13). Perhaps the silence represents God listening to the prayers of the saints.[307] It is the lull before the storm, as a few moments of calm precede the most devastating destruction of a tornado or hurricane. - Constable

Rev_8:2

Rev_8:2

> **8:2–5** *Heaven's Incense Altar: The Saints' Prayers, and Fire Flung to Earth.* Like the just-completed cycle of visions associated with the Lamb's breaking the scroll's seven seals, a sevenfold vision series begins with a glimpse into God's heavenly sanctuary. As seven angels stand ready to sound warning trumpets, the incense altar from which smoke rises (symbolizing the prayers of the suffering church) is the source of a succession of fiery judgments cast from heaven to the earth—devastating, but still restrained, foretaste of final judgment to come. - ESVSB
>
> **8:2–6** This scene of preparation in heaven introduces the seven trumpets of judgment and continues the theme of God's receiving and answering prayer (Rev_5:8; Rev_6:9-11). - NLTSB
>
> **8:6–11:19** *The Seven Trumpets.* The seven angels introduced in Rev_8:2 now sound their trumpets, initiating a second cycle of divine judgments (cf. Rev_6:1-17). These judgments lead to heavenly praise (Rev_11:15-18). - NIVZSB
>
> **seven trumpets . .** In Revelation, trumpets primarily announce impending judgment. The trumpets are of greater intensity than the seals, but not as destructive as the final bowl judgments will be (cf. Rev_16:1-21). - MSB

the seven angels which stood . . Should be, **which stand**. It is probably a designation of seven Angels (commonly, perhaps correctly, called Archangels) who permanently enjoy special nearness to God. - CBSC

the seven angels . . These may be the seven archangels spoken of in Jewish tradition (see RSVA Tob_12:15; 1 Enoch 20). Of these, only Michael is mentioned by name in Revelation (Rev_12:7). - FSB

and I saw the seven angels who stand before God . . It is interesting that the DEFINITE ARTICLE appears, "the seven angels." In rabbinical Judaism the seven angels of the presence are named in (RSVA Tob_12:15) and 1 Enoch 20:1–7. They are Uriel, Raphael, Raguel, Michael, Saraqael or Sariel, Gabriel, and Remiel. - Utley

seven angels . . stand ready to sound **seven trumpets**, initiating limited judgments that warn of coming destruction (cf. Eze_33:1-6; Joe_2:1) and summon rebels to repent (Rev. 9:21). - ESVSB

seven angels which stand before God . . the angels who act as his immediate ministering servants, to whom were given seven trumpets. The seventh seal, therefore, embraces these angels and their trumpets, and all they do in the following verses belongs to this seal. The seventh and last seal will not be exhausted until the seven

trumpet angels have discharged their mission. - PNT

seven angels . . John saw someone, perhaps God, give seven trumpets to a group of seven angels standing before the heavenly throne (cf. Rev_1:4; Rev_3:1; Rev_8:6; Rev_15:1).

Exactly who these angels were is not clear. Some interpreters have identified them with seven archangels in Jewish tradition (cf. Book of Jubilees 1:27, 29; 2:1–2, 18; 15:27; 31:14; Tobit 12:15; 1 Enoch 20:2–8), but there is no basis for this in Revelation. They are apparently simply seven other angels who have great authority. These trumpets appear to be different from the trumpet of God (1Co_15:52; 1Th_4:16) and other trumpets mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament (Heb_12:19; Rev_1:10; Rev_4:1), though they too announce God's working (cf. Eze_33:3). - Constable

seven trumpets were given to them . . There may have been seven angels to correspond to the seven trumpets. In the OT trumpets were often used to communicate to God's people, either religiously or militarily (cf. Exo_19:16; Num_10:1-10; Isa_27:13; Jer_4:5-9; Joe_2:1; Zep_1:16; Zec_9:14; 2 Esdras 6:23). In the NT a trumpet will announce the Second Coming of Christ (cf. Mat_24:31; 1Co_15:52-53; 1Th_4:16). - Utley

trumpets . . were used to assemble the people in OT times. Num_10:1-2 Num_10:9-10; Lev_25:9; Amo_3:6 ; 1Co_15:52 ; 1Th_4:16 ;

Here the trumpets seem to be announcing the Judgments of God. The climax is in Rev_11:19 (cf Rev_11:15-19).

trumpets . . Trumpets play a major role in God's dealings with His people (cf. Exo_19:16; Exo_20:18; Isa_27:13; Jer_4:5; Joe_2:1; Zep_1:16; Mat_24:31; 1Co_15:51-52; 1Th_4:16). They were part of Israel's ceremonial processions (e.g., Jos_6:1, Jos_6:13-16; 1Ki_1:34, 1Ki_1:39; 1Ch_15:24), and they assembled the Israelites for war, journeys, and special feasts (e.g., Num_10:9-10). They also warned of the coming day of the Lord (e.g., Joe_2:1), and they announced the new year in Israel (e.g., Num_29:1). Here they announce divine judgment in the day of the Lord (cf. Zec_1:14-16). - Constable

seven trumpets. . Instruments of battle (e.g., Jos_6:5). When blown by the angels, these trumpets initiate the next seven judgments. - FSB

Joel's *Day of the Lord* was heralded by a trumpet, Joe_2:1 .

The trumpet judgments are reminiscent of the ten plagues of Egypt (Exod 7:14 – 11:10) and have the same purpose—to show the powerlessness of earthly gods (or satanic powers) and to demonstrate beyond doubt the power and sovereignty of God. - NLTSB

÷Rev_8:3

Rev_8:3

another angel . . One different from the seven with the trumpets - Rev_8:2.

This text and Rev_5:8 have been used to promote the rabbinical theological concept that angels are the bearers of prayers to God. The Bible is silent on how to interpret this type of detail. These symbolic passages should not be used to define speculative theological details. This is a vision and not meant to define the role of certain angels. It does affirm that the prayers of the saints do affect God. - Utley

The vision at this point is very reminiscent of priestly service as it took place in Israel's tabernacle and temples. Another angel acting as a priest came into view and stood before the golden incense altar in heaven (cf. Rev_6:9). His censer of gold, appropriate in view of God's presence, contained coals of fire. The angel received more incense to add to the prayers of the saints already there. - Constable

at . .over . . = *epi* = ***on*** or ***at*** the altar. More literally, **on the altar**, R. V. "over the altar." - CBSC

altar . . = the brazen altar, cf Rev_16:6-7 ; the golden altar is the incense altar in Rev_9:13. The people prayed while the priests burned incense, Luk_1:10, cf/Zacharias.

Rev_5:8-9 If every church prayed as you - how much incense would angels have to mix with the coals of the altar. Let's keep the incense box full!

altar . . The altar has been identified as either the incense altar before the veil in the Holy Place or the altar of sacrifice (cf. v. 5; Rev_9:13). However, this vision is not the earthly Tabernacle or Temple in Jerusalem, but the throne room of God in heaven (cf. Heb_8:2; Heb_9:11, Heb_9:24). The incense altar fits this context best. - Utley

golden censer . . A rounded vessel in which incense and burning coals were placed together. The resulting sweet fragrance often accompanied worship ceremonies and religious rituals (see Luk_1:9) - FSB

golden censer . . Firepan used by priests to burn spices in temple worship (Lev_16:12; 1Ki_7:50). NIVZSB

golden censer . . . A golden pan, suspended on a rope or chain, that was used to transport fiery coals from the brazen altar to the altar of incense, in order to ignite the incense, symbolizing the prayers of the people (Rev_5:8; Exo_27:3; cf. Luk_1:8-9). This occurred twice daily at the time of the morning and evening sacrifices. - MSB

he was given . . "Who" gave the incense to the angel is not revealed and apparently is not important to the picture.

offer it with . . Literally, **give** (i.e. add) **it to the prayers;** ... Apparently the image is, that the prayers of the Saints are already lying on the Altar, and the Angel, in modern liturgical phrase, "censes the holy things." - CBSC

prayers . . 8:3–4 ***The prayers of God's people*** ask for God's ultimate justice and judgment (Rev_6:10-11; see also Rev_5:8; Ezr_9:5-6; Psa_141:2; Dan_9:21). The mixture of ***incense*** and ***prayers*** that reaches God's presence shows that God hears their prayers (see Rev_6:9-11) and is prepared to act. - NLTSB

the prayers of all the saints . . Exactly which group of saints this represents is uncertain, but this does show that God knows and responds to the needs of His people (cf. Exo_3:7). Incense was a symbol of prayer (cf. Psa_141:2; Rev_5:8) because the smoke went up and disappeared from the visible realm to the invisible realm. - Utley

the golden altar . . Perhaps the same altar as Rev_6:9, where the souls of the slain saints had been seen. - Lev_16:12-13 - day of atonement.

This seems to parallel the opening of the seals, Rev_5:8.

8:3–5 The earthly OT sanctuary had two altars, one for bloody sacrifice in the courtyard and the other for smoky incense inside, adjacent to the veil into the Most Holy Place (Exo_27:1-8; Exo_30:1-10).

John sees only one **altar** in heaven, fulfilling both functions (Rev_6:9; Rev_8:3). As incense was associated with the **prayers of the saints** in the earthly sanctuary (see Psa_141:2; Luk_1:9-11), so it is in John's visions (see Rev_5:8).

Not only martyrs under the heavenly altar (Rev_6:9-10) but also suffering saints on earth cry out for justice. Therefore **fire from the altar**, from which the saints' prayers rise, will be flung to earth in judgment, indicating that the judgments to follow answer the prayers of the saints. - ESVSB

And another angel came and stood over the altar . . The scene reveals the altar of the tabernacle, "a pattern made after heavenly things." This is the altar of sacrifice from which the coal was always taken to light the incense (Lev_16:13). This angel receives the incense and offers it upon the **golden altar,** the altar of incense. The incense is "the prayers of the saints;" these to reach the throne must be lighted from the altar of sacrifice; or by faith in the blood of the Lamb of God. - PNT

÷Rev_8:4
Rev_8:4

And the smoke . . As the smoke arose before the throne, so the prayers of the saints in the name of the crucified Savior arise to God. The special significance of all this is that in the terrible judgments about to follow, the prayers of the true and faithful saints will still come before God, and his providence will be over them. - PNT

smoke ... with . . Incense and prayers mingled together.

The mixture of ***incense*** and ***prayers*** that reaches God's presence shows that God hears their prayers (see Rev_6:9-11) and is prepared to act. - NLTSB

(also Swete, p. 108)

from the hand of the angel . . The angel appears to be performing a priestly action. (compare Lev_16:12; Num_16:46).
÷Rev_8:5
Rev_8:5

the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and threw it to the earth . . This is an allusion to Eze_10:2.

Coals for the incense altar before the veil would have normally been taken from the altar of sacrifice at the front of the Tabernacle (cf Rev_9:13). These are Tabernacle symbols whose meaning is fluid. The key theological thought is that this is occurring before God in heaven. - Utley

cast . . = 2 Aorist, Active, Indictive.

threw it to the earth . . Initiates judgment in response to the prayers of the saints—probably those recorded in Rev_6:10. - FSB

> The action of ***the angel,*** as he throws ***fire*** … ***down upon the earth,*** signals the dramatic beginning of God's judgment (see Gen_19:24; Exo_9:23; Lev_10:2; Deu_9:3; 2Ki_1:10). - NLTSB
>
> Therefore **fire from the altar**, from which the saints' prayers rise, will be flung to earth in judgment, indicating that the judgments to follow answer the prayers of the saints. - ESVSB

and cast it . . Probably cast the censer full of burning coals, but possibly only "scattered the fire," as Num_16:37. The meaning must be, to represent the same instrument as obtaining God's mercy on His people, and executing His vengeance on His enemies: cf. Eze_10:2. - CBSC

> This fire cast from the altar upon the earth indicates that the judgments of God are about to fall upon it. - PNT

and there followed peals of thunder . . These types of physical phenomenon are often associated with YHWH's presence (cf. Rev_4:5; Rev_11:19; Rev_16:18; Exo_19:11; Psa_18:10-13). - Utley

thunders, and voices ... = Mt. Sinai - when God was about to speak - God got the world's attention! Exo_19:9 ;Exo_19:16 ; Exo_19:18-19
When God says there will be thunders and lightening and earthquakes then when such passes it is a figure of "***God Speaking!***"

In judgment again Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal (Eze_38:2) there came judgment in Eze_38:19-20 .

thunders and sounds and lightnings and an earthquake . . This formula, first mentioned in Rev_4:5, is used again in Rev_11:19 and Rev_16:18. The latter three usages follow a set of judgments (the seals, trumpets, and bowls). - FSB

peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake . . Alludes to the Sinai theophany (Exo_19:16-20; cf. Rev_4:5). A storm theophany also concludes the cycles of trumpets (Rev_11:19) and bowls (Rev_16:18). - NIVZSB
Rev_8:6
Rev_8:6

8:1–6 These verses represent the actions during the period of silence. - Utley

*** In response to the saints' prayers (Rev_6:10) we seem to have the whole action of the 7 trumpets.

Seven trumpets seem parallel to Luk_21:25-26.

Joe_2:1 picture of God's judgment against Judah when the Babylonians overthrew and conquored the nation. (A trumpet sound pictured at Christ return at the resurrection 1Th_4:16). The trumpet pattern is like that before, 4 & 3 with 4 natural disasters described.

8:6–13 The next wave of judgments begins; four of the seven trumpets are blown in this section. The attacks, which come against nature and the cosmos, are intended to lead sinful humanity to repentance, not totally destroy them. - FSB

Describes the commencement of judgment. John's imagery recalls several of the plagues from the book of Exodus. - FSB

8:6–11:19 *The Seven Trumpets.* The seven angels introduced in Rev_8:2 now sound their trumpets, initiating a second cycle of divine judgments (cf. rev 6:1–17). These judgments lead to heavenly praise (Rev_11:15-18). - NIVZSB

8:6–11:18 *Angels Sound Seven Trumpets.* Revelation's third sevenfold series (with a second interlude in **10:1–11:14**) portrays judgments sent from heaven in response to the saints' prayers. Judgments revealed by the first four trumpets harm the same spheres that will be destroyed when the first four bowls are poured out (Rev_16:1-9): earth, sea, rivers and springs, and sky. The damage done with the trumpets is limited to "a third": God restrains his wrath, while giving foretastes of total devastation to come if rebels ignore his warnings. - ESVSB

seven trumpets . . Introduced in Rev_8:2. This scene recalls Jos_6:2-5, where seven priests blow trumpets before Jericho's destruction.

In Scripture, trumpets summon the community for worship or battle (Lev_23:24; Num_10:1-10) and announce the Lord's glorious presence in revelation (Exo_19:16), judgment (Joe_2:1), and salvation (1Th_4:16). - NIVZSB

And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets. See verse 2. There is the utmost deliberation. All must be

made ready. The four angels hold back the winds (Rev_7:1), then there was the silence of half an hour (verse 1); now the seven angels **prepared themselves to sound.**

This implies that all things were being made ready for the great events to follow. ***Trumpets***. The trumpet is used to give a signal. Usually it implied the march or charge of armies. See Joe_2:1, Joe_2:15; Jer_4:5; Eze_33:1-6. Sometimes it calls the people to worship. See Num_31:6; 1Ch_15:24. The reader will see that the first is likely to be the significance here. - PNT

÷Rev_8:7
Rev_8:7

The earth is smitten.
The purpose of the Trumpet Judgments is to work repentance, Rev_9:20 .
The Trumpet Judgments affect : 1) land; 2) sea ; 3)water 4) heavenly bodies; 5) bottomless pit; 6) River Euphrates; 7) heavenly acts

First -	Rev_8:7	the earth - 1/3 part burned
Second -	Rev_8:8-9	the sea - 1/3 part as blood, fish, ships
Third -	Rev_8:10	fountains of waters - 1/3 made bitter
Fourth -	Rev_8:12	heavenly bodies - sun, moon, stars
Fifth -	Rev_9:1	angel with key to bottomless pit
Sixth -	Rev_9:13	River Euphrates - 4 angels loosed
Seventh -	Rev_10:7	mystery finished - little book eaten

First Trumpet = storms - Eze_38:22 ;
The number "1/3" is not unique to the book of Revelation. Zec_13:8-9
These plagues often resemble the Egyptian plagues (Exo_9:22-25 ;Joe_2:30-32 ff) John adds blood to the hail and fire of the exodus narrative.

Each of the first four trumpets affects ***one-third*** of its target (see Eze_5:1-4, 12; Zec_13:8). The point is not to convey an exact measurement; instead, it indicates that God's judgment on the earth is beginning but has not reached its zenith. Together, the first four trumpets form a unified message of judgment - -

This is usual prophetic language that graphically portrays a coming judgment by God. Don't get lost in trying to make it an allegory and every piece equal to some specific event. The whole of the message, is a severe judgment is coming.

Joe_2:30-32 ff quoted in Act_2:19 with regard to "the last days" of Judaism, of the last days of the Mosaical dispensation (Act_2:15; Heb_1:1-3) and the beginning of the new Messianic age is now ushered in.

The judgment upon Israel came because of their rejection of God's Son, Mat_21:37-41; Mat_22:6-7; Mat_23:34-38;

÷Rev_8:8
Rev_8:8

second Angel . . sounding his trumpet. Judgment illustrated by the **sea.**

The 1) earth and 2) sea are affected - food supplies. From the language it sounds like a *volcano* Jer_51:25 . Not literal, but figurative

Vs. 8 **mountains . .** In OT prophetic language they usually stand for social institutions, and government. In Eze_38:19 there is a "*shaking*" of the ruling or controlling power.

÷Rev_8:9
Rev_8:9

Effect of the second angel sounding is continued; affecting a third of the sea creatures and ships.

The imagery of vs 8-8 echoes Jer_51:25, Jer_51:42, where God announced that he would make Babylon, Zion's destroyer, a "burnt mountain" and cover it with the sea. - ESVSB

The wealth of the religious hierarchy in Jerusalem's came from the tithes of the world-wide trade of Jewish merchants. Sea captains lament Babylon's (Jerusalem, Rev_11:8) ruin in Rev_18:17-19.

÷Rev_8:10
Rev_8:10

third angel . . - a star named "Wormwood" *bitterness* fell on waters and many men died, Rev_8:10-11.

star . . = lamp, torch, Lamp (λαμπὰς) Rev_4:5 (meteor); Dan_8:10 ; Mat_24:29 ; Isa_13:10-11

burning as it were a lamp . . Rather, ***like a torch***, with a flaring trail of fire. The same image is used of natural shooting stars, e.g. Verg. *Aen.* ii. 694. - CBSC

Stars usually symbolized the princes, judges, priests, the lesser ruling authorities in a nation or kingdom (The sun, moon represented the higher governing authorities.)

star fell . . The falling star, as in **Mat_24:29**, **Mar_13:25** and **Luk_21:25**, represented the downfall of authorities and rulers of the persecuting governments-- Wallace

The same imagery was in Isaiah's description of the fall of the Babylonian rulers; the constellations were used as the symbols of their positions, and the same figures of speech were used by the prophet as metaphors of the darkness that settled over the empire in the destruction of ancient Babylon. (**Isa_13:10-11**) - Wallace

rivers and on the springs of water . . Corresponds to Exo_7:20-25. Whereas the previous judgment was against salt water, this judgment is against fresh water. - FSB

÷Rev_8:11
Rev_8:11

star . . named ***Bitterness*** (literally *wormwood,* a shrubby plant yielding a bitter extract) is symbolic rather than physical. Bitter water is connected with judgment from early in Israel's national experience (Exo_15:22-26; Num_5:18; Jer_9:13-16; Jer_23:15). The message is that wide-scale judgment has begun. - NLTSB

wormwood . . is a plant native to Europe, Asia, and northern Africa, with a bitter-tasting and poisonous extract from the root. Deu_29:18 ; Pro_5:4 ; Amo_5:7; Amo_6:12. Imagery is from Jer_9:15 , Jer_23:13-15 ;

wormwood . . A leafy plant that causes water to become bitter. Though wormwood is not poisonous, it can be

combined with other elements that are (e.g., Deu_29:18, where "poisonous and bitter fruit" is actually "gall and wormwood"; Lam_3:19). - FSB

wormwood . . A bitter-tasting shrub (see NIV text note), which symbolizes sorrow (Pro_5:3-4) and judgment (Jer_9:15; Jer_23:15).

waters … bitter. Recalls the first Egyptian plague (Exo_7:20-21) and the bitter water at Marah (Exo_15:23); contrasts with "springs of living water" (Rev_7:17). - NIVSB

÷Rev_8:12

Rev_8:12

fourth angel . . = 1/3 sun & moon smitten; heavenly bodies are affected. Such symbols represent higher ruling authorities in OT prophetic language.

Like the 9th plague of Egypt - Exo_10:21-23 . - sun, moon, stars. Terms used to describe the fall of a nation (compare Joe_3:15; Amo_8:9). cf. Mat_24:29; Luk_21:11 ; Luk_21:25.

the fourth angel . . On the fourth day of creation, God made ***the sun*** … ***the moon, and*** … ***the stars*** (Gen_1:14-19). - NLTSB

sun … moon … stars … turned dark . . Alludes to Exo_10:21-23; Mat_24:29; the darkness is partial, not total, covering "a third of the day." Darkness symbolizes the primordial world (Gen_1:2), evil (Luk_22:53; Joh_1:5), and final destruction (Isa_13:10; Eze_32:7; Joe_2:10). The beast and its kingdom will be "plunged into darkness" (Rev_16:10). - NIVZSB

Darkness has always been a sign of God's judgment (cf. Exo_10:21; Isa_13:10; Isa_34:4; Isa_50:3; Eze_32:7-8; Joe_2:2, Joe_2:10, Joe_2:31; Joe_3:15; Amo_5:18; Mar_13:24). The heavenly bodies were often worshiped as spiritual powers. God created them (cf. Gen_1:14-19; Isa_40:26); named them (cf. Psa_147:4; Isa_40:26); controls them (cf. Isa_48:13); and they praise Him (cf. Psa_148:3). - Utley

÷Rev_8:13

Rev_8:13

angel . . [eagle] . . The majority of manuscripts from all periods have the word *aetos* ("eagle") here. However, a minority of late manuscripts have the word *angelos* ("angel"). The Textus Receptus form of the Greek text follows the latter reading, as do English translations based on it, like the KJV and NKJV. - FSB

eagle . . vulture, Bird of prey ; OT symbol of vengeance and wrath.
The ancients regarded the ***eagle*** as a symbolic messenger of God (see *4 Ezra* 11:7–8; *2 Baruch* 77:19–26). NLTSB

This can refer to (1) a vulture (or eagle), which often was a symbol of slaughter (cf. Eze_17:3; Hab_1:8; Mat_24:28; Luk_17:37); (2) an allusion to the judgment scene in Eze_39:17-20; Hos_8:1; (3) an allusion to the intertestamental apocalyptic book of *II Baruch 77:21–22*, in which a vulture sends a message to God's hurting people; or (4) the Roman army standards which were topped by eagles. - Utley

flying overhead . . = The "flying in midheaven" is probably another allusion to birds of prey soaring above the earth (cf. Rev_14:6; Rev_19:17). - Utley

through the midst of heaven . . Rather, **in mid-heaven**: it is a single compound word. It occurs again in

Rev_14:6, Rev_19:17, and nowhere else in the N. T.: but in the later classical Greek it is not uncommon for the position of the sun at noonday. Yet the last of the places cited from this book, where all natural birds are said to fly "*in mid-heaven,*" seems rather as if St John used it of the *air*, the space between earth and sky. - CBSC

Woe, woe, woe . . This possibly corresponds to the last three trumpets which are to come (cf. Rev_9:12; Rev_11:14; Rev_12:12); it may also be a symbol of intensity (like "holy, holy, holy" of Rev_4:8). In Hebrew a three-fold repetition is a superlative (cf. Holy, holy, holy of Isa_6:3). In the OT "woe" marks a certain poetic lament related to death and judgment.- Utley

Woe, woe, woe . . The threefold use of ***"woe"*** corresponds to the three remaining trumpet judgments. It communicates distress, pain, suffering, and displeasure. - FSB

Woe . . *Terror, terror, terror* . . A threefold announcement would be recognized as a message from God (see Act_10:16). • The ***terror*** (Greek *ouai*) that sounded like an eagle's screech was directed against humans of ***this world*** who were not among God's faithful people (Rev_6:10; Rev_9:4, Rev_9:20). - NLTSB

to those who live on the earth . . In Revelation this phrase refers to unbelievers, [to those persecuting the souls of Rev_6:9-10] not all earth's inhabitants (compare Rev_3:10; Rev_6:10; Rev_11:10; Rev_13:8). - FSB

by reason of . . = because of

by reason of the other voices . . in other words, *"you aint seen nothing yet!"*

The first four trumpets shows judgment on the people as symbolized by natural phenomena, the last three more specific and devastating.

Remember that this judgment was to the people without the seal of God - Rev_9:4

÷Rev_9:1

Rev_9:1

Chapter 9 - <u>The Fifth and Sixth Trumpets</u>

Fifth Trumpet - the opening of the bottomless pit (vs. 1-12)

9:1–12 The blowing of the fifth trumpet, also called the first woe (Rev_9:12),... John describes terrifying locusts unleashed upon the unrepentant oppressors for five months ...The imagery describing these creatures is borrowed from various portions of the Hebrew Bible. - FSB

star . . = Num_24:17 ; Dan_8:10 ; Dan_1:20; Job_38:7 ; Rev_8:10 ; Rev_20:1-2 ;

star . . = A star was a symbol of a leader. Is this one an angel or a demon? Demonic or good (?) he is doing God's bidding of judgement. Is he the same as the angel in Rev_20:1 who is in possession of the key to the pit? Is he the same as the king over the pit in Rev 9.11 which apparently is Satan himself?

star … fallen . . Cf. Rev_8:10. May represent a fallen angel (possibly Satan, Rev_12:9; Luke 10:18) or a divine agent carrying out God's will (Rev_20:1). - NIVZSB

star . . Stars are sometimes associated with angels (Rev_1:20). This figure may be the angel in Rev_9:11 who is given charge over the abyss. The concept of a fallen star may suggest that the figure is Satan or one of his fallen angels (compare Luk_10:18; Rev_12:9). - FSB

The **star fallen from heaven to earth** is Satan, whom Jesus saw fall like lightning as a result of his disciples' ministry (Luk_10:18). Three chapters later in Revelation, John will see the "dragon," whom he identifies as Satan, cast down from heaven to earth (Rev_12:9). The fact that the **key to the shaft** of the Abyss **was given** to him shows that Satan can do nothing apart from God's permission (cf. "were told," Rev_9:4). However, many scholars think that this "star" represents a good angel, and that this verse in connection with Rev_20:1 marks the beginning and the end of the middle section of the book. - ESVSB

and I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth . . There have been several theories as to the identity of this personified star who is called an angel: **(1)** because the verb is PERFECT TENSE, it could refer to Satan having fallen in the past and continues to be fallen from heaven (cf. Isa_14:12; Eze_28:16; Luk_10:18; Rev_12:9) or **(2)** because of the context it could be just another servant angel involved in God's judgment (cf. Rev_20:1). Angels as falling stars are often found in the intertestamental Jewish apocalyptic literature. - Utley

star ... fallen . . Clearly therefore the star is identified with a person: no doubt a "fallen angel," in the common sense of the term. For the identification of angels with stars, Rev_1:20, and Job_38:7: and of *fallen* angels in particular, *Enoch xviii. 16*, *xxi. 3,* &c. The fall of this star may legitimately be *illustrated*, as to the image by Isa_14:12, and as to the meaning by Luk_10:18, and Rev_12:9 in this book: but it is not to be assumed that this passage refers to the same event as either of the two last, still less that the first does. - CBSC

fall . . = "*having fallen*" Perf. Ptc. St John does not say that he witnessed the actual fall.

fall .. [fallen] . . Luk_10:18 - Satan's fall]

was given . . There is a series of PASSIVE VERBS in both chapters 8 and 9, which emphasize God's control of both history and the demonic (cf. Rev_8:3, Rev_8:7-8, Rev_8:11-12; Rev_9:1, Rev_9:3, Rev_9:4, Rev_9:5). Often Jewish writers used PASSIVE VOICE as a CIRCUMLOCUTION for deity's actions. - Utley

key . . = symbolizes authority - cf. Rev_1:18 A key to release further destruction, "*was given".* cf. Rev_9:11; Rev_20:1

the abyss . . = [**shaft**, RSV] bottomless pit ; mentioned 7 times (long shaft to an abyss) The image of covered and locked well shaft is familiar to us. Familiar OT designations.

the abyss . . Where demons and fallen angels were thought to be kept—the underworld (see 2Pe_2:4 and note; Jud_1:6; compare the ancient Jewish work of 1 Enoch 90:22–27). - FSB [Rev_9:11]

bottomless pit . . Lit. "pit of the abyss." Mentioned 7 times in Revelation, it always refers to the prison where some of the demonic hordes are incarcerated, the place of severest torment and isolation (vv. 1, Rev_9:2, Rev_9:11; Rev_11:7; Rev_17:8; Rev_20:1, Rev_20:3; Luk_8:31; 2Pe_2:4; Jud_1:6-7). - MSB
÷Rev_9:2
Rev_9:2

smoke . . Dense smoke as from a furnace stack.

s**moke went up from the shaft . .** May reflect the notion of the underworld as a place of burning and judgment (e.g., Mar_9:47-48). Smoke could also be figurative, describing the appearance of the locusts hurrying out of the abyss. - FSB

the smoke . . from the pit turned the sky ***dark,*** as in the plague on Egypt (Exo_10:21-29; see Mat_27:45).

smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke of a great furnace . . This terminology is used in several senses in the OT: (1) it accompanied the judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah (cf. Gen_19:28); (2) it accompanied the judgment of God on the nations (cf. Isa_34:10); and (3) it accompanied the presence of God on Mt. Sinai (cf. Exo_19:18). - Utley

÷Rev_9:3
Rev_9:3

*** Exo_10:14; Joe_2:1 ff; Picture of Joel's judgment of locust, Joe_2:1-10. Joe_2:10. Joel's locust army was the Babylonian army coming in judgment out of the north against Judah.

locusts . . These are often used as symbols of God's wrath (cf. Exo_10:12-15; Joe_1:4; Joe_2:1 ff) because they symbolized an invading army (cf. Rev_9:7; Joe_2:4-5, Joe_2:7-9). - Utley

locusts . . Echoes Exo_10:12-15. The imagery of locusts is used in the ot for invading armies (e.g., Jer_51:27; Nah_3:15). - FSB

When the fallen star unlocked the bottomless pit, **locusts** emerged in billowing **smoke** that darkened the sky. An echo of the eighth plague on Egypt (Exo_10:14-15), this infestation of locusts also recalls the swarm summoned by trumpet to strip the land bare on the "awesome day of the Lord" (Joe_2:31). - ESVSB

locusts . . A grasshopper-like insect that descends in swarms so thick they can obscure the sun and strip bare all vegetation.
In the 1950s a locust swarm devoured every growing thing for several hundred thousand square miles in the Middle East. These are not normal locusts, however, but specially prepared ones that are merely the outward form of demons, who, like locusts, will bring swarming desolation (*see* Joe_2:1-5). "*Like*" appears 9 times in John's description; he finds it difficult to describe what he sees in a way the reader can understand. - MSB

power was given to them . . They have been commissioned as agents of judgment and wrath—possibly referring to their ability to inflict pain (see Rev_9:5, Rev_9:10). FSB

scorpions . . An arachnid that inhabits warm, dry regions and has an erect tail tipped with a venomous stinger. A scorpion's victim often rolls on the ground in agony, foams at the mouth, and grinds his teeth in pain. The demons in locust form are able to inflict the physical—and perhaps, spiritual—pain like the scorpion (v. 5). - MSB

÷Rev_9:4
Rev_9:4

The ***Fifth*** Trump harms, but the ***Sixth*** brings actual destruction.

the grass of the earth . . The normal food of locusts. This deviation in diet may suggest that the creatures in view here are not actual locusts (see note on v. 3). FSB

Rather than eating plants, these locusts are like stinging *scorpions* that viciously attack people. Only people

without the ***seal of God*** (see Rev_7:1-8) receive this painful judgment. While the stings cause painful torture, they are not life-threatening (Rev_9:5-6). - NLTSB

Locusts always devour vegetation (Exo_10:15; Joe_1:4), but here they are "told not to harm the grass" (contrast Rev_8:7) and instead torture only unbelievers not protected by "***the seal of God***" (see note on Rev_7:2). - NIVZSB

seal . . = mark of distinction, here a mark (brand) of ownership, like that of slaves, etc. The plague was not against the Christians, but their enemies, the leaders of the Jerusalem government, etc. Rev_4:1; Rev_7:2-3; This symbology is also from the O.T. Eze_9:4

÷Rev_9:5
Rev_9:5

Background here is **Joel 1 & 2,** and **Ezekiel 2.**

it was granted to them . . The passive voice indicates that their authority to act comes from someone else (God). - FSB

torment . . = suffering limited and intense.

five months . . = The usual duration of the invading locust, April - Sept, cf. Rev_9:10.

five months . . It has been conjectured that this period is named, as being the time for which a plague of the literal locusts is liable to last. But more probably the period is to be reckoned on the same principle—whatever that be—as the other periods of time indicated in this book. - CBSC

five months . . Some interpret this time span as the life expectancy of a locust. However, it is possibly one-half the number ten, which is another metaphor for a limited judgment (cf. Rev_6:6, Rev_6:8; Rev_8:7-12). - Utley

Others think these locusts represent military forces, and still others consider them to be actual locusts but with their destructive power described in figurative imagery

not allowed to kill . . Divinely imposed limitation (Rev_9:10). NIVZSB

like torture of sorpion . . Reactions to scorpion stings include deep, severe, widespread pain, swelling, sensations of restricted breathing, and paresthesia, a tingling sensation on the skin. - FSB

the torment of a scorpion . . The sting of a scorpion is another OT metaphor (cf. 2Ch_10:11, 2Ch_10:14). Utley

"The scorpion belongs to the largest and most malignant of all insect tribes. Its general appearance is like a lobster, but much more hideous. Its sting located near the end of its tail is not always fatal, but can be. It ranks with the snake in its hostility toward human beings (cf. Luk_10:19; Luk_11:12)." Thomas, *Revelation 8–22*, p. 30. -cited by Constable

÷Rev_9:6
Rev_9:6

What a horrible literal picture, but something worse is the figurative meaning of it.

9:6 This is a direct parallel to Rev_6:15-16, which may be additional evidence for the recapitulation theory among the seals, the trumpets, and the bowls. - Utley

in those days . . Refers to the five-month period of torture and suffering. - FSB

people will seek death . . Repeated in the following clause for emphasis. The pain will be so great that they will prefer death, but the stings will not be fatal (Rev_9:5). Compare Jer_8:3.

seek death and will not find it . . The tormented will find no relief. Even their unimaginable attempts to end their misery in suicide will be unsuccessful. - MSB

shall flee . . Lit. ***fleeth.*** Present. Indictive = "*continually flees*"

Since Rev_4:1 John had been reporting what he saw, but now he spoke as a prophet predicting the future.

"For the first time the Apostle ceases to be the exponent of what he saw, and becomes the direct organ of the Spirit ... " Alford, 4:641.

This is one of the indications that Revelation is prophetic rather than only apocalyptic in genre. - Constable

÷Rev_9:7
Rev_9:7

9:7 Imagery of war-horses - Joe_2:4-6.
The locusts' visible similarities to **horses**, **human faces**, lions, and **scorpions** caution against reading John's visions as physical descriptions.

shape of the locusts . . This is obviously an allusion to the book of Joel in its description of: (1) the lion's teeth (cf. v. 8; Joe_1:6) and (2) the vast number of chariots and horses rushing to battle (cf. v. 9 and Joe_2:5). - Utley

the appearance of the locusts . . The physical description of these locusts is very similar to Joe_2:4-9 and also to a famous Arabian proverb that says, "locusts have a head like a horse, a breast like a lion, feet like a camel, a body like a serpent, and antennae like the hair of a maiden." - Utley

crowns . . = Perhaps indicating an governing authority behind the punishment being inflicted.

Their crowns (Gr. *stephanos*) probably symbolize their victory over the objects of their oppression. - Constable

as men's . . = he is probably realizing this locust army is figurate of a real army of men coming to work judgment.

their faces were as the faces of men . . Marks them distinctly as differing from real locusts. The word used for "*men*" means, in classical Greek at least, "*human beings,*" not necessarily males. But in Hellenistic Greek it is not infrequently used in opposition to women, and probably the next clause marks it so here. - CBSC

÷Rev_9:8
Rev_9:8

women's hair . . Jer_51:27 refers to locusts having bristles like hair. - MSB

hair of women . . = Apparently the Roman soldiers did not wear their hair long, it was a detriment in battle, but they employed many mercenary soldiers from many parts of their empire.

as the hair of women . . It is said that, in Arabic poetry, the same comparison is used of the antennæ of the natural locust: - DBSC

teeth of a lion . . = The allusion is form Joel, Joe_1:6

lions' teeth . . They are fierce, powerful, and deadly (cf. Jer_51:27). - MSB

÷Rev_9:9
Rev_9:9

breastplates of iron . . Breastplates were designed to protect the vital organs and sustain the life of the warrior. - MSB

breastplates of iron . . This probably *is* an idealisation of the structure of the natural locust. - CBSC

the sound of their wings . . They gave a sound like the rush of chariots and horses rushing to battle. - PNT

sound of chariots . . = The sound of numerous war-horse chariots. Again the imagery is again from Joel, Joe_2:5.

> The sound of their activity will be terrifying, as the sound of battle is (cf. Joe_2:4-5; 2Ki_7:6; Jer_47:3) - Constable

÷Rev_9:10
Rev_9:10

Their power . . Everything said about the scorpions is true to their nature, but it is also evident these creatures are symbolic of some power that will deliver God's judgment upon men.

five months . . See note on Rev_9:5

five months . . = many locusts born in the spring died in the late fall.
Rev_9:5 also speaks to the life span of one season.

How long was Jerusalem sieged by the Romans? Most historians say five months.
Josephus says in his "War of the Jews" BOOK V "From the coming of Titus to Besiege Jerusalem to the Great Extremity to which the Jews were Reduced" This book in his work covers an interval of about six months.

÷Rev_9:11
Rev_9:11

a king . . The imagery of locust breaks down as they don't have a leader Pro_30:27 .

the angel of the bottomless pit . . Either the fallen star of *v.* 1, who opened the pit and let them out of it, or a

spirit—presumably, if not quite certainly, a bad one—made the guardian of that lowest deep of God's creation. - CBSC

> The ***king*** of the locusts is identified in three ways: (1) as ***the angel from the bottomless pit*** (probably different from the fallen star, Rev_9:1, who unlocked the abyss rather than coming from it); (2) as ***Abaddon*** ("destruction"), often paired with death (see Job_28:22; Psa_88:11); and (3) as ***Apollyon—the Destroyer*** (see 1Co_10:10). • Although John makes no direct connection between the devil and this king of the locusts, the prince of demons is linked with Satan in the Gospels (Mar_3:22-26; see Mat_12:24-27; Luk_11:15-18). The NT also identifies the devil as the prince of this world (Joh_12:31; Joh_14:30; Joh_16:11) and as the prince of the power of the air (Eph_2:2), so he probably represents Satan. There is also a connection with the Roman emperor Domitian, whose patron god Apollo was symbolized by the locust. - NLTSB

bottomless pit . . [abyss] . . The term "abyss" refers to the realm of the dead (cf. Rev_9:1-2, Rev_9:11; Rev_11:7; Rev_17:8; Rev_20:1, Rev_20:3; and Rom_10:7).

angel of the bottomless pit . . = the abyss, cf. the "star" of Rev_9:1 ?

Abaddon . . A Hebrew name for the place of the dead (meaning "destruction"). This place is sometimes mentioned in the Hebrew text in parallel to Sheol (e.g., Job_26:6; Pro_15:11; Pro_27:20) - FSB

Abaddon . . = "Destroyer" or "Destruction" Job_28:22; Pro_15:11.
Is this "king" a personification of "Death" or Satan? "Destruction"

Abaddon, **Apollyon**. In **Hebrew** and **Greek**, respectively, these words refer to "destruction" and the "one who destroys." Satan's demonic hordes wage war against his own human subjects. Later the enemy will be called the "accuser," as his Hebrew and Greek names, Satan and Devil, signify (Rev_12:9-10). - ESVSB

Apollyon . . = Greek - (*Apolluōn*). Present active masculine singular participle of *apolluō*, meaning "destroying," used here as a name and so "Destroyer"

Apollyon . . is a participle, "destroying," and so "Destroyer." - CBSC

Abaddon … Apollyon. Although locusts normally have no king (Pro_30:27), these demonic creatures do. His name in both Heb. and Gr. means "destroyer." There is a hierarchy of power among the demons, just as among the holy angels. Apparently, "the angel of the bottomless pit" is one of Satan's most trusted leaders. - MSB

the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon . . The Hebrew term meant "destruction" and the Greek term meant "destroyer." The Hebrew term was identified with *Sheol*, the realm of the dead (cf. Job_26:6; Job_29:22; Job_31:12; Psa_88:11 Pro_15:11; Pro_27:20).

> Robert B. Girdlestone has an interesting comment on this term in his book *Synonyms of the Old Testament:* "This word is rendered "perish" in about a hundred passages. When used of persons it generally signifies death, when used of lands it implies desolation" (p. 273).
>
> In Job_28:22 it is personified along with Death. This personification is also characteristic of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the intertestamental Jewish apocalyptic literature. This is somewhat unusual because the angel of death in the OT is a servant of YHWH (cf. Exo_12:23; Job_15:21) or even a personification of YHWH (cf. Exo_12:13, Exo_12:29). But here the angel seems to be the ruler of an imprisoned, demonic horde. This may be another way to show God's control of all things. - Utley

Their **king** is the (leading) angel of the abyss. This is further confirmation that the locusts represent demons. The names "**Abaddon**" in Hebrew and "**Apollyon**" in Greek both mean "destroyer." [Only the Apostle John

supplied information bilingually in the New Testament (cf. Joh_1:38, Joh_1:42; Joh_4:25; Joh_6:1; Joh_9:7; Joh_11:16; Joh_19:13, Joh_19:17, Joh_19:20; Joh_20:16; Rev_1:7; Rev_3:14; Rev_9:11; Rev_12:9).] - Constable

> The objective of these demons is to destroy people. God grants this lead creature permission here to carry out his objective against unbelievers as part of God's outpouring of wrath on earth-dwellers (cf. Job_2:6). Probably we should identify this angel as one of the hierarchy of fallen angels that emerges from the abyss with the other demons (cf. Eph_6:12) [Thomas, *Revelation 8–22*, pp. 38–39]. The revelation of his name simply expresses his objective. Identifying him as Satan is tempting,[331] but the text only calls him an angel. The appearance of Satan later (Rev_12:3, Rev_12:9) is much more dramatic than the introduction of this angel. - Constable

(See Job_26:6 a symbolic picture of when the wickedness of hell is turned loose upon men, ie. **judgment.**)

÷Rev_9:12
Rev_9:12

÷Rev_9:13
Rev_9:13

Sixth Trumpet -

the sixth angel sounded . . A voice is then heard coming from the golden altar of incense (see Rev_8:3). He does not say who spoke, but declares the command uttered. - PNT

one voice . . [Lit. **one voice**: see on Rev_8:13. CBSC]
Perhaps one of the martyrs under the altar or the angel with the censer (see Rev_6:9-11; Rev_8:3-5). In either case, the sixth trumpet is presented as a response to the prayers of the saints. - FSB

altar . . This is an allusion to the altar of incense in the Tabernacle (cf. Exo_30:2-3, Exo_30:10). There are two altars mentioned in this section: the altar of sacrifice under which the souls of the martyrs were found, and the altar of incense upon which the prayers of God's people are placed. The horns were an OT symbol of power. Both the incense altar and altar of sacrifice had horns. - Utley

voice from the horns . . Who? Apparently one speaking with the authority of God to release the four angels. - NLTSB

four horns of the gold altar . . (see Rev_8:3) are introduced with the sixth trumpet blast. Many excavations have uncovered altars with pointed horns at their four corners (see note on Exo_27:2; -NLTSB

the golden altar . . = the altar of incense - this shows these judgments are in connection with prayers - Rev_6:10.

horns of the golden altar . . God's design for the golden altar of incense included small protrusions (horns) on each corner (Exo_30:2;). Normally a place of mercy, as God responded to His people's prayers, the altar will resound with a cry for vengeance. - MSB

÷Rev_9:14
Rev_9:14

(Sixth trumpet, for the 7th Trumpet see Rev_11:15)

The Sixth Trumpet loses the 4 angels from the Euphrates.

Judah's enemies traditionally came from beyond the Euphrates, Assyria and Babylon which took the north (Israel) and the south (Judah) into captivity.

Historically the northern border or boundary, Gen_15:18 Deu_1:7, Jos_1:4. The crossing of the Euphrates by the eastern enemy symbolizes judgment Rev_16:12 .

The trumpet loosed these! Isa_8:5-8 . In Isaiah the waters represented an enemy army.

four angels . . Not the same four angels as those mentioned in Rev_6:2-8 or Rev_7:1. [There is controversy as to whether they are the same angels mentioned in Rev 7.1 - WG] Many angels appear throughout the book, often in the same quantity (four, seven, etc.). - FSB

The four angels represent four agencies which had been restrained and kept from advancing. - PNT

Loose the four angels . . We are reminded of the four angels of Rev_7:1, but it is hardly possible that they are the same as these. The plagues held back by them, on "the earth, the sea, and the trees," have come already, Rev_8:7-9 : moreover, these angels do not stand "on the four corners of the earth," but in one not very remote part of it. - CBSC

bound . . Under a restrain command (Rev_7:1-2) apparently not bound like that described in Rev_ 20:1-2;

Euphrates . . The longest river in western Asia and the northeastern border of the promised land (Gen_15:18; Jos_1:4) and the Roman Empire. Recalls OT prophecies of foes from the north (cf. Isa_8:7-8; Jer_1:14-15) and prepares for the sixth bowl judgment (Rev_16:12-16).
- NIVZSB

The northern part of the headwaters of the Euphrates River was the northeastern boundary of the Promised Land (cf. Gen_15:18; Deu_1:7; Deu_11:24; Jos_1:4). - Utley

Euphrates . . One of the 4 rivers that flowed through the Garden of Eden (cf. Gen_2:14). Starting with Babel, this region has spawned many of the world's pagan religions. - MSB

Euphrates . . Their location ***at the great Euphrates River*** probably refers to Assyria and Babylon, empires that had devastated the kingdoms of Israel and Judah and thus were symbols of destruction (see 2Ki_17:22-24; 2Ki_25:1-11). - NLTSB

÷Rev_9:15
Rev_9:15

Remember the 5th Trumpet called for torment, the 6th for death.

four angels . . Rev_9:14;

prepared . . That they were prepared for a specific time is shown by the definite article. See the NASV on this verse.

the hour . . The definite article with "hour" indicates a definite time, (not "an hour" as the KJV reads)
The article is not repeated, but plainly the one article belongs to all the nouns: they are "prepared for the hour, and day, and month, and year," when God has decreed to execute the vengeance here foretold. - CBSC

hour and day and month and year . . The fourfold time designation for releasing ***the four angels*** confirms that even evil forces must observe God's timing. - NLTSB

a third part of men . . How many Jews were killed by the invading army led by Rome? Probably this is just symbolic of "a lot" but not "all", rather than specific, who knows?
Escalation of the fifth trumpet from torture (Rev_9:5) to death; cf. Rev_9:18.

> These warriors, with their origin beyond the Euphrates, suggest that John now sees the carnage wrought by military aggression and warfare. Yet, devastating as the bloodshed is, God still imposes limits: **a third of mankind was killed** (vv. 15, 18). This is the last limited judgment and warning blast, for when the seventh, last trumpet sounds, "the mystery of God will be fulfilled" (Rev_10:7; cf. 1Co_15:52; 1Th_4:16), and the opportunity to **repent** will be past (Rev_9:20-21). - ESVSB

÷Rev_9:16
Rev_9:16

horsemen . . calvary, (collective sing. noun = 200 million). The astronomical figure shows it is symbolic of a huge force coming against the city being judged. Dan_7:10

The word rendered "horsemen" is not here plural but collective, as we should say "the cavalry." - CBSC

heard . . Did he hear this information about the number, or did John hear them coming? He next sees them in Rev_9:17.

two hundred million . . This figure represents an innumerable multitude. Even at its greatest strength, the ancient Roman army with twenty-one legions numbered only about 126,000 soldiers. - NLTSB

twice ten thousand times ten thousand . . 200 million cavalry, 1,000 times the size of Rome's formidable army. - NIVZSB

This number is comparable to the myriads of angels who serve God (cf. Rev_5:11; Deu_33:2; Psa_68:17; Dan_7:10; Heb_12:22; Jud_1:14). - Utley

÷Rev_9:17
Rev_9:17

Verse 17 shows A Great Invasion!

horses . . the imagery in John's vision. Hab_1:5-10. Their description recalls the description of the locusts in Rev_9:7-9.

those who sat on them . . The ***riders*** had ***armor*** in colors that matched the ***plagues*** of their horses, with ***red*** for ***fire***, ***blue*** for ***smoke***, and ***yellow*** for ***sulfur***—all of which are signs of judgment in Scripture (see Rev_14:10-11; Rev_19:20; Gen_19:24-28; Psa_11:6; Eze_38:22; Luk_17:29). - NLTSB
The ***horses*** are reminiscent of the terrifying monsters of Greek tales pictured on ancient buildings and

celebrated in ancient dramas. - NLTSB

First the men are described, then their mounts.

breastplates . . = Defense of fire - not fire color.

jacinth and brimstone . . = sapphire - answers to smoke (dark purple) hyacinthine.

smoke and brimstone . . = sulphur - Gen_19:24, Gen_19:28

of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone . . All these are expressed in Greek by adjectives. The last means only "*like* brimstone;" and though the terminations of the two former would properly indicate the material, yet the "jacinth" seems so incongruous with the other two, that it is easiest to understand all three as referring to colour only: they had breastplates of fiery red, of smoky blue, and of sulphurous yellow. Whether all had tricoloured armour, or whether there were three divisions, each in a distinctive uniform, may be doubted: but the three plagues corresponding to these colours, which we hear of directly after, are almost certainly inflicted by the whole army alike: and this affords some presumption that the attire of all was symbolical of all three.- CBSC

fire, smoke and sulfur . . Recalls the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen_19:24, Gen_19:28; cf. Deu_29:22-23; Luk_17:29) - NIVZSB

brimstone . . Brimstone is a yellowish, sulfuric rock that often attends fire and smoke in Revelation (Rev_14:10; Rev_19:20; Rev_20:10). Common in the Dead Sea region, when ignited such deposits melt and produce burning streams and suffocating gas. - MSB

Now John saw what these horsemen looked like. **Horses** were swift implements of war in ancient times. **Red, blue**, and **yellow** breastplates covered both horses and riders. This was apparently their only armor, and it is defensive armor. **Hyacinth** is a flower that is most commonly blue, and **brimstone** is sulfur that is yellow. **Lion-like horse heads** could be very different from those of ordinary horses or just heads of horses that appear exceptionally bold and majestic. **Lions** are terrifying (cf. Rev_10:3), fierce (cf. Rev_9:8), and destructive (cf. Rev_13:2). Natural horses do not breath fire, smoke, and brimstone. This verse suggests that this army is probably something other than a human army of cavalry, probably an angelic army (cf. Rev_9:9). - Walvoord, *The Revelation* . . ., p. 167, and Hendriksen, p. 148, preferred the view that this is a human army. (quoted in Constable)

Rev_9:18
Rev_9:18

By these . . = *apo* = ***from***, i.e. the source.

Fire, smoke, and brimstone are natural elements that God used to bring judgment in the past during similar conditions (cf. Gen_19:24, Gen_19:28). ... The repetition of the definite article "the" in the Greek text (*tou*) indicates that these are three distinct plagues.- Constable

a third of mankind . . The men ("mankind") upon whom this judgment is pronounced.

out of their mouths . . = Like plagues.

[Modern prophets try to see fiery missiles from cobra helicopters doing this killing. I've heard the

"horsemen" were literally the number of "Chinese" that would invade Israel, etc. And see the next verse for possible fancy interpretations!]

Again, to try to relate this to the modern nation of China is another example of forcing figurative literature into current history. The desire of Christians to figure out the future and impress each other with esoteric knowledge is a recurrent problem. - Utley [Rev_9:16]

÷Rev_9:19
Rev_9:19

For their power . . Read, **for the power of the horses**. For the use of the word "***power***" (the same as is sometimes elsewhere translated "authority" or "licence"), cfRev_6:8, ver. 3: St Luk_22:53 illustrates the meaning of the word in such a context. - CBSC

mouth ... tails .. Imagery of scorpions - (of the Fifth Trumpet plague Rev_9:5)

serpent . . = Akin to the old serpent, the Devil - Rev_12:4 . Recalls Gen 3.1 and the judgment against Israel in the wilderness (Num_21:6-7; cf. 1Co_10:9).
The background image is probably of Gog and Magog from Ezekiel ch 38 and ch 39.

tails .. having heads . . John pictures the destruction of these horses whose tail is like deadly snake heads.

The locusts had the power to injure like scorpions with their tails (v. 10), but these horses have power to kill like serpents with their tails, which is worse (cf. Rev_9:15). - Constable

The ***horses*** are reminiscent of the terrifying monsters of Greek tales pictured on ancient buildings and celebrated in ancient dramas. - NLTSB

÷Rev_9:20
Rev_9:20

Purpose of such a terrible judgment: That they might repent and be saved. (If such plagues as described here - even figuratively - will not bring men to repentance, what will?)

Judgment for sins - Psa_106:1 see the entire Psalm for the sins of God's people. Dan_5:23 (lifting up one's self again God's house of worship)

still did not repent . . Unbelieving humanity responds to the plagues with continued hostility toward God. Cf. Pharaoh's hard-hearted response to divine judgments on Egypt (Exo_4:21; Exo_14:4). Cf. Rev_16:9, Rev_16:11. - NIVZSB

This is a clear, unambiguous statement of the redemptive purposes of these plagues (cf. Rev_9:21; Rev_14:6-7; Rev_16:9-11). - Utley
As God used the plagues on Egypt as a motivation for (1) Egyptians to believe and serve Him and (2) Israel to stay faithful and serve Him (cf. **Deut. 27–28**), so these similar plagues were meant to turn unbelieving mankind back to their creator, but they refused. Their stubborn unbelief had become a settled state of rebellion (cf. Rom_1:24, Rom_1:26). - Utley

Rev_9:20-21 Even when humans are faced with ***plagues*** and death, repentance is not automatic. People tend to

continue in their ***evil deeds*** and to ***worship demons and idols***—things that belong to the created order—rather than worshiping the Creator (see Rev_13:4; Rev_14:9-10; Rom_1:25; 1Co_8:4; 1Co_10:19-22). - NLTSB

the works of their hands . . Elsewhere in Scripture the phrase "the works of their hands" refers to idolatry ... In his day people fashioned idol images out of the materials that John mentioned. Today objects that people venerate made of these same materials can be bought in stores. John reminded his readers of the helplessness of these idols (cf. Deu_4:28; Psa_115:5-7; Psa_135:15-17; Isa_44:12-20; Dan_5:23). - Constable

the demons and the gold . . John equates idol worship to demon worship. Compare 1Co_10:20-22. - FSB

idols ... neither see nor hear ... etc.. Reminiscent of Isa_44:18 (compare Dan_5:23).

worshiping demons … idols of gold . . Recalls how the OT describes the material and spiritual essence of idols (Deu_4:28; Deu_32:16-17; Psa_115:4-7). - NIVSB

÷Rev_9:21
Rev_9:21

did not repent . . Surely then, with something like this coming, everyone will ***repent***! Deu_4:23-28

The Destruction of Jerusalem was like unto that of Joel's day and the enemy was at the Euphrates.

murders … witchcraft … immorality … thefts . . What people worship parallels the ways in which they live (see Rev_21:8; Rev_22:15; Rom_1:23, Rom_1:29-32). - NLTSB

sorceries . . This Greek word is the root of the Eng. word "pharmacy." Drugs in the ancient world were used to dull the senses and induce a state suitable for religious experiences such as seances, witchcraft, incantations, and cavorting with mediums (Rev_21:8; Rev_22:15). - *MSB*

sorceries . . Fitly mentioned between "murders" and "fornication," and in connexion with "idolatry;" cf. Gal. 5:20 - CBSC

sorceries . . The Greek word translated "sorceries" (*pharmakon*) implies the use of drugs. The English word "pharmacy" comes from it. The Greek word can refer to poisons, amulets, charms, magic spells, witchcraft, or any other object or practice that makes someone susceptible to sin (cf. Exo_22:18; Lev_20:27; Deu_18:10-12; 1Sa_28:7; Act_8:9; Act_13:8; Act_19:13-15). - Constable

fornication . . This term may mean spiritual fornication or apostasy, and it may mean literal fornication.

thefts . . These four things (idolatry, murder, sorceries, immorality, thievery) characterize the immoral lifestyle. Gal_5:16 ff. This language of Revelation comes also from Deu_32:1. ff.

÷Rev_10:1
rev_10:1

Mighty Angel With the Little Book
(The opening of the 7th seal was likewise proceeded by by two visions.)

I saw . . Notice that John is back on earth after the vision of chapters 4–5. - Utley

another mighty angel . . Many commentators understand this to be Jesus Christ. But the Greek. word translated "***another***" means one of the same kind, that is, a created being. This is not one of the 7 angels responsible for sounding the trumpets (Rev_8:2), but one of the highest ranking in heaven, filled with splendor, greatness, and strength (cf. Rev_5:2; Rev_8:3; Rev_18:1). - MSB

mighty angel . . Whereas a few commentators have identified this strong angel as Jesus Christ, the evidence for his being simply another (Gr. *allon*, another of the same kind) strong angel seems more convincing (cf. Rev_10:5-6). Other commentators have identified him as Gabriel or Michael (cf. Dan_8:16; Dan_12:7), but this is only guessing. - Constable

another angel, a strong one . . is exactly like Rev_5:2; ἰσχυρός, "strong," is added because of the whole appearance and the action of this angel. - Lenski

angel . . = Could it be Gabriel, or Michael? (of verse Rev_10:6) Rev_5:2 ; Rev_18:21 ; Dan_12:7 ; Zep_1:15 ; An angel announced the 2nd Woe of Rev_9:12; and Rev_11:14 ; (Rev_11:17)

coming down . . descending . . John's visions shift between earth and the throne room in heaven. This chapter takes place on earth. - FSB

> When John writes that he saw him "coming down out of the heaven," we need only to remember that each of these visions presents all that is necessary for its purpose, and that thus there is no need to ask how John, while in spirit, could see this great angel coming down and taking his stand on sea and on earth. - Lenski

clothed with a cloud . . "Having thrown around him" (as a garment) is a passive with the accusative, which is often used with this verb, although it occurs with ἐν in Rev_4:4. This perfect participle, like the other in v. 2, has its present connotation. The cloud thrown around him lends a heavenly majesty to the angel. - Lenski

wrapped in a cloud . . Recalls the Son of Man imagery from Dan_7:13 and **Rev 1** as well as the ascension scene from Act_1:9. This angel shares similarities with the glorified Christ from **Rev 1**; he may serve in close proximity to the Lamb. John identifies this being as an angel. - FSB

rainbow . . Recalls God's covenant with humankind in Gen_9:8-17. Following the seven seals and six trumpets, this angel is a harbinger of mercy. - FSB

rainbow on his head . . = God's assurance of justice, hope, and peace.

rainbow over his head . . This is a reminder that the enthroned God is encircled by a rainbow (Rev_4:3), a biblical symbol of God's covenant with humanity (Gen_9:8-17). - NLTSB

his feet were like pillars of fire . . See Rev_1:15. The combination of pillars of fire and cloud recalls God's leading Israel in the exodus event (see Exo_13:21). The exodus deliverance motif, established in ch. 8, may be hinted at here to bring hope to God's people. - FSB

÷Rev_10:2
Rev_10:2

a little scroll . . The diminutive term is suggestive of size, not importance. It was small enough to be consumed. - FSB

little Book . . It was not sealed like the book of Rev_5:1 which was in the right hand . Perhaps only a "little book" of the next portion John is to see.

that was opened . . Though its contents are unknown, it is opened, suggesting the contents are not secret. - FSB

little scroll … open . . Alludes to Eze_2:9-10; see Rev_10:9 and note. May refer to the scroll that the Lamb opened in **rev 6:1–8:1** or to a different scroll. - NIVZSB

The **scroll** is **open** because the Lamb has broken its seals. The scroll is **little** compared to the great size of the angel, whose stride spans **sea** and **land**. It will be given to John to eat and to proclaim (Rev_10:10-11), completing the process of transmission (from God to Christ to angel to John to the churches) initiated in Rev_5:7. - ESVSB

The little scroll in his hand must be different from the scroll Jesus Christ unrolled (rev 5:1; Rev_6:1). John used a different and rare Greek word to describe it (*biblaridion*, not *biblion*). The tense of the Greek verb translated "was open" (perfect passive) indicates that someone had opened it and it was then open in his hand. ... (cf. Eze_2:8-9 ff –Eze_3:3; Jer_15:15-17). - Constable

hand . . = his *left* hand, for he raises his right hand in an oath in Rev_10:5 τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ

sea ... earth . . = Seems to exercise command of both. Describes a colossal angel. His stance may suggest his authority as well as the universal scope of his message.

another mighty angel . . (see **Rev_5:2; Rev_7:2; cp. Rev_1:12-16**): This angel appears similar to the huge bronze Colossus that stood as a symbol of human power in the harbor of Rhodes for several decades before it was toppled by an earthquake in the late 200s bc. The statue still lay broken at the time that John wrote Revelation. It was about 100 feet tall and represented the sun god, Helios. - NLTSB

:Rev_10:3
Rev_10:3

cried . .[***he gave a great shout] . .*** Cp. Job_37:2-5; Psa_18:13; Psa_29:3-4.

lion's roar . . The shout was likely meant to gain attention so all would hear his message (vv. Rev_10:6-7).

as when a lion roars . . This term "roars" (*mukaomai*) is usually used for the voice of oxen (a low bellow). However, it seems appropriate given that this is an allusion to the OT passages where God spoke as a lion (cf. Jer_25:30; Hos_11:10; Joe_3:16; Amo_3:8). - Utley

as roar of a lion. . = terrifying and deafing. Joh_12:29 . When God speaks it is likened to thunder.

seven thunders utter . . These may be heavenly voices or God's voice (compare Joh_12:28-29). The following verse, which indicates John was going to write down what they said, suggests that the thunder was more than just noise. - FSB

Thunder warns of coming storms, more judgments. These thunders spoke. - Constable

... it is scarcely possible to doubt that these thunders, voices from heaven, are from God, or at least directed by Him. - CBSC

Here we see that these thunders not only made a reverberating noise but also spoke something that John was about to write down. It may be possible that they spoke the same words in unison, or, as we deem less

likely, that the seven spoke in succession. - Lenski

÷Rev_10:4
Rev_10:4

seven thunders . . may be an allusion to Psa_29:1-6.

uttered their voice . . An authoritative voice, probably belonging to God or Christ . see Rev_10:3

I was about to write . . See Rev_1:19. It is useless to speculate how far the book was written at the same time that the vision was seen: possibly it may have been in part, but it is enough to suppose that, having been bidden to write, the seer seemed to himself to write, or (so to speak) saw himself writing, at appropriate points of the vision. - CBSC

Seal up those things . . - 2Co_12:1-4 , (Dan_8:26, Dan_12:4, Dan_12:9) As much as we would like to know what was said, there is no way. The message was sealed up. This is not to be revealed - 1 Aor. Imperative.

Apparently John used the intervals between events in his visions to write down what he had seen and heard or at least to make notes. - Constable

Seal up . . A seal would prevent disclosure.

Seal up . . John does not disclose what precisely the seven thunders said. Cf. Dan_8:26; Dan_12:4, Dan_12:9; contrast Rev_22:10. - NIVZSB

do not write . . Contrast Rev_1:19.

There are several places in the Bible where someone has received a revelation from God but could not reveal it. Two of these are **(1)** Daniel (cf. Dan_8:26; Dan_12:4, Dan_12:9) and **(2)** Paul (cf. 2Co_12:4). **(3)** John here in Rev_10:4; John is told in Rev_22:10 that the words of this prophecy are not to be sealed up.

÷Rev_10:5
Rev_10:5

the angel . . Rev_10:1-2; The fact that the angel took an oath and swore by God seems to confirm that he is not God.

lifted up his hand to heaven . . Read, "his **right** hand." Cf. Dan_12:7, where the angel lifts up *both* hands: here, his left is occupied with the book, Rev_10:2 - CBSC

lifting up hand . . - as in an oath, his ***right*** hand, τὴν (αὐτοῦ τὴν δεξιὰν)

While raising one's right hand is common in taking an oath today, it is rare in biblical literature (cp. Gen_14:22; Gen_24:9; Dan 12:7).

• When making an oath, Jews were very careful not to swear lightly by God's name (see Exo_20:7). Jesus also rebuked insincere oath-taking (see Mat_5:33-37; Mat_23:16-22). When God swore an oath, he did so in his own name as the highest possible point of reference (see Gen_22:16; Psa_89:35-36; Jer_22:5; Heb_6:13-18). - NLTSB

raised up his hand . . This Gr. verb appears often in the technical sense of raising the hand to take an oath or a solemn vow (cf. Dan_12:7; *see notes on* Mat_5:33-37). The hand is raised toward heaven because that is where God dwells. The angel is taking an oath. - MSB

to heaven . . The angel makes a solemn oath and proclamation before God (see Dan_12:7).

÷Rev_10:6
Rev_10:6

swore . . Apparently this angel is a created being. Dan_12:7 The angel swore to the truth of his proclamation. The oath emphasized the certainty of what he announced. What was about to happen was extremely important.

who lives for ever and ever . . Refers to God. He appealed to God as the eternal Creator who can cause whatever He pleases to happen. This appeal strengthens the force of the oath and the certainty of its outcome.

there should be time no longer . . The prayers of the saints will be answered, Rev_6:10 ; No further delay in sounding the 7th trumpet;

> Emphasizes that God will soon accomplish his purposes (cf. Dan_12:9; Hab_2:3) to vindicate his suffering people (cf Rev_6:10-11). - NIVZSB
>
> The angel swears that the era of God's longsuffering, which entailed **delay** of his martyrs' vindication (Rev_6:10), will end when the last trumpet sounds. - ESVSB

should be delay no longer . . see ASV; NASB; NIV ; ISV; GW

there will be delay no longer . . This is literally "that time (*chronos*) no longer shall be."

> The concept of time is very fluid in this book for several reasons: (1) there are two different Greek words that express time—*chronos*, the passing of time (cf. Rev_10:6) and *kairos*, a special time, season, or event (cf. Rev_1:3; Rev_11:18; Rev_12:12, Rev_12:14); (2) there are several idioms used: "the things which must shortly take place" (cf. Rev_1:1; Rev_22:6); "the time is near" (cf. Rev_1:3; Rev_3:11; Rev_22:10); "I am coming quickly" (cf. Rev_2:5, Rev_2:16; Rev_22:7, Rev_22:12, Rev_22:20); "I will come like a thief" (cf. Rev_3:3; Rev_16:15). All of these speak of immediacy. However, some passages speak of a delay (cf. Rev_6:11; Rev_10:6; Rev_14:13). Another idiom is that the day of judgment and rewards has arrived, "it is done" (cf. Rev_16:17; Rev_21:6) or "the time has come" (cf. Rev_11:18; Rev_20:12). - Utley

÷Rev_10:7
Rev_10:7

A KEY VERSE TO ANY INTERPRETATION

> (7th Trump see Rev_11:19)
> (The voice of Rev_10:3 ??)

mystery of God . . = 1Co_2:7 ff; Eph_3:2-6 ff The mystery of how God would make JEW and GENTILE into one universal body, the Gospel.

mystery finished . . = completed, [No further revelation after AD 70]

"Mystery" implies that we ourselves do not know except by a revelation which God has supplied. - Lenski

mystery finished . . The mystery is finished (the aorist passive of *teleo*). Jesus had much to say in Matt 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 about the destruction of the city of Jerusalem (God's judgment on the Jewish leaders and

priests for rejecting God's Messiah). With the coming end of the city and the nation, that prophecy was to be finished, completely filled.

mystery of God . . Whately's paradox is hardly an exaggeration, that for "mystery" one might substitute "revelation," without altering the sense: see on Rev_1:20. - CBSC

mystery word study, see Bible Study Text Series, p. 120. (two senses, here #1)
#1 The Total Christian Revelation - 1Co_2:1 ; Rom_16:25 ; Col_1:26; Col_2:2; Col_4:3 Eph_1:9 ; Eph_6:19 ; 1Ti_3:9; 1Ti_3:16
#2 Special Christian Doctrines - 2Th_2:7 ; 1Co_4:1 ; 1Co_13:2 ; 1Co_14:2 ; 1Co_15:51 ; Rom_11:25

the mystery . . In the NT, a "mystery" is a truth that God concealed but has revealed through Christ and His apostles (*see notes on* Eph_3:3-5; cf. Rom_16:25).

the mystery of God . . is truth that has not been previously revealed or fulfilled, but is being revealed now (Eph_3:9). The phrase **his servants the prophets** echoes the same wording in Amo_3:7, but it probably refers to both OT and NT (Eph_2:20; Eph_4:11) prophets in this passage. - CSB

He declared to His servants . . Amo_3:7 ; Jer_7:25 ; Jer_25:4 (1Co_1:8)

the prophets . . While generally referring to the ot prophets, this may be a reference to prophets of the gospel (compare Rev_11:18). Either association is possible if the mystery is related to the kingdom (see Amo_3:7). - FSB

the prophets . . who served God in the past warned that the day of the Lord would come (see Joe_2:1-3, 10–11; Amo_5:18-20; Zep_1:14-18). - NLTSB

÷Rev_10:8
Rev_10:8

the voice which I heard from heaven, *I heard* again . . There has been much speculation about the identification of the speaker. Some have asserted that it is God, or Christ, or the Holy Spirit, or one of the powerful angels. - Utley

spake unto me again . . The true reading is scarcely grammatical, but must mean "[I heard] again speaking unto me." - CBSC

take . . 2Aorist, Imperative
This is the same voice that forbade John to write what the seven thunders uttered (Rev_10:4) and now again gives him directions. Ὕπαγε is exclamatory (R. 855) and is often used with other imperatives (R. 449) for the purpose of intensification just as we say, "go do this or that." John is to go and to take the booklet that is in the angel's hand. Once more it is noted that this booklet is open. - Lenski

take the opened scroll . . Unlike the scroll in ch. 5 (which could only be opened by the Lamb), this scroll is already open, and John is allowed to take it. - FSB

little book . . Rev_10:2
÷*Rev_10:9*
Rev_10:9

I went . . Apparently from his place in heaven to the earth: but there are difficulties in tracing coherently the changes in the point of view. - CBSC

It was not necessary for John to move from heaven to earth, between the sea and the earth, in order to get this book. - Lenski

angel . . = Rev_10:1.

and said unto him, Give me, &c. . . Read, 'saying unto him that he should give me. ' - CBSC

little book . . = scroll;

he said . . the angel,

eat it . . = Eze_2:9-10 ; Eze_3:1-3 ; Jer_15:15-16 (the Greek κατάφαγε, "eat it down")

Take and eat it . . By eating the scroll, John can speak the very words of God (Rev_10:11). In Ezekiel, the prophet is also told to consume a scroll (the words of God) in order to make them known (compare Eze_2:9 – 3:4). - FSB

Take it and eat it' " This is an allusion to Eze_2:8 –3:14 or Jer_15:16-17.

This symbolizes being commissioned to speak God's message. The little book symbolizes God's message which contains both assurance to believers (honey, cf. Psa_19:10-11; Psa_119:103) and judgment to unbelievers (bitter). This scroll is not the same as the one that Jesus opened in chapter 6. This refers to the message from the almighty angel (cf. Rev_10:7-11). - Utley

book = About judgment upon Jerusalem: ***Bitter*** because John was Jewish, ***Sweet*** because he was a Christian.

bitter . . - Oh that Israel might be saved - Rom_9:4 ; Rom_10:1
Like in Ezek ch. 2 & 3, Israel was rebellious to the end. Eze_2:3 ff ; Eze_3:1 ff

bitter . . The scroll is bitter or sour because it contains God's judgments. - FSB

As in Ezekiel's experience, the ***scroll*** tasted ***sweet*** in the ***mouth*** (Eze_3:1-3; see Jer_15:16; see also Psa_19:10; Psa_119:103). The experiences yet to come for God's people would be sweet, including the victory of God's plan and the vindication of his people. John's ***sour*** … ***stomach*** resembles the effects of Ezekiel's hard message for Israel (Eze_3:8-9). The process of bringing God's plan to fruition involves hardship. - NLTSB

sweet as honey . . The scroll is also sweet because it contains God's words (see Psa_19:10; Psa_119:103). - FSB

÷Rev_10:10
Rev_10:10

Then I took . . John obeys his commission, internalizes God's word, - NIVZSB

John may have actually eaten the little book or he may have only devoured it metaphorically. This revelation was pleasant at first because it was a revelation from God (cf. Ps. 119:103). - Constable

John taking the **open** scroll from **the hand of the angel** represents delegated authority, even as it did when

the Lamb (Christ) took the unopened scroll from God the Father in Rev_5:7. For John to **eat** the scroll recalls Ezekiel being commanded to do the same thing (Eze_3:1-3). - CSB

sweet .. bitter . . eating the book = Eze_3:1-3 ; Jer_15:15-16

The fact that the sweetness is now mentioned before the bitterness is due only to the fact that in eating the mouth comes first. Κοιλία is the abdominal cavity with its various organs: "belly," and, when eating is referred to, the belly as containing the stomach. - Lenski

sour … **stomach** . . resembles the effects of Ezekiel's hard message for Israel (Eze_3:8-9).

It is not John who uses this symbolism as though John borrows from Ezek. 2:8–3:3; it is the strong angel who borrows from Ezekiel. Yet in the case of Ezekiel there was no bitterness in the belly. Here, as elsewhere, the Old Testament features are exceeded, and it is unwarranted to say that *John* used literary sources as though Revelation is a composition that was devised by John's own mind. - Lenski

Rev_10:11
Rev_10:11

he said to me . . (**they said to me)** The powerful angel or the Triune God is affirming John as prophetic recorder and spokesman. - Utley

Some simply translate this "***I was told***." RSVA, NIV, ESV

The indefinite plural λέγουσι, "they say to me," hides the speakers just as the passive does in many cases, and just as John's statement does: "I heard a voice saying" (v. 4 and 8). - Lenski

"They" . . may refer to God or Jesus Christ (vv. Rev_10:4, Rev_10:8) and the strong angel (v. Rev_10:9). Many interpreters, however, believe this is a third person plural of indefinite reference that expresses reverentially the divine prompting that John experienced (cf. Rev_12:6; Rev_13:16; Rev_1:1). - Constable

prophesy again . . A call for John to warn men about the bitter judgment in the seventh trumpet and the 7 bowls. **peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.** *See note on Rev_7:9.* - MSB

prophesy again . . This could be another indication of an early date for the book of Revelation.

Thou must prophesy again . . Here is the clear indication that John survived the Patmos revelation.

He survived the castastrophe of Jerusalem, to go among the nations, peoples, tongues, kings, proclaiming the passing away of the old things of Judaism and the end of the old system, preaching again the word that concerns the people of all nations. He would himself fulfill **Mat_24:31**. - Wallace

prophesy again . . Some believe this refers to the latter part of Revelation (Rev 12–22). (FSB,

prophesy again . . To preach to people, nations, tongues and kings. (f John is only in his 60's this may be expected, but it is more difficult to imagine of a man 96 years plus !? The reply would probably be that John did so through his book "Revelation".

about . . Unlike Ezekiel, who prophesied for Israel alone, John ***must prophesy*** … ***about*** (or *against*) all the people of the world. There is debate whether "about" or "against" is the best translation; "about" allows for both promise and judgment (see both at 21:24–27). - NLTSB

many peoples and nations and tongues and kings . . This terminology is used of both unbelievers (cf. Rev_11:9; Rev_13:7-8; Rev_14:6; Rev_17:15) and believers (i.e. before Judgment Day cf. Rev_7:9; Rev_15:4 and after Judgment Day cf. Rev_21:24, Rev_21:26; Rev_22:2). This verse could refer to preaching the gospel

(cf. Rev_10:11; Rev_14:6) to all nations (cf. Mat_24:14; Mar_13:10) or the prediction of further temporal judgments of the wrath of God. - Utley

> Reiterates John's prophetic calling (cf. Rev_1:19). **many peoples.** Stresses the universal scope of John's witness, recalling Jeremiah's calling as "a prophet to the nations" who is given authority "over nations and kingdoms" (Jer_1:5, 10). The nations must worship God and the Lamb (Rev_5:9; Rev_7:9-10; Rev_15:4; Rev_21:24); those who ally with Babylon will face divine wrath (Rev_11:18; Rev_14:8-10). - NIVZSB

Before peoples, nations, tongues and kings . . To apply the expression ***prophesy again*** to the further things in the Revelation does not fit the language used by the angel, ***before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.*** The statement is comparable to the words of Jesus to Saul on the Damascus road in that commission to be executed by Paul, the apostle, recorded in **Act_9:15** :

> Furthermore, to make ***prophesy again*** mean to continue what he was then doing, and in the same way, would be a disregard for proper use and meaning of words. The passage indicates that John left the scene of these visions and became an active evangelist in many countries, among many peoples and tongues. - Wallace

:Rev_11:1

Rev_11:1

Chapter 11 - The Two Witnesses, Seventh Trumpet, Final Woe

> The Measuring of the Temple, Rev_11:1-2
> The Two Witnesses, Rev_11:3-12
> The Fall of One Tenth of the City, Rev_11:13-14
> The Final Trumpet, Heaven Rejoices, Rev_11:15-19

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> **11:1-14** These verses comprise the second interlude between the sixth and seventh trumpet judgments. Similar to ch. 7 during the seal judgments, ch. 10 and this episode in ch. 11 disrupt the sequence of events. - FSB

and . . (then) . . "And" (Gr. *kai*) ties this chapter closely to the previous one.

was given . . Perhaps by the angel from ch. 10 or by God.

In the previous sections John watched as the angels performed tasks, but in the following trumpets John will be involved in the action. - Utley

a reed . . A hollow, bamboo-like cane plant that grew in the Jordan Valley. Because of its light weight and rigidity, it was commonly used as a measuring rod (cf. Eze_40:3-5). -SB

measuring reed . . A staff with a standardized length used for taking measurements . = Zec_2:1-2 ff (Amo_7:7) ; Eze_40:2-3 ; Rev_21:15

> The term "***measuring rod"*** comes from the OT usage of river reeds which were used as horizontal measuring instruments. They were between eight and twenty feet long (cf. Eze_40:5 – Eze_42:20). - Utley

> We know the word of God is the divine standard for it is required in **1Pe_4:11** - Zerr

the temple . . = Representing the Jewish worship and worshippers. (Implies the temple was still standing, and evidence this was written before AD 70 when the temple was destroyed by the Romans.)

the temple . . Some would argue it is used in a figurative way, cf - Rev_3:12 ; 1Co_3:16; 2Co_6:16 ; Eph_2:20

;1Pe_2:5; however the mention of ***those who worship there*** seems to take away the figurative argument of it being a reference to the church.

The temple of God means the church (**1Co_3:16-17**). The altar was the center of worship in the Mosaic system, and it is referred to here as a symbol of the worship under that of Christ. The in that worship therein means Christians, whose personal lives must be measured (regulated) by the word of God and not by the decrees of Rome. - Zerr

the temple of God . . The word used is not that for the whole "Temple-precinct," but the "Temple" in the narrowest sense—what in the O. T. is called "the house" or "the palace." - CBSC

The word is not ἱερόν, "the Temple" (our versions), for this includes all the courts; but ναός, "the Sanctuary," the one building that contained the Holy and the Holy of Holies where God is present. - Lenski

thos who worship there . . This is done to see if the worshippers "measure up" to God's standard, see the OT references.

Interesting, the church [the New Jerusalem] is also measured in **Rev_21:15** , with a golden measuring rod.

:Rev_11:2
Rev_11:2

leave out the court . . which refers to the court of the Gentiles and shows the measurement is concerned with the Jews, Israel, proper.
The outer courtyard in the Jerusalem Temple, outside the stone warning fence, was regarded as the place for the Gentile ***nations***. John makes a clear distinction between the Jewish worshippers and all others.

holy city . . The only cities referred to as "Holy" are Jerusalem, and the New Jerusalem.
How, and Why would "Rome" be called the "holy city"? Jerusalem, (the city where our Lord was crucified, Rev_11:8) and unbelieving Israel are the one facing God's wrath in Revelation and not the city of Rome.

the holy city shall they tread under foot . . Jerusalem was the once holy city: but was no longer that. It was here called holy because of its past association with the covenanted and the sainted ancestors. *"How is the faithful city become harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers."* (**Isa_1:21**)
"0 Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee . . . Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." (**Mat_23:37-38**) By divine decree Jerusalem was to be desolated and **"trodden down of the Gentiles."** (**Luk_21:24**) The judgment had already been passed, and John was commanded to leave Jerusalem out, and **"measure it not,"** as that which had been cast away. - Wallace

Gentiles … will trample on the holy city . . May refer to Rome destroying the Jerusalem temple (cf. Luk_21:24) or unbelievers persecuting God's people, heirs of the "new Jerusalem" (Rev_21:2). - NIVZSB

forty-two months . . = Luk_21:24 = 3 1/2 years, or times (2) and time (1) and 1/2 a time, or 1260 days. They are all equal!
The time of the influx of the warring, persecuting powers who invaded Jerusalem in AD 67 and the Romans invading Galilee and proceeding to capture Jerusalem in AD 70 was 3 1/2 years. - See Josephus.

forty two months . . Restated in Rev_11:3 as 1,260 days (compare Rev_12:6; Rev_1:1). Both figures define, according to traditions from Daniel, the length of the persecution of God's people (e.g., Dan_7:25; Rev_12:11-12). - FSB

forty and two months . . Rev_11:2-3 Rev_12:6 Rev_13:5. From the imperial order and the beginning of the siege to its end and completion it was forty-two months, or ***a thousand two hundred and threescore days,*** or the oft-mentioned ***twelve hundred and sixty days*--**that was the exact period of time, as a matter of historical record, which covered the events of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem.

An example of such necessary mathematical application is in the prophecy of Isaiah concerning the end of the ten tribes, Isa_7:1-9. - Wallace

42 months . . Equivalent to 1,260 days (v. 3; 12:6) and "a time, times and half a time" (Rev_12:14; cf. Dan_7:25; Rev_12:7). May denote a literal time period ... - NIVZSB

Because this language echoes Jesus' prediction of Jerusalem's destruction (Luk_21:24; cf. Dan_8:13), some believe that Revelation was written before a.d. 70 and predicted that disaster. Again, however, others do not think that "the holy city" (cf. Rev_21:2; Rev_22:19) refers to earthly Jerusalem. Instead, they understand it as a reference to the true church. They argue that Rev_11:8 implies that the earthly Jerusalem that rejected its Messiah now belongs to "the great city," along with Sodom and Egypt (see Rev_17:18) - ESVSB

Rev_11:3
Rev_11:3

And I will grant authority . . This seems to imply God the Father speaking because Jesus is referred to in Rev_11:8. - Utley

The speaker seems to be the angel who spoke in verses 1–2, who here speaks for God (cf. v. 8). - Constable

Two witnesses . . = the Jewish legal code required two witnesses (so the point is that there is ample evidence and witnesses.) Joh_8:17; Heb_10:28; Deu_19:15;

Who are they?

1) Enoch and Elijah
2) Zerubbabel and Joshua (Zec_4:3-6)
3) Moses and Elijah (Law and the Prophets)
4) Are they symbolic for the OT and NT prophets?
5) Symbolic for the church (Luscombe, Coffman)
6) Symbolic for the apostles and NT prophets
   Mat_24:14; Joh_8:17; Mat_23:31-37; Act_7:52;
7) ***We do not know!***

Are they literally two witnesses, i.e, prophets?
Are they symbolic for all prophets of God, (Christians) martyred?
Are they symbolic for all the apostles and prophets? (JJ)

my two witnesses . . May be modeled after Moses and Elijah, Mat_17:1-3. Remember Jesus send out his ambassadors two by two, Luk_10:1; From what appears later there is an allusion to Zec_4:3-6; Zec_4:11; Zec_4:14. where Zerubbabel and Joshua who sought to restore Israel after a previous exile

The OT required two or more witnesses to confirm testimony (cf. Deu_17:6; Deu_19:15; Mat_18:16; Joh_8:17; Heb_10:28), and these two prophets will be the culmination of God's testimony to Israel: a message of judgment from God and of His gracious offer of the gospel to all who will repent and believe. **-**

MSB

"By the prophets of the old dispensation and the apostles of the new covenant, the testimony, divine revelation, was completed and by "the two witnesses" thereby established." - Wallace

for twelve hundred and sixty days . . (See **Rev_11:2**) Forty-two months of thirty days each equals twelve hundred and sixty days. The gospel will be proclaimed during this period of persecution by the unbelieving nations (cf. Mat_24:8-14, Mat_24:21-22). This symbolic number comes from Dan_7:25; Dan_12:7 and is used often in Revelation (cf. Rev_12:6; Rev_13:5).

When the O.T. speaks of the "end of the age" or "the last days"it always is speaking of the last days of that dispensation, the Jewish system of Jerusalem temple worship with is high priest system, for Jesus would become the High Priest and all God's saints would be priests, and the temple would be his church everywhere (Joh_4:23-24).

sackcloth . . Symbolizes mourning over sin and judgment and possibly a message of repentance (cf. Dan_9:3; Jon_3:5-8; Mat_11:21). - NIVZSB

Coarse, rough cloth made from goat or camel hair. Wearing garments made from it expressed penitence, humility, and mourning (cf. Gen_37:34; 2Sa_3:31; 2Ki_6:30; 2Ki_19:1; Est_4:1; Isa_22:12; Jer_6:26; Mat_11:21).

The witnesses are mourning because of the wretched wickedness of the holy city.

Scripture requires **two witnesses** to confirm testimony (Deu_19:15; Mat_18:16). The two witnesses here may symbolize the saints, as the parallel between Rev_11:7 and Rev_13:7 suggests. Wearing the **sackcloth** of repentance (cf. Isa_37:1-2; Jon_3:5; Mat_11:21) to symbolize their message, they **prophesy** while the holy city suffers trampling (Rev_11:2), the Messiah's mother is nourished in the wilderness (Rev_12:6, Rev_12:14), and the beast wields its authority (Rev_13:5). - ESVSB

÷Rev_11:4
Rev_11:4

the two olive trees . . This echoes the reference in Zechariah to two anointed ones (Zec_4:11-14). These may be identified with the postexilic high priest Joshua and the Davidic descendant Zerubbabel, both of whom were instrumental in the temple restoration efforts (see Zec_4:1-14). - FSB

"two anointed ones" (Zec_4:11, Zec_4:14): a royal leader to rebuild God's temple (Zec_4:6-10) and a high priest to lead worship in it (Zec_3:1-5). - ESVSB

two olive trees … two lampstands . . Alludes to Zec_4:2-14, where the gold lampstand represents Israel, and two olive trees probably symbolize Joshua and Zerubbabel, who were empowered by God and "anointed" (Zec_4:14) for rebuilding Israel's temple. - NIVZSB

two olive trees and the two lampstands . . Olive oil was commonly used in lamps; together the olive trees and lampstands symbolize the light of spiritual revival. The two witnesses' preaching will spark a revival, just as Joshua's and Zerubbabel's did in Israel after the Babylonian captivity. - MSB

These are two olive trees . . His identity is from Zec_4:1-3 and Zec_4:11-14 . See Exo_25:31-40;
God's light bearers!

the two lampstands Earlier in Revelation, lampstands are identified with the churches (Rev_1:12, Rev_1:20). Only two of these churches (Smyrna and Philadelphia) were entirely faithful and received no rebuke. The two witnesses thus may be a symbol of the Church bearing faithful witness. - FSB

÷Rev_11:5
Rev_11:5

God's Protection
Reminsent of Ahaziah's messengers sent to arrest Elijah in 2Ki_1:10 ff. God's vengeance.

if anyone wants to harm them … if anyone wants to harm them . . Both of these are FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCES which assume that there are those who want to hurt them, but they will be divinely protected until their mission is accomplished. - Utley

fire ... from mouth . . In one of the psalms, God is portrayed with ***fire*** coming from his mouth, a picture of judgment on his enemies (Psa_18:8; see also 2Sa_22:9). Cp. Elijah, 2Ki_1:1-15. - NLTSB

fire comes from their mouths . . Recalls Jer_5:14, where the prophet's word of judgment is likened to devouring fire. In 2Ki_1:9-12, consuming fire from heaven validates Elijah as a man of God. - NIVZSB

fire flows out of their mouth and devours their enemies . . Notice that the power is in their mouth which implies the power of the message they proclaim. In Revelation the mouth is a weapon, the tongue a sword (cf. Rev_9:17; Rev_19:15; Heb_4:12). - Utley

÷Rev_11:6
Rev_11:6

power . . = Like **Elijah** - 1Ki_17:1 ; 1Ki_18:41-46; Luk_4:25; Jas_5:17; and like **Moses** Exo_4:9 ; Exo_7:17 Exo_7:21-22; Exo_8:1 ff

Moses and Elijah are at least proto-types of these two witnesses.
Power and authority. 1Sa_4:8

÷Rev_11:7
Rev_11:7

the beast . . The Two witnesses persecution by the the beast (Romans), Rom_1:1-10; Rev_3:10; cf Dan_7:21; Rev_13:7; Rev_17:8;

the beast . . (cp. Rev_13:1) is introduced for the first time; it is associated with ***the bottomless pit*** ... Like all enemies of God, the beast engages in ***war*** against God's witnesses, and he kills them. -NLTSB

bottomless pit . . [the abyss] . . See note on Rev_9:1.

the abyss . . Where demons and fallen angels were thought to be kept—the underworld (see 2Pe_2:4 and note; Jud_1:6; compare the ancient Jewish work of 1 Enoch 90:22–27). - FSB [Rev_9:11]

bottomless pit . . Lit. "pit of the abyss." Mentioned 7 times in Revelation, it always refers to the prison where some of the demonic hordes are incarcerated, the place of severest torment and isolation (vv. 1, Rev_9:2,

Rev_9:11; Rev_11:7; Rev_17:8; Rev_20:1, Rev_20:3; Luk_8:31; 2Pe_2:4; Jud_1:6-7). - MSB

shall overcome . . = Fut. Ind.

attack … overpower . . The same Greek phrase occurs in Rev_13:7 : "power to wage war against God's holy people and to conquer them" (cf. Dan_7:21). - NIVZSB

will kill them . . They will be killed because of their prophetic ministry and message of Christ (see v. 6). - FSB

> The irony of using the word **conquer** to speak of the death of the witnesses is that, while it may seem that the beast is victorious (vv. Rev_11:7-10), these witnesses, as martyrs, come back to life (Rev_11:11-12). - CSBSB-N

÷Rev_11:8
Rev_11:8

***** Key Verse**

> The Greek has no verb in this verse.

bodies in the streets . . The Jewish custom was to bury the same day. So this is an indication of war or persecution.

bodies *will lie* in the street . . Refusing to bury one's enemies was a way to dishonor and show contempt for them (cf. Act_14:19). The OT expressly forbids this practice (Deu_21:22, Deu_21:23). - MSB

the street . . For the sing. cf. Rev_21:21, Rev_22:2. The word in fact means a *broad* street, such as *the* principal street of a city would be. The modern Italian *piazza* is the same word; but Rev_22:2 seems to shew that it is a street rather than a square—perhaps most accurately a "boulevard" in the modern sense, only running through the city, not round it. - CBSC

that great city . . here identified as Jerusalem, where our Lord was crucified.

the great city . . Identifying Jerusalem as a city like Sodom and Egypt stresses the city's wickedness. - MSB

symbolically ESV . . (spiritually NKJV, mystically NASB; figuratively NIV; allegorically RSVA;)

Sodom and Egypt . . Used metaphorically to highlight spiritual corruption. In biblical literature Egypt is vilified for its oppression and idolatry, and Sodom for its wickedness and immorality. - FSB

> **"The great city"** is further identified symbolically (or "spiritually"; see ESV footnote) as "**Sodom**" (known for its depravity and rebellion against God) and as "**Egypt**" (known for its persecution of God's people), both of which again correspond to the city of Jerusalem, both in its persecution and martyrdom of the prophets and its rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah. - ESVSB

> Jerusalem is called Sodom in Eze_16:46-49 and Isa_1:9-10, Sodom and Egypt seem to be metaphors for sin and bondage. Gal_4:24-25; Gal_5:1;

Sodom . . (infamous for its sexual immorality) and **Egypt** (where God's people had been slaves). This depicts

the wickedness of Jerusalem's inhabitants at this time.

The brutal death of the two witnesses, the sacrilege of not giving them a proper burial, and the glee of the non-elect "earth dwellers" (see notes at 13:8; 17:7–8) at their deaths demonstrate that wickedness.

That the witnesses are also called **prophets** in the context of their death at the hands of the beast places them in the category of other prophets who had died for their faith and who are honored in Revelation (v. Rev_11:18; Rev_16:6; Rev_18:20; Rev_18:24). - CSBSB

where also their Lord was crucified . . Refers to Jerusalem. FSB

where their Lord was crucified . . There is a direct connection between how the Lord was treated by evil forces and the experience of persecuted Christians (see Act_9:5). - NLTSB

where also their Lord was crucified . . Recalls Jerusalem (Luk_13:33-34). Jesus' witnesses follow their suffering master (cf. Rev_1:9; Joh_15:18-20). Revelation emphasizes the great city's ungodly nature and heritage, not its geographic location. - NIVSB

Two great prophetic signs:
1. The sign par excellence of God's acceptance of Jesus was his resurrection - Act_17:31; Rom_1:4
2. The sign par excellence of God's rejection of the Jews was the destruction of Jerusalem - Mat_24:1-4 ;see note at Mat_24:30 KJV, ASV

Jerusalem was filled with iniquity like Sodom and mistreated God's people like Egypt. It was Jerusalem that was condemned for killing the prophets, **Luk_11:47-51 ; Luk_18:7 ; Luk_21:20-22 ; Mat_23:34-36 ; Rev_6:9-10 ; Rev_16:6**

Rev_17:6 The woman "Babylon" drunk with the blood of the martyrs.

Jerusalem was the place where Jesus was crucified (not Rome).

*** This verse identifies the city to be judged as **JERUSALEM**!

The judgment described in Revelation is God's vengeance on Jerusalem for rejecting His Son, and for their persecution of his saints, in both the OT times and Christian age.

:Rev_11:9
Rev_11:9

The Roman Army was made up of men from all over the empire. See Josephus.

Vv. 9 & 10 - the whole world would know what was done to Jerusalem!

:Rev_11:10
Rev_11:10

those that dwell on the earth . . The whole world would see the corpse (pagans and Jews). The beast wants all to see his victory and celebrate it.

those who dwell on the earth . . (a phrase used 11 times in Revelation to speak of unbelievers) will celebrate the two witnesses' deaths as a holiday. - MSB

celebrate; and they will send gifts to one another . . Some see this as a perverted Feast of Purim (cf. Est_9:19, Est_9:22). It is more likely an allusion to Joh_16:20. This rejoining of the unbelieving world reveals the power of the two witnesses' message, but the unbelievers would not repent (cf. Rev_9:20-21; Rev_16:9, Rev_16:11). - Utley

make merry . . This is the only instance of rejoicing during the Tribulation recorded in this book. It reflects the widespread wickedness of that day (cf. 1Ki_18:17; 1Ki_21:20). Earth-dwellers will celebrate because they do not have to listen to messages from God any longer. - Constable

two prophets . . Designates the two witnesses (v. 3); recalls John's call to prophesy about [to] nations (Rev_10:11). - NIVZSB

That the witnesses are also called **prophets** in the context of their death at the hands of the beast places them in the category of other prophets who had died for their faith and who are honored in Revelation (v. Rev_11:18; Rev_16:6; Rev_18:20, Rev_18:24). - CSB [cf Mat_23:29-31]

tormented . . = i.e. disturbed their consciences.
Their exultation is short.

Rev_11:11
Rev_11:11

after the three and a half days . . This is an allusion from Daniel and is a symbolic period of persecution. See full note at Rev_11:2.

breath of life . . John likely borrows this phraseology from Eze_37:5, Eze_37:9-10. - FSB

The breath of life from God will revive the witnesses' dead bodies (cf. Gen_6:17; Gen_7:15, Gen_7:22; 2Ki_13:20-21; Eze_37:5, Eze_37:10). Their resurrection will terrify onlookers because these God-haters could do no more to silence their enemies than kill them. - Constable

stood on their feet . . This reminds us of the Valley of Dry Bones - Eze_37:1-7 ; Eze_37:8-14 which was a symbolic of Israel's revival after exile and their resurrection of a new nation.

This could also be symbolic of some sort of a revival.

great fear . . = in contrast with the merriment in Rev_11:10.

It is a fearful experience for sinful humans to face the power of the living God (see Heb_10:31). - NLTSB

Rev_11:12
Rev_11:12

they heard a loud voice . . Probably the awesome, majestic voice of God.

voice from heaven . . Those who hated and dishonored God's messengers and message will become aware of their vindication.

Their acceptance by God is now seen by all!

See note on Rev_11:8 .

Come up here . . Reminiscent of Enoch and Elijah being taken up to heaven (see Rev_11:3 and note; Gen_5:24; 2Ki_2:11; compare Rev_4:1

John's point of view had changed from heaven in earth in Rev_11:1, now John hears this voice from heaven where he had seen God's throne, Rev. 4.

in a cloud . . = Act_1:9 This picture seems to be based on Jesus' ascension. cf. Rev_10:1. (1Th_4:17) 2Ki_2:11-12. It conveys to our mind "divine transportation." cf. Dan_7:13; and Mat_24:30; Mat_26:64; Mar_13:26; Rev_1:7; Rev_14:14).

As in Rev_1:7, Act_1:9, and several OT passages, the "***cloud***" symbolizes the mysterious active presence of God. - ESVSB

÷Rev_11:13
Rev_11:13

In the same hour . . Apparently coinciding with the two prophets called up into heaven.

a great earthquake . . An ***earthquake*** often accompanies key moments in biblical hi story (see Exo_19:18; 1Ki_19:11-12; Mat_27:51). - NLTSB

Alludes to Eze_38:19; anticipates the earthquake accompanying Babylon's destruction (Rev_16:18-19). - NIVZSB

cf. Eze_38:17-23

a tenth of the city fell . . The temple area was about 1/10 of the city. Josephus says 10,000 lives were claimed the day the temple area fell.

The remnant . . = the rest, some gave God the glory. Those who were not killed saw God's hand in the matters.

seven thousand . . The number who ***died*** shows God's involvement in judgment (contrast 1Ki_19:18). - NLTSB

afraid and gave glory . . [doxa];

gave glory to the God of heaven . . The intended goal of the judgments throughout the book (compare Rev_9:20-21). - FSB

Those who survived the earthquake were forced to acknowledge God's power and sovereignty over the world (see Php_2:9-11). - NLTSB

This doesn't speak of conversion but an acknowledgement of God's hand in these events. (Walvoord, The Revelation . . ., p. 183; Newell, p. 157.)

The title **"the God of heaven"** was often used by Daniel Dan_2:18. It appears in the NT only here and in Rev_16:11.

÷Rev_11:14
Rev_11:14

Second woe past - Rev_8:13; Rev_9:12
The third woe comes ... Rev_11:15

11:14 This is a transitional device (cf. Rev_9:12; Rev_12:12). - Utley

The second woe has passed . . The sixth trumpet judgment - Rev_8:13.

The interlude between the sixth and seventh trumpets ends. - MSB

the third woe . . The seventh trumpet judgment (see Rev_11:15). The seventh and last trumpet (Rev_10:7; Rev_11:15-18). - ESVSB

the third woe . . In what does this consist? *Perhaps* we are to see the answer in Rev_12:12: but at any rate we have an instance of the way that, throughout this book, the last member of each series of signs disappoints us; we think (cf. Rev_10:7) that the end of all things is come, but instead a new series begins. - CBSC

The end of the second woe Rev_11:14
This verse is transitional (cf. Rev_9:12). It refers to the end of the ***second woe*** (the sixth trumpet, Rev_9:21) and ties this judgment in with the ***third woe*** (the seventh trumpet). It clarifies that God interjected the revelations of the mighty angel and the little scroll (Rev_10:1-11) and the two witnesses (Rev_11:1-13) into the chronological sequence of trumpet judgments. He did so to give supplementary, encouraging information. The final woe will follow "***quickly***" (Gr. *tachy*, "soon," cf. Rev_2:16; Rev_3:11; Rev_22:7, Rev_22:12, Rev_22:20) on the heels of the second woe. - Constable

quickly . . "quickly" (Gr. *tachy*, "soon," cf. **Rev_2:16; Rev_3:11; Rev_22:7, Rev_22:12, Rev_22:20)**

:Rev_11:15
Rev_11:15

The Seventh Trump
All will be over -- the complete overthrow of Jewish temple worship.
A summary from the spiritual standpoint.
God used the kingdoms of men to accomplish his purposes.

Picture returns to ... *Heavenly Activities*

seventh angel blew the trumpet . . This completes the cycle of seven trumpets. There is no woe explicitly stated in relation to this trumpet . - FSB
The seventh trumpet includes the 7 bowl, final judgments depicted in chapter 16. - MSB

The interlude was over. The seventh trumpet sounded the ***finish*--**the end of the tribulation period. It was the completion of the **"mystery of God"** which was **"according to the good tidings"** of the prophets, fulfilled in the fall of Judaism, the triumph of Christianity, the success of gospel, the victory of the church, and the expansion of the kingdom of Christ. - Wallace

loud voices in heaven . . ***Loud voices*** in the court of ***heaven*** sing a victory hymn; - NLTSB

Recalls worship in Rev_5:12; Rev_7:10. - NIVZSB

The **"great voices in heaven"** were the combined voices of the vision united as one to proclaim the announcement of the seventh trumpet.

Before this it had been ***an angel*** **or** ***a voice*** but now it was all of the voices together in one *great voice* to announce the end of all events of the vision. - Wallace

the kingdom of the world . . The KJV and NKJV have "the kingdoms of this world." The PLURAL is not present in any ancient Greek manuscripts. - Utley

the kingdom of the world . . The singular (kingdom) is the preferred reading. Despite its many political and cultural divisions, the Bible views the world spiritually as one kingdom, with one ruler—Satan (Joh_12:31; Joh_14:30; Joh_16:11; 2Co_4:4). Following Satan's lead, the human rulers of this world are generally hostile to Christ (Psa_2:2; Act_4:26). - MSB

have become the kingdoms of our Lord . . This kingdom also belongs to God the Father (*see notes on* Dan_4:3*;* Dan_6:26*;* 1Co_15:24). - MSB

-the worldwide expansion of Christianity. It was the fulfillment of the words of Christ in **Mat_24:31** to ***send his angels with a great sound of trumpet,*** after the destruction of Jerusalem to gather together his elect from the ***four winds, from one end of the heaven to the other.*** With the fall of Jerusalem came the shaking down of all Jewish opposition to gospel.

Christianity was liberated from the fetters of Judaism and entered upon a worldwide career of leavening the civilizations of world by bringing them under the influence of Christ. Thus the kingdoms or dominions of men ***became*** the kingdoms of our Lord (God) and of ***his Christ.*** In **Eph_5:5** the apostle designated it ***the kingdom of God and Christ,*** and declared in **Col_1:13-14** that it was then present. - Wallace

our Lord and of His Christ . . God's kingdom is inextricably bound to the Messiah, Jesus (cf. Psa_2:1-2), who reigns in heaven following his ascension (Rev_1:5; Act_2:33-36) - NIZSB

our Lord and of His Christ . . Notice how closely the Father and Son are linked. Notice, also, that the emphasis of 1Co_15:24-28 has now been fulfilled. Some see an allusion to Zec_14:9 which is possible because of John's favorite sources of apocalyptic images in Daniel, Ezekiel, and Zechariah. - Utley

has become . . This is an AORIST MIDDLE (deponent) INDICATIVE.

This is a description of the end of the reign of fallen human governments and the beginning of the reign of our God. The new age of the Spirit has fully come. This confirms the recapitulation theory that the Second Coming occurs at the end of each of the three cycles of judgment: the seals (cf. Rev_6:12-17), the trumpets (cf. Rev_11:15-18), and the bowls (cf. 19). Revelation is not in a chronological, sequential order, but a dramatic presentation in three cycles, each viewing the same period, but in successive and intensifying degrees of judgment (1/4, 1/3, full). - Utley

and He shall reign forever and ever! . . This refers to the eternal reign of our God (cf. Isa_9:6-7; Dan_2:44; Dan_4:34; Dan_7:14, Dan_7:27; Luk_1:33; 1Th_4:17; 2Pe_1:11), not a millennial reign - Utley

reign for ever . . Fulfills the OT expectation that God will reign forever through the Davidic king (Isa_9:7; Dan_2:44; Mic_4:7; cf. Luk_1:33). The redeemed will participate in this eternal reign (Rev_22:5). - NIVZSB

Rev_11:16
Rev_11:16

What John saw in the heaven.

the twenty-four elders . . representing the people of God, confirm God's victorious enthronement (see note on Rev_4:4). Their worship acknowledges God's sovereign rule as ***the Almighty*** (see Rev_4:10-11; Rev_5:8-10). - NLTSB

the 24 elders . . (Rev_4:10; Rev_5:8, Rev_5:14; Rev_7:13-14) response to this announcement was to prostrate themselves before God. Worship in heaven contrasts with rebellion on earth. - Constable

which sat before God &c. . . Read, ***which are before God, who sit upon their thrones***. - CBSC

÷Rev_11:17
Rev_11:17

We give thanks . . The only occurrence of the term "to give thanks" (*eucharisteō*) or its derivatives in Revelation. - FSB

O Lord God, the Almighty . . This refers to the three major OT titles for God: (1) YHWH, the covenant God as Savior (cf. Exo_3:14; Psa_103:1); (2) *Elohim*, the Creator God as provider and sustainer (cf. Gen_1:1; Psa_104:1); and (3) *El Shaddai* (cf. Rev_1:8), the strong or compassionate God which was the Patriarchal name for deity (cf. Exo_6:3). - Utley

who is and who was . . [NKJV "*and who is to come"*] The final phrase, "who is to come," (used in Rev_1:4, Rev_1:8; Rev_4:8) is omitted in the many manuscripts. The last of these three chronological aspects will never be mentioned again in the book of the Revelation.

It is not, however, likely that any importance is to be attached to the omission of the full expression we had in Rev_1:4, Rev_1:8; Rev_4:8. CBSC

and have begun to reign . . God has always been sovereign over His creation, however in John's visions he sees the completion of the end of the Mosaic dispensation, the Jewish temple rituals and hierarchy and is now revealed the authenticity and vindication of Christianity.

÷Rev_11:18
Rev_11:18

A picture of judgment.
God's wrath comes...
The dead prophet and apostles are ***vindicated*** who had cried out from under the altar - Rev_6:10-11 ***!***

God's judgment upon Jerusalem is parallel to the JUDGMENT in Rev_20:12.

God's judgment upon Jerusalem and Judaism is a fore-picture and an assurance that he will one day judge all men - Rev_20:12 .

The vision closes with this verse. Rev_11:19 begins a new vision.

- - - - - - -

nations were angry . . The hostility of the nations against the Jews was manifest. This is an allusion to Psa_2:1 and Eze_38:1-39.

Your wrath has come . . God used the nations (Rome and her allies) to bring his wrath upon Jerusalem (the Babylon of Revelation).

time of the dead .. be judged . . All the pass leaders who had persecuted God's prophets and had rejected the Christ would now be seen to have been in error. Their actions were judged as heinous and against God's anointed. Mat_23:28-36.

The phrase definitely shows us that the visions of Revelation comes in three parallel acts (seals, trumpets, and bowls) where each ends with a sever judgmental scenes upon Jerusalem and Israel that rejected the Messiah and persecuted his disciples .

reward Your servant the prophets and the saints . . All those who had suffered and were persecuted are now vindicated.

those who fear your name . . This is continuing part of the phrase of those whom God would reward, so it must be speaking of all those who honored, respected, and obey God.

small and great . . Describes everyone without distinction, whether ordinary or important. - FSB

destroy those who destroy the earth . . The Greek term for "destroy" (*diaphtheirō*) refers to those who kill, murder, and oppress persons or nations. - FSB

This seems to speak of God's wrath and judgment of those who would destroy this genuine people, now the church, His true temple, 1Co_3:17.

destroy them which destroy . . The verb used twice over is ambiguous, and perhaps has a meaning that we should express differently in the two places; as in 1Co_3:17. Thus neither the marginal rendering nor the text is wrong. - CBSC

- - - - - - - - - - -
The vision closes with this verse. Rev_11:19 begins a new vision.

÷Rev_11:19
Rev_11:19

This verse should have been the beginning of ch. 12.
While some think this verse is the conclusion to John's vision of chapter 11, it rather seems that ***Verse 19*** begins a new vision.
***

the temple . . on earth was now closed! A new temple is opened in heaven!
It is like two signs hanging out -
"Closed on earth" "Open in heaven"

With Christ's death and the veil of the temple being torn we have God's rejection of the earthly temple and now see Christ as the Great High Priest of the new covenant. Mat_27:51.

ark of His covenant was seen . . Located in the temple's inner sanctuary 1Ki_6:19. The ark could now seen by all.

Under the Mosaic Law only the High Priest could view the ark of the covenant, and the only on one day

of the year, the day of atonement. But under the New Covenant every disciple is a priest and has access to God's mercy and grace.

> The ark was the locus of God's presence with His people and the symbol of His covenant with them, and here it carries the same significance (compare Rev_21:3). - FSB

ark of His covenant . . This piece of furniture in the OT tabernacle and temple (*see notes on* Exo_25:10-22) symbolized God's presence, atonement, and covenant with His people. That earthly ark was only a picture of this heavenly one (see Heb_9:23; Heb_10:20). It was there God provided mercy and atonement for sin. As the earthly Holy of Holies was open when the price of sin was paid (Mat_27:51; Heb_10:19-20), so the Holy of Holies in heaven is opened to speak of God's saving New Covenant -MSB

lightnings, noises, thundering, etc. .. All these indicate God's mighty presence, as also seen at important times in the Old Testament.

> As elsewhere, the storm theophany portrays the manifestation of God's presence (cf. Rev_4:5; Rev_16:18; Exo_19:16-19) - Constable

÷Rev_12:1

Rom_12:1

Section 3: The Earthly Apocalypse (chapters 12-20)

This vision begins with ch. 11:19

Chapter 12 - The Underlying Conflict (Woman on the Moon)

The Glorious Woman With Child, - Rev_12:1-2
The Great Red Dragon, vv. - Rev_12:3-4
The Man Child, vv. - Rev_12:5-6
The Spiritual War, vv. - Rev_12:7-9
Rejoicing In Heaven, vv. - Rev_12:10-11
The Dragon Persecuted the Woman, vv. - Rev_12:12-17

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Rev_12:1

A great sign appeared in heaven .. This may be the beginning of "the seven signs" of the Revelation.

> This is a special theological term (*sēmeion*) used often in John's Gospel (cf. Joh_2:11, Joh_2:23; Joh_3:2; Joh_4:54; Joh_6:2, Joh_6:14, Joh_6:30; Joh_7:31; Joh_9:16; Joh_10:41; Joh_11:47; Joh_12:18, Joh_12:37; Joh_20:30). It now appears seven times between Rev_12:1 and Rev_19:20 —three times of signs in heaven (cf. Rev_12:1, Rev_12:3; Rev_15:1) and four times of signs on the earth (cf. Rev_13:13, Rev_13:14; Rev_16:14; Rev_19:20). - Utley

in heaven . . In Revelation the word ***heaven*** was employed to denote governments and authorities. The Lord Himself so used the word in his own description of the destruction of Jerusalem in referring to **"great signs in the heavens,"** and **"stars falling from heaven"-** a symbolic reference to the casting down of the Jewish and Roman rulers and authorities. - Walace

heaven . . The place where God dwells. The Greek word *ouranos* can mean sky or heaven. - FSB

a woman . . The **woman** represents the righteous remnant of Israel, who gave Christ to the world, v. - Rev_12:5 Mic_5:3 , and who (as the church) will be persecuted by the Dragon (Satan), the Beast (Rome), the False-Prophet, and BABYLON, the harlot.

The woman is not Mary, not yet the church, but God's faithful (which included Mary). The **Tree** in Roman 11 (see Rom_11:7 -36 ff . Psa_107:2 The redeemed of the earth. They are called the "remnant" in Rev_11:13

...this woman represents the true people of God (cf. Rev_12:1-6), but in Rev_12:13-17 she will be the NT people of God fleeing from the wrath of the dragon. - Utley

In *New Bible Commentary* George R. Beasley-Murray said, "Religious people of the ancient world would have seen in the travailing woman a goddess crowned with the twelve stars of the zodiac; a Jew would have understood her as Mother Zion (see Isa_26:16, Isa_27:1; Isa_49:14-25; Isa_54:1-8; Isa_66:7-9), but for John she represented the 'Mother' of the Messianic community, the believing people of God of old and new covenants" (p. 1441).[Utley]

woman . . The faithful people of God, from whom the Messianic son comes (v. 5). - NIVZSB

The sun . . = A picture of her glory.

moon under her feet . . A picture of her exaltation over authorities and civil powers.

Twelve stars - helps us to remember this is in ch. 12.

The sun, moon, stars = the light for the earth.

"twelve stars" Here again our presuppositions drive the interpretation: (1) if it is OT then it refers to the twelve Jewish tribes; (2) if it is intertestamental apocalyptic literature it refers to the signs of the zodiac; and (3) if it is NT then it refers to the twelve Apostles. Twelve is the regular biblical symbolic number of organization.

However, the meaning of chapter 12 is not conditioned on a proper identification of John's symbolism, but the central truth of the context. This principle must be maintained. We must not (1) push the details; (2) choose some things literally and some things symbolically; or (3) force our interpretations into our historical setting. - Utley

sun … moon … twelve stars . . Recalls Joseph's dream in Gen_37:9.

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Colin Nicholl in his book *The Great Christ Comet: Revealing the True Star of Bethlehem,* shows the woman in Revelation 12 as the zodiac Virgin, who is clothed with the Sun only around Sept. 15, and only had the moon under her feet [in this time period] in B.C. 6, thus he sees this as a reference to the birth of Jesus giving us a time table for the real "Christmas."

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BOOK REVIEW

As a Christian and an astronomer, it's only natural I should have a keen interest in the mystery of the Star of Bethlehem. While I've never done any original research on the topic, I've followed new developments from a distance over the years. And each time it appears all plausible explanations have been exhausted, someone comes up with a fresh idea.

Now we have a lengthy treatise written by an academic. Will we be surprised again?

Skeptic Turned Believer

I have to admit I started Colin Nicholl's *The Great Christ Comet: Revealing the True Star of Bethlehem* with considerable skepticism. Quickly perusing the book before I began reading in detail, I noticed Nicholl adopts 4 B.C. as the date of Herod's death. While this has been the consensus view among historians, recent scholarship throws this dating into doubt (more on this below). Nicholl is obviously aware of this debate, but

seems overly dismissive of challenges to the consensus. I feared if he lacked careful attention to this important point, his scholarship on other points would be similarly weak.

I'm happy to report, however, that I was wrong in my initial assessment of T*he Great Christ Comet.* Unquestionably, Nicholl is a deeply knowledgeable and meticulous biblical scholar. Nearly every page contains multiple footnotes, often to obscure books and scholarly journals. But he is also humble. He acknowledges early on that the study of the mystery of the Star of Bethlehem requires expertise in multiple disciplines including biblical studies, Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) history, and astronomy. I'm impressed he dialogued with multiple astronomers while working on this book. Gary W. Kronk, a leading expert on comets, wrote the foreword.

The input from astronomers is evident in the high quality and great depth of discussions relating to the technical aspects of astronomy. Nicholl carefully explains the basic motions of celestial bodies in the night sky, always with attention to details relevant to ANE observers. He also does a very good job explaining the anatomy, orbital mechanics, brightness changes, and visual appearances of comets. Nicholl often draws on detailed historical accounts of bright comets, including many beautiful illustrations; the visual impact of a celestial phenomenon is an important part of the story of the Star. I couldn't find any obvious errors in the book's astronomy content.

Biblically Focused, Persuasive Storyteller

The biblical text is Nicholl's main source material. Early on, he makes a solid case that the nativity narrative should be taken as describing real historical events. Not only does he make use of the detailed description of the Star in Mat_1:18 – Mat_2:18, but he also brings in Num_24:17, Isa_9:2, and Rev_12:1-5. Though Kronk says in the foreword that Nicholl is the first to tie the Revelation passage to the star, this isn't the case. In chapter 4, Nicholl actually states Ernest L. Martin did so in *The Star of Bethlehem: The Star that Astonished the World,* as well as Frederick A. Larson, likely influenced by Martin, in his *The Star of Bethlehem* documentary.

I'm not spoiling the conclusion by telling you Nicholl strongly advocates the comet explanation for the Star; that much is evident on the book's cover. Before presenting his own theory, he critiques other well-known proposals. These include various conjunctions between Jupiter and other planets or stars, a nova or supernova, meteors, and an ordinary star. He also notes that the 12 B.C. apparition of Halley's comet, which some have identified as the Star, is much too early to be consistent with the biblical chronology. I find his critiques to be persuasive.

Nicholl is a good storyteller. As I read through each chapter I had the impression he was retelling the story of how he'd worked as a detective to solve the mystery of the Star, carefully sifting through subtle clues bit by bit to arrive at a final, inescapable conclusion. Although at times the material can be technical and the pace slow (with some very long footnotes!), I think he manages to maintain the average reader's interest most of the time.

Theories and Chronologies

Without giving away the whole story, I'll briefly summarize Nicholl's theory. Only a comet, he argues, can do all the things the Star is reported to have done in the nativity texts—leading the Magi to Jerusalem, then to Bethlehem, then to the specific house in which the Christ child lay. I must admit I was astonished when I read Nicholl's description of the celestial sign he says prompted the Magi to make their long journey to Jerusalem. I won't spoil the surprise by revealing it here!

Nicholl even gives the orbital elements of the "*Christ Comet.*" This is quite an achievement. With these,

anyone with modern planetarium software can follow its path across the ancient skies and confirm that it did everything Nicholl claims for it.

I need to say a few words about the timing of the Christ Comet. As noted above, Nicholl accepts the consensus dating of Herod's death (4 B.C.). In 2009 Andrew Steinmann, professor of theology and Hebrew at Concordia University, published a paper in Novum Testamentum titled "*When Did Herod the Great Reign*?" in which he presents a case for Herod's death occurring in 1 B.C. There are many subtleties in this debate, such as whether one should count partial years in calculating the length of a king's reign and which lunar eclipse is relevant to Herod's death. In my opinion, Steinmann presents a compelling case for the 1 B.C. date.

On this accounting, Jesus was born in 2 or 3 B.C. Nicholl's birthdate of 6 B.C., then, is excluded in the new chronology. His estimate is based on the celestial event described in Revelation 12. So there are actually two possible dates: September 11, 3 B.C. or September 15, 6 B.C. Thus, there is a simple fix to Nicholl's chronology—just advance his dates by three years!

Mystery Solved?

So, has Nicholl finally solved the mystery of the Star? I'm tempted to say he has. But until an independent reference to the Christ Comet is discovered in the historical record, I would have to call his theory a speculative historical reconstruction—albeit a sophisticated one that may be the most plausible offered to date.

Historians, take note: even a single brief note of a comet appearing at a certain date and in a particular constellation consistent with Nicholl's theory would be enough to confirm it.

Colin Nicholl. *The Great Christ Comet: Revealing the True Star of Bethlehem.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015. 368 pp. $40.00.

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October 9th, 2015
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In response to this read the lengthy excellent review response by Jason Engwer (Nov. 9, 2015) in Amazon's reviews of the book. The resonse took the view of a miraculous star.

Rev_12:2
Rev_12:2

With child . . - Mic_4:9 Mic_5:3 Rev_12:5

Some see the child as the church, but the woman seems to *become* the church, and the child seems to be our Lord.

The woman is not Mary, but God's faithful remnant (which included Mary) in OT times and the church in NT time.

crying out . . This, along with "birth pains" and "torment," may suggest the persecution of the people of God. - FSB

cried out … in pain . . Israel, often pictured as a mother giving birth (cf. Isa_26:17-18; Isa_54:1; Isa_66:7-12; Hos_13:13; Mic_4:10; Mic_5:2-3; Mat_24:8), had agonized and suffered for centuries, longing for the Messiah to come and destroy Satan, sin, and death, and usher in the kingdom. - MSB

and she … pained to be delivered . . There is probably a reminiscence of Gen_3:16, and perhaps of St Joh_16:21, as well as of Mic_4:10, to which the main reference is. Cf. also St Mat_24:8, St Mar_13:1. - CBSC

Rev_12:3
Rev_12:3

another sign . . The first sign is the woman, the second is the dragon.

great fiery red dragon . . We have no problem identify the Great Red Dragon. Rev_12:9, as Satan, the woman's mortal enemy. He appears as a dragon 13 time in this book. Red speaks of bloodshed (cf. Joh_8:44). - cf MSB

> **dragon . .** The word in classical Greek means simply "serpent," though perhaps it was always specially applied to the larger or more formidable kinds. But in St John's time the conception seems to have been familiar of a half-mythical kind of serpent, to which the name was appropriated: it had not gone so far as the mediæval type of "dragon," with legs and wings, but the dragon was supposed to "stand" (see the next verse), hardly perhaps "on his rear," as Milton imagines the Serpent of Eden to have done, before the curse of Gen_3:14, but erect from the middle upwards; see Verg. *Æn.* II. 206–8. Whether this dragon bore visibly on him the primæval curse or no, there is an undoubted reference to the story of the Fall in this picture of the woman, the man, and the serpent. In Psa_74:13-14 (14, 15); Job_26:13; Isa_27:1, isa 51:9, we seem to find references to a "war in heaven," either past or future, like that which follows here. - CBSC

crowns . . = diadems. Crowns of kings, not the garland crowns given to victors. These represent the powers he used for his purpose of destroying the woman's child.

horns . . The horns recall the imagery of Dan 7:7 (where they referred to 10 kings). The dragon elevates himself and uses his power to influence the kings of the world for the oppression of God's people.
The Dragon employs the Seven head, ten horns, seven crowns as his agents.

> (Daniel will identify this beast doing the Dragon's bidding later (Dan_7:7 ff. Dan_7:23; Dan_8:9) as the fourth empire to arise, the Roman.

royal headbands . . Each of the seven heads had a diadem or crown. John sets up a deliberate contrast between the beast's *diadēmata* ("crowns") and the woman's *stephanos* ("crown, wreath"). Royalty and kingly pretenders wore *diadēmata*, whereas victors wore a *stephanos*. -FSB

Rev_12:4

Rev_12:4

third part . . This may refer to the angels who joined Satan (suggesting it was about a third of heaven's angels who sided with Satan in the revolt).

third of the stars of heaven . . Satan's original rebellion (cf. Isa_14:12 ff.; Eze_28:11 ff.) resulted in one-third of the angelic host joining his insurrection and becoming demons. **- MSB**

> Jews thought the stars as angels, this may be a reference to the dragon defeating some of the angelic host (compare the Jewish literature 2 Enoch 4:1; 2 Baruch 51:10). cf - FSB

John is probably drawing a parallel between the activities of this dragon-like kingly pretender and Antiochus in Dan 8:10. Both usurpers harmed the stars. - FSB

stood before the woman . . Note the dangers to the "***child***" - Herod the Great acted as Satan's agent trying to destroy the Christ-child. (cf. the temptations at the beginning of Christ's ministry.) - Act_4:26-27. Mat_4:1-11***

to devour her Child . . Unable to prevent the virgin birth of Christ, Satan tried to kill the child in a general massacre of male children commanded by Herod (Mat_2:13-18; cf. Luk_4:28-29).- MSB

(Can you see Satan using King Herod trying to end God's plan of redemption before it can get a good start!)

for to devour her child . . Symbolizes the enmity of the serpent against the seed of the woman, beginning with the intended treachery of Herod, and massacre of the Innocents; but including also the malice that pursued Him through life, the temptation, and at last the Cross. - CBSC

[See Utley's extensive remarks about Satan's casting out of heaven. Rev_12:4] Be careful of pushing the details; apocalyptic literature is often true theology presented in an imaginative frame-work. It is true, but symbolically presented! - Utley

÷Rev_12:5

Rev_12:5

she bore a male child . . Jesus Christ in His incarnation was of Jewish descent (Mat_1:1; 2Ti_2:8). Despite Satan's efforts to destroy Israel and the messianic line, Jesus' birth took place as predicted by the prophets (cf. Isa_7:14; Isa_9:6; Mic_5:2). - MSB

rule all nations with a rod of iron . . The "rod of iron" (also Rev_2:27; Rev_19:15) is not a royal scepter (as in some translations) but the shepherd's club, here used to shatter the nations like pottery (cf. Psa_2:9). - ESVSB

to shepherd . . [rule] . . The Greek verb *poimainō*, meaning "to shepherd," is often translated as "to rule." While the sense is certainly one of leadership, the shepherd imagery should be maintained (see Rev_7:17). - FSB

rule . . - as a shepherd with an iron rod.

This is an allusion to Psa_2:9 and is, therefore, Messianic. In Rev_19:15 this phrase is used of the Messiah, while in Rev_2:26-27 it is used of the saints. - Utley

rod of iron . . An iron rod in the hands of the Messiah connotes an unyieldingly just reign; He will not deviate from His righteous standards or tolerate wickedness or sedition. See Psa_2:9; compare Rev_2:27; Rev_19:15. - FSB

Rev_2:26-27 said of those who overcome. Rev_3:21 - those overcoming will sit with Christ.

child was caught up to God . . This phrase, coupled with the birth described earlier in the verse, likely represents Christ's ministry from His birth to His death, resurrection, and ascension in summary fashion. Such abbreviated overviews are common in the nt (e.g., Joh_16:28; 1Ti_3:16). - FSB

her Child was caught up to God . . Christ's ascension is in view (Act_1:9; Act_2:33; Heb_1:1-3; Heb_12:2). - MSB

to God and his throne -- Cf. Rev_3:21. In the vision, "He that sat on the throne" is still present, and no doubt St John *saw* the translation of the child to His side. - CBSC

The Child is not destroyed by the dragon but is exalted to God's **throne** (cf. Act_2:33-36; Rev_3:21). - ESVSB

÷Rev_12:6

Rev_12:6

woman fled into the wilderness . . Throughout the Bible, the wilderness is viewed as a safe haven where the afflicted hide (e.g., 1Sa_23:14; 1Ki_19:1-4). God often provides safety and sustenance in these circumstances (e.g., Deu_29:5; 1Ki_17:1-6). - FSB

> At the beginning of the Jewish-Roman was (c. AD 67) the Christians in Jerusalem fled to Pella, east of the Jordan river, where they were protected by Herod Agrippa from persecution. This is the same Herod Agrippa who had heard Paul preach in Acts 26 and came close to conversion himself (Act_26:27-31). According to Eusebius the Jerusalem Christians heeded the warning that Christ had given in Luk_21:20-24.

place prepared by God . . The woman was protected by God.

of God . . = *apo* denotes source.

feed her there . .

1260 days . = 42 months = 3 1/2 years (the duration of the Jewish-Roman war. At its beginning the Christians in Jerusalem fled to Pella. cf. Luk_21:20-21;)

> This same period of time is referred to in several different ways which equal about three and one half years: (1) "time, times and a half time" (cf. Dan_7:25; Dan_12:7; Rev_12:14); (2) "2,300 evenings and mornings" (cf. Dan_8:14); (3) "forty-two months" (cf. Rev_11:2; Rev_13:5); "1,260 days" (cf. Rev_11:3; Rev_12:6); "1,290 days" (cf. Dan_12:11); and "1,335 days" (cf. Dan_12:12). - Utley

Comments by Foy E. Wallace
Verse 6.

The woman's flight into the wilderness--Rev_12:6.

1. And the woman fled into the wilderness. The context of these visions surrounded the events prior to and including the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, and the scattering of the church in Judea by onslaught of persecution. Jesus foretold such a flight in his description of the destruction of Jerusalem in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew. This cannot be considered an application too light or limited or unimportant for this vision. The portent was tremendous. It was of extremely ominous and terrible proportions. In the Lord's warnings and in his own forebodings he exhorted them to pray that the flight might not come at a time when hindrances to the flight could not be overcome, and the difficulties of escape would be insurmountable i.e. to the woman with child, who could be greatly handicapped in flight; in the winter when the cold weather would add to suffering and misery; on the sabbath day, when due to the Jewish observance of the sabbath the exits of the city would be closed, its gates locked, barring an expeditious flight, and they would find themselves entrapped. (See *GOD'S PROPHETIC WORD,* p. 336-337) The period of escape from Jerusalem after the city was alerted would be so short that the Lord warned the one on the housetop not to come down to enter his house for even clothing or food; and the laborer in the field not to return to his house for such purpose, for the same reason.

Describing the horrors of the siege Jesus called it **"the tribulation of those days"** and quoted the prophecy of **Dan_12:11** on **"the abomination of desolation"** (**Mat_24:15**) as being fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem. During the siege one million one hundred thousand people perished.

All the houses and underground chambers were filled with perishing bodies; famishing people ate the putrified flesh of human corpses; mothers ate the flesh of their own babies. Outside the besieged city the expatriated race

of Jews throughout the empire were slaughtered. In his chronicles on the destruction of Jerusalem Josephus, the eye-witness historian, verifies the declaration of our Lord in **Mat_24:21** : **"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."** Since the Lord Himself declares that no event of the future could exceed the tribulation, there can be no reason to search for events in later history, or to engage in speculation on events of future history to fulfill the identical symbolic descriptions of Revelation. The signs and symbols of Revelation were but the extensions of the twenty- fourth chapter of Matthew, spoken by the Lord Himself in Matthew's record and extended by his servant John in the visions of Revelation.

In this verse, **Rev_12:6**, John stated that **"the woman (the church) fled into the wilderness."** This was precisely what Jesus commanded his disciples to do. When the signs which he had set forth should appear Christians in Jerusalem and Judea were to make hasty their flight. In **Mat_24:33** Jesus said to them: **"When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors."** In the parallel record of **Luk_21:20**, He said, **"When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh"--**and they did know it. In **Mat_24:16** the Lord said, **"Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains."** In **Luk_21:21**, the parallel adds, **"And let them which are in the midst of it (Jerusalem) depart out"--**and they did, they departed and fled.

As generally known, Josephus was an eyewitness to the siege of Jerusalem and the events preceding it. In Wars, Book III, Section 3, page 3, he relates that after the armies of Cestius Gallius, Roman general, had besieged Jerusalem, they withdrew--and in this interval the disciples fled, according to the Lord's admonition. The historian Josephus was an unbeliever and admitted his inability to account for the cessation, but declared it was nevertheless a fact. All who believe the statements of the Lord in Matthew twentyfour, Mark thirteen and Luke twenty-one, know and understand the why-it was the Lord's doing.

Another later historian, Eusebius, whose history bears date of 324 A. D., states in Book III, Section 3, page 3, that the church in Jerusalem, by divine revelation, fled to the mountain country of Pella, beyond the Jordan, which according to Josephus was largely a desert, mountain region. The Lord of the descriptions and signs of Matthew's record of the destruction of Jerusalem is the Lord of the portrayals and symbols of Revelation. There is no difference in the command for all the Christians in Jerusalem and Judea to flee to the desert region of Pella, in the record of Matthew and Luke, and the statement in **Rev_12:6**, that she fled into the wilderness.

2. To a place prepared of God. The disciples' flight was to a place where Jesus had directed them: **"Let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains."** But Revelation states that the woman fled to **"a place prepared of God."** The place where Jesus commanded is the place that God prepared. The descriptions are parallel. Furthermore, Jesus said in **Mat_24:34** : **"This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled."** All of the signs of **Mat_24:1-51** are above verse 34. Jesus said they were all fulfilled in the generation of people who heard his words. (For further discussion on the destruction of Jerusalem, see *GOD'S PROPHETIC WORD,* pp. 246-260.) It is so with the symbols of Revelation. Jesus said to the disciples in **Luk_21:31-32** : when **"ye see" and "know ye"; and "I say unto *you."*** His emphasis was on the fulfillment of the signs in events of their own lives. The parallel in Revelation is verse 3 of chapter 1: "**Blessed is *he* that *readeth*** (the one who read it to the churches); **and *they* that *hear*** (heed) **the words; and *they* that *keep*** (remember and observe); **for the time is at hand."** If the time of these things was so remote as to be yet future, there was no point in this exhortation for them, and no application to them. As the signs of **Mat_24:1-51** were fulfilled in that generation of living people, so the symbols of Revelation were fulfilled in the experiences of the existing churches.

3. That they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days. Here is an instance of a literal period of time, a specific date, introduced into a figurative and symbolic context. ...

The context yields the same exact computation of ***a thousand two hundred and threescore days*** of the woman's flight into the wilderness. It was the same period of "the forty and two months" of the preceding

chapter eleven-- the same mathematical time period in which Jerusalem, **"the holy city"** was trodden **"under foot forty and two months."** In the record of **Luk_21:24**, this period of the treading under foot of Jerusalem was limited by the phrase **"until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."** It was the same period as the "forty and two months" of **Rev_11:3**, and the thousand two hundred and threescore days of chapter 12:6. The specific mathematical period designated, historically verified, follows this order:

Emperor Nero delivered the mandate for the siege of Jerusalem to Vespasian, his imperial officer, in the month of February A. D. 67 when the war against Judea was declared. This was the beginning of the period which ended in August A. D. 70, when the city of Jerusalem was razed, ravished and destroyed; the temple was desecrated and demolished, bringing an end to Judaism and the Jewish state.

This exact computation is attested, as mentioned previously, in the authoritative works of *Jewish Testimonies,* Volume VIII, by Lardner, and *Wars of Jews,* Volume VII, by Josephus. No further evidence is necessary.

- Wallace

:Rev_12:7

Rev_12:7

war broke out in heaven . . This must refer to an event subsequent to the Incarnation—not, therefore, to the "Fall of the Angels," as readers of *Paradise Lost* are apt to assume. - CBSC

This war in heaven occurs upon the ascension of Christ back into heaven and saw Satan losing his power over death and his direct access into the presence of God and also losing his miraculous powers. See: Psa_24:7; Dan_7:13; 1Jn_3:8; 1Th_1:10; 1Co_15:54-55;

Heb_2:14; Joh_12:31 Col_2:15 (symbolic Luk_10:18)

Jesus went into the hadean world and conquered and came out with the ***keys*** - Rev_1:18.

WAR at the ascension of Christ into heaven!

Michael . . = the only angel designated an archangel in the Bible (Jud_1:9) the protector of God's people (see Dan_10:13; Dan_12:1; The two passages seem to tell us that he is the special patron or guardian angel of the people of Israel: and it may be in that character that he is introduced here. cf also Jud_1:9).

Another of the other seven names given in Hebrew tradition is also Gaberiel.

fought . . Apparently the right reading is **to fight**—the sense is "there was war in Heaven, so that Michael and his angels made **war** with the Dragon." R. V. "*going forth* to war." - CBSC

dragon and his angels . . Exactly who Satan's angels are is hard to describe biblically. Many see them as demonic (cf. Mat_25:41; Eph_6:10 ff). But there is always the nagging question of the angels in Tartarus (cf. 2Pe_2:4), and the angels mentioned in Rev_9:14, who are obviously controlled by God but are still evil angels. Much of the conflict in the angelic world is simply unexplained (cf. Dan_10:1 ff). - Utley

To note all the verses about Christ destroying Satan and Satan having his powers curtailed, also Rev. 20 (Rev_20:1-2) , the chaining of Satan.

Note from Foy Wallace:

There are several words in the general vocabulary of Revelation, the connotations of which must be understood. These are the words: air, earth, sea, quake, heaven, stars and war. The symbols are employed in the following meaning : ***air,*** the sphere of life and influence; ***earth,*** the place of the nations; ***sea,*** society described as either troubled and tossed or placid and peaceful; ***quake,*** the political shaking of the nations; ***heaven,*** the governments, authorities and dominions; ***stars,*** the rulers and officials of governments; ***war,*** the upheavals in the governments and among inhabitants of the earth (various provinces of the empire); and the conflicts between the heathen authorities and the church in the waging of the persecutions of the saints. With this nomenclature defined, the

various facets of the phraseology employed in the next few verses can be explained.

1. There was war in heaven: ***Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels.*** The war in heaven meant the hostilities which developed with the tributary governments of Rome. Two classes were here placed in opposition--Michael and his angels are put in opposition to the dragon and his angels.

The dragon and his angels represented all of the powers of paganism and darkness. Conversely, Michael and his angels were representative of the truth and the light of Christianity. Michael was represented in **Dan_12:1-13** as defender and guardian of Israel. So Michael and his angels were the representatives and protectors of the woman-the persecuted church. They fought against the dragon and his evil angels by the means of the war between the satellites of Rome, because these conflicts within the Roman empire diverted the emperor's attention from the persecutions of the woman and gave respite to the church. History verifies this outbreak of wars within the Roman empire during this period of persecution; and in **Mat_24:1-51** Jesus foretold that such wars would exist to **"shorten these days." -** Foy Wallace

:Rev_12:8
Rev_12:8

they . . The dragon and his angels. The Dragon lost his place in heaven - Job_2:1
(Literal? or symbolic? what is the impact?)

no place in heaven . . The victory of Michael and the holy angels over the **dragon** and its coconspirators may symbolize the triumphant power of Jesus' cross (cf. Col_2:15), or a subsequent defeat of demonic forces flowing from Christ's victory at the cross, or the original casting of Satan and his demons out of heaven. - ESVSB

> In John's vision Satan's forces proved weaker, and God threw them out of heaven. Consequently Satan no longer had access to heaven (cf. Rev_20:11; Dan_2:35; Zec_10:10). God will no longer hear Satan's accusations against believers. - Constable

there was no longer a place found for them in heaven . . This implies that Satan has been in heaven for some time (cf. **Job 1–2; Zech. 3**; and 1Ki_22:21). Notice the PLURAL PRONOUN, which implies other angels in league with Satan. - Utley

> Satan was defeated and neither was their place found any more in heaven. This means that the enemy not only was vanquished but driven from the field. - Zerr

:Rev_12:9
Rev_12:9

the great dragon . . = is identified as the old serpent, the Devil, Satan, etc. cf. 2Pe_2:4 ; Rev_20:2

cast out . . "Out" is not expressed— the sense is rather "cast down." - CBSC

hurled down . . Likely refers to Satan's defeat through Jesus' death and resurrection (Joh_12:31; Col_2:15). - NIVZSB

> Satan is banished from the divine council in heaven to earth, then to the abyss (Rev_20:1-3), then finally to the lake of fire (Rev_20:10).- FSB

the devil and Satan . . The Greek terminology used here— *diablos* (meaning "slanderer") and *satan* (meaning "accuser")—appropriately coincide with the description of the dragon's activities in Rev_12:10 - FSB

He is a malignant liar (Joh_8:44; 1Jn_3:8). His accusations against believers (v. 10) are unsuccessful because of Christ our Advocate (1Jn_2:1). - MSB

Here God identified the dragon as Satan. He called him the "great dragon" because he is fierce and cruel in nature. The title "serpent of old" stresses his crafty and subtile character (cf. Rev_20:2; Gen_3:1-5; 2Co_11:3). The name "Devil" means accuser or slanderer. - Constable

"This name for the evil one would have made a specially strong impact in the first century, for there was a well-known and well-hated figure called the *delator*, the paid informer. He made his living by accusing people before the 0authorities." (Morris, p. 161. Cf. Barclay, 2:102.)

who deceives the whole world . . This describes the mission of the evil one. The best book that I have read on the development of Satan in the Bible, from servant to enemy, is A. B. Davidson's *A Theology of the Old Testament*, pp. 300–306. Satan's mission is described in 2Co_4:4; 1Pe_5:8; Rev_13:14; Rev_19:20; Rev_20:3, Rev_20:8; Rev_20:10; 2Jn_1:7. It is hard to conceive of Satan as a servant of God but compare 2 Sam. 24:1 with 1 Chr. 21:1.- Utley

[Only the Apostle John supplied information bilingually in the New Testament (cf. Joh_1:38, Joh_1:42; Joh_4:25; Joh_6:1; Joh_9:7; Joh_11:16; Joh_19:13, Joh_19:17, Joh_19:20; Joh_20:16; Rev_1:7; Rev_3:14; Rev_9:11; Rev_12:9).]

Rev_12:10
Rev_12:10

A key verse as to the time of this WAR Rev_12:7, ... -- Salvation is now come! Salvation through Christ, and the establishment of His kingdom, the church. Mar_9:1; Act_2:1-3; Heb_12:28; Rev_1:9; Col_1:13.

a loud voice . . See on Rev_6:6 : and cf. Rev_11:12 : the word "loud" here is literally "great" as there. Here, "our brethren" seems to imply, that it is a number of angels that speak. - CBSC

for the accuser of our brethren . . This shows that the voice of v. 10 was not an angel, but apparently believers, possibly the martyrs of Rev_6:9-11 - Utley

now . . (the time) **..** i.e. Pentecost. The full message of salvation through the gospel was preached by the apostle Peter, Acts 2, after Jesus' ascention back into heaven.

salvation, and strength . . Rather, ***the salvation and the might and the kingdom of****.…*" - CBSC

power . . Differs from the preceding word "strength" or "might" as implying that it is derivative— cf. 1Co_15:27-28. - CBSC

This is a literary equivalent to Rev_11:15-18 - Utley
An outburst of praise. - Constable

accuser . . - Job_2:1 What did Satan do in the presence of God? He finds fault with the brethren!

accuses them before our God day and night . . Satan's role in the divine council was to accuse continually (see v. 8), but he rebelled from this proper role and became evil. Here, he carries on his original work, but

outside of God's jurisdiction. -FSB [Not sure of this view.]

accuser . . *See note on v. 9*. Satan will no longer accuse believers before the throne of God because he will no longer have access to heaven. - MSB

is cast down . . (κατεβλήθη) The aorist tense. Once and for all. Compare Joh_12:31; Joh_16:8, Joh_16:11.

÷Rev_12:11
Rev_12:11

*** Devotional though:
Three Ways to Overcome Satan - (1Jo_1:5-9)
1) by the blood of the Lamb
this answers the sin problem
2) by the testimony of the apostles
power of God's word in our lives - Mtt 4
Jesus knew the word, we need to memorize words that helps us.
3) they loved not their lives
Realized more to life than this life
They had a proper love
They had proper priorities

they overcame . . This verse contains the second stanza of the song of praise begun in verse 10. "***They***" refers to believers whom Satan formerly accused before God. Jesus Christ's death is the basis for believers' ultimate victory over Satan even though he has accused us. - Constable

overcame . . (conquered) . . The knowledge that Satan could be defeated by faith, witness, and perseverance would have been a tremendous encouragement to the members of the seven churches and others being pressured to compromise spiritually. - FSB

by the blood . . More literally ***because of the blood … and because of the word***. - CBSC

blood of the Lamb . . No accusation can stand against those whose sins have been forgiven because of Christ's sacrificial death (see Rom_8:33-39). - MSB

they did not love their lives until death . . They were willing to be martyred for the sake of remaining faithful to Christ. - FSB

they loved not their lives . . St Joh_12:25, St Luk_14:26 are the closest parallels among the similar sayings of our Lord. Here, as in all of them, the word for "life" is that elsewhere rendered "soul"—not the same as that used for "life eternal" in St John. - CBSC

First century believers and their families faced horrible deaths. Their faith in Christ was stronger than their fear of death (cf. Rev_2:10; Mar_8:35; Luk_14:26; Joh_12:25). - Utley

÷Rev_12:12
Rev_12:12

rejoice, you heavens . . The heavens should rejoice because Satan has been expelled from their midst. - FSB

Woe to the inhabiters of . . We should read, **Woe to the earth and the sea!**—the sense is clear, though the construction is peculiar, which led to the alteration. *When* and *in what sense* the Devil's power was, or will be, at once lessened and brought into more terrible neighbourhood to earth, we can hardly venture to say. - CBSC

inhabitants of the earth and the sea . . It appears that Jewish writers (the eastern mind) thought in terms of Palestine-Israel as "***the earth"*** and "***the sea"*** as all the rest of the world, that is, those who lived "*across the seas"* as we westerners would say.

he has a short time . . The devil had but a ***short time*** till he was to be chained, and lose his miraculous powers till he is loosed near the end, (Rev_20:3).

a short time ... cf. Mat_24:22; Mar_13:20. In the wilderness 3 1/2 years.

> [Most likely it was from time Satan was cast out (Jesus' ascension) till the fall of Judaism, one generation, or 40 years (AD 30 to AD 70, Mat_24:34). After this time Satan's power, such as "demon possession" is limited, and he has no miraculous power, only man's nature and Satan's influence and persuasion.]

but a short time . . viz. the time, apparently, between Christ's first coming, which broke his strength, and His second, which will destroy his kingdom for ever. It seems unlikely that the "little season" of Rev_20:3 is here referred to. - CBSB

> **knowing that he has *only* a short time . .** This seems to refer to the time from the Ascension of Christ (cf. Act_1:9-11) to the Second Coming which John and the first century Christians thought would be in a short period of time. It has been almost 2,000 years now; every generation has the hope of the any-moment return of the Lord. Believers were warned of this delay in II Thessalonians and Mat_24:45-51. Be careful that the delay does not reduce faith (cf. 2Pe_3:3-4). - Utley
>
> This is the usual view of those taking a late date for Revelation. However the internal evidence and context of the book shows that the reference for the coming of Christ "quickly" (Rev_22:20) was to render His justment upon Jerusalem and the Jewish leadership for rejecting Him and His mission. This suggests that the "short time" is that time until the fall of the Harlot, the Babylon (Jerusalem), which is the judgment of the book (and it prefigures the final judgment of Satan in Rev_20:11-15) See Rev_22:7; Rev_22:6; Rev_22:10. - WG

÷Rev_12:13
Rev_12:13

when the dragon saw . . ("realized" NET, NLT) The scene picks up from Rev_12:9.

he persecuted .. (pursued) . . The Greek word for "pursue" can also mean "persecute." Since the woman is given two wings (Rev_12:14), "pursue" fits the context better. However, Rev_12:17 indicates that he will soon persecute her offspring. - FSB

he persecuted . . Satan persecuted God's faithful, the woman introduced in Rev_12:1.

the woman . . Possibly originally the woman referred to the OT believing community; now it refers to the NT people of God (cf. Rev_12:17; Rev_13:7). In *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Vol. 6, A. T. Robertson calls her "the true Israel on earth" (p. 395). - Utley

the woman . . See note on Rev 12.1 for more about "the woman."

÷Rev_12:14
Rev_12:14

two wings . . Exo_19:4, deliverance by God.

wings of a great eagle . . Not actual birds' wings, but a graphic depiction of God's providential protection of Israel (cf. Exo_19:4). Wings often speak of protection (cf. Deu_32:9-12; Psa_91:4; Isa_40:31). - MSB

eagles — probably vulture-like griffins—were the largest birds known in Palestine. - MSB

two wings … eagle . . *S*hould be **"the** two wings of **the** great eagle." The word is, however, no doubt used generically. - CBSC

the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman . . These eagle wings are symbolic of God's protection and provision (cf. Exo_19:4; Deu_32:11; Deu_33:12 and Isa_40:31). This may be another allusion to the new exodus. - Utley

so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place . . The wilderness is seen as a place of divine protection, - Utley

> God bore the Israelites "on eagles wings" when He enabled them to escape from Pharaoh (Exo_19:4; Deu_32:11; cf. Isa_40:31). Therefore we should probably understand the eagle to be metaphorical describing the way God will save them, namely, with strength and safety. - Constable

a time (1) and times (2) and half a time (1/2) = 3 1/2 years, or 42 months, 1260 days. cf. Rev_11:2-3.

> It is noted that the Christians in Jerusalem fled into the wilderness east of the Jordan river, to Pella, where they were protected from Jewish persecution during the 3 1/2 year Roman war which began in AD 67. See Luk_21:20-21;

from the dragon . . Literally *from the serpent;* also in Rev_12:15. See Rev_12:9 - NLTSB

÷Rev_12:15
Rev_12:15

> **12:15–16** These verses describe the futile efforts of Satan to destroy the woman. These two verses should probably be understood as a metaphor for an attempted destruction of God's people (compare note on Rev 12:1). - FSB

spewed water out . . Rivers of adversity - Psa_124:4 This may be a metaphor connected to God's wrath in Hos_5:10.

flood . . We have not means for interpreting this description in detail. All we can say certainly is, that it describes the providential foiling of Satanic attempts at the destruction of Israel. Perhaps the most plausible suggestion of a definite meaning of the "flood" [better translated **river**] is that the Christians of Jerusalem, in their flight to "the mountains" (St Mat_24:16 &c.) of Pella, were delivered by a miracle or special providence from the dangers of the passage of Jordan: - CBSC

÷Rev_12:16
Rev_12:16

Help given.

The earth helped . . Nature fought for Barak and Deborah against the Canaanite city of Hazor and her military general, Sisera: (1) the rain stopped their chariots (cf. Jdg_5:4) and (2) even the stars (thought of as angelic powers) fought against Sisera (cf. Jdg_5:20). - Utley

earth … swallowing . . May recall the judgments on Egypt (Exo_15:12) and on Korah's followers (Num_16:30-33). - NIVZSB

÷Rev_12:17
Rev_12:17

went away to make war . . The phrase "to make war" is metaphorical of spiritual, political, and economic oppositions. This is an allusion to Dan_7:21 (cf. Rev_11:7; Rev_13:7). This persecution is the very evidence of the church's victory through Christ (cf. Php_1:28). - Utley

make war with the rest of her offspring . . The evil one tried to destroy the Messianic community by (1) destroying the Messiah, (2) destroying the mother church, and (3) by destroying all Messianic followers. Utley

the rest . . The remnant, the righteous faithful, by this time is now the church.

The Devil's persecution of God's people.

those who keep God's commands . . Cf. Rev_14:12; 1Jn_3:24. - NIVZSB

testimony . . Cf. Rev_1:2, Rev_1:9; Rev_19:10; Rev_20:4. - NIVZSB

those who obey . . This description shows this reference is to the church. They will be attacked by the enemy, but they will be spiritally protected. Rev_12:6.

That war still continues today on different fronts and various avenues. Chapter 13 deals with specific enemies he employed.

[Rev. 12:18] "And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore." . . Most translations put this as the beginning of Rev_13:1.

÷Rev_13:1
Rev_13:1

Chapter 13 - The Emerging of the Dragon's Helpers
With the Dragon are: The First Beast and the Second Beast

The Sea Beast, Rev_13:1-8
The Patience and Faith of the Saints, Rev_1:1-10
The Earth Beast, Rev_13:11-18

*** POINTS: We must remember the churches in the first century to whom this was written were closer to the mind-set that would understand these symbols better than our remote western minds.**

Also there were men among the churches with the spiritual gift of "wisdom" who could interpret these symbols to the churches (1Co_12:8; Rev_13:18; Rev_17:9) and tell definitively who was the beast. These hidden symbols would then baffle heathen readers and provide some protection from persecution.

And I . . The "I" could be "He", i.e., the dragon. The beast out of the bottomless pit, Rev_11:7.
Textual comment: ASV = "And he stood" i.e., the Dragon, and "I saw" (It appears the "subject" of the one standing on the seashore should be the antecedent noun, the Dragon of Rev_12:17).

And I saw . . The dragon is standing on the sand of the sea when John sees the beast rise up out of sea. Then he sees another beast rise up out of the earth, Rev_13:11.

The dragon stood on the seashore watching a beast come out of the sea, in John's vision (cf. Dan_7:2-3; Dan_7:7-8; Dan_7:19-27). The implication is that the dragon summoned the beast out of the sea.[416] Evidently this was part of his plan to destroy the rest of the woman's offspring (Rev_12:17). - Constable

beast rise out of the sea . . The first beast **-** Rev_13:1-8 A beast from the sea.
[Occassionally the "earth" represents the "home" for the Jews, and "the sea" represents all the gentiles nations or the rest of the world. (Some conclude that "the waters" mentioned in Rev_17:15 interpret "the sea," so that it means "peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues"; *Lenski*.). So this "beast" represents a foreign or gentile power.]
This beast represents the Roman Empire, the fourth empire that Daniel sees in Dan_7:3-7; Dan_7:7; Rev_13:1-2

a beast . . The description of the beast is reminiscent of Dan_7:1-7 FSB

a beast . . Lit. "a monster" (cf. Rev_11:7), which describes a vicious, killing animal.

seven heads and ten horns . . Represents political and military power or "kings" (Rev_17:12; cf. Dan_7:24). Recalls the description of the dragon in Rev_12:3 and the fourth beast in Dan_7:7. - NIVZSB

a beast rise up out of the sea . . Until this stage of vision the dragon's activities had been confined to Palestine, but now a beast rises out of the sea as the instrument by which to implement and to execute his diabolical plans. He summoned aid from Rome.
The beast had ***seven heads*** and ***ten horns,*** and was the symbol of the great power of Rome. The ten horns represented the ten divisions of the Roman empire, the emperor of which was seated on a throne situated on the seven hills of Rome, the universal symbol of the imperial city. - Wallace

upon his horns ten crowns . . The ***crowns*** represent its political and military power (cp. Rev_17:3, Rev_17:7-11; Dan_7:7, Dan_7:19-20)- NLTSB

the name . . Read, **names**, as in the margin. Cf. Rev_17:3. The reference perhaps is to the blasphemous assumption of divine honours by the Roman emperors—most markedly (at least up to St John's time) by Gaius. - CBSC

blasphemous names . . The Greek manuscripts are equally divided between the PLURAL (ms A) "names" (NRSV, NJB) and SINGULAR (mss P^{47}, C, P) "name" (NKJV, TEV). Whichever is true, this is obviously an allusion to Dan_7:8, Dan_7:11; Dan_7:20; Dan_7:25 or Dan_11:36. These blasphemous titles are connected with the (1) claim of deity or (2) evil titles (cf. Rev_17:3). - Utley

The Dragon works through this Sea-Beast described next.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

IDENTIFICATION OF REVELATION SYMBOLS--

The Dragon -- (Rev_12:9) is Satan, the Devil.

The Beast -- Rome --Identified by Daniel's prophecy, **Dan_7:3-7; Dan_7:7; Rev_13:1-2**

The Second Beast (False Prophet) -- Religious elements catering to the beast and supporting the persecution against God's people. (Rev_13:11)

Babylon (the Harlot)-- Jerusalem and the Jewish system (See Rev_11:8)

The Woman on the Moon-- (Rev_12:1) represents the righteous people on earth. (In OT they are called 'the remnant'. In NT time it becomes the church.)

The man child (Rev_12:4-5) -- Christ

666 -- Rev_13:18 the number of a man (undoubted the seven churches of Asia knew who it represented, probably Nero Caesar as his names equals 666.

Rev_13:2
Rev_13:2

now the beast . . "A Bear-footed Leopard with a Lion's mouth" - 7 heads - 10 horns - 10 crowns.
This beast is made up of that seen in Daniel 7, the 4th kingdom = The Roman Empire, ROME. The Roman empire took on much of the characteristics of the three former empires.

The fourth beast in Dan. 7 is not described as like any ordinary animal: here he is described as combining the likeness of the other three. ... The Rome of St John's day *was* "like unto" a Greek empire, and at the same time embodied elements derived from Babylon, and from Persia. - CBSC

The **beast** looks **like a leopard** but has feet **like a bear's**, a mouth **like a lion's mouth**, and **ten horns**, and it wages "war on the saints" (Rev_13:7). - ESVSB

leopard = known for swiftness; (Hab_1:8) Like the third beast in Daniel's vision (Dan_7:6).

leopard . . A metaphor for ancient Greece, alluding to the Greeks' swiftness and agility as their military

moved forward in conquest, particularly under Alexander the Great (cf. Dan_7:6). - MSB

feet of a bear . . Like the second beast in Daniel's vision (Dan_7:5)

bear . . A metaphor for the ancient Medo-Persian Empire, depicting that kingdom's ferocious strength, combined with its great stability (cf. Dan_7:5). -MSB

mouth of a lion . . Like the first beast in Daniel's vision (Dan_7:4).

lion . . A metaphor for the ancient Babylonian Empire, referring to the Babylonians' fierce, all-consuming power as they extended their domain (cf. Dan_7:4). - MSB

dragon gave him his power . . Daniel identifies this beast doing the Dragon's bidding in - Dan_7:7 ff. Dan_7:23; Dan_8:9 as the fourth empire, Rome.

his throne . . (seat) Better, **throne.**

great authority . . The beast is a vassal who acts on behalf of and with the destructive force of the dragon. Since the dragon bestows his power on the beast, the beast shares many of the dragon's characteristics. - FSB

But it was Rome doing the Dragon's bidding.

The Dragon works through the Beast as his agent; the war is of Satan's making, but the Empire is his tool for waging it. The Seer regards the persecuting Emperors as vassals of Satan; - Swete

authority . . The words rendered "power" and "authority" here are the same as "strength" and "power" in Rev_12:10.

Rev_13:3
Rev_13:3

I saw . . Should be omitted from the Greek text, but of course must be supplied in sense. - CBSC

one of his heads . . Comparing Rev_17:10-11, it has been thought that this indicates the *death of Nero*, - CBSC
That ***one of the heads*** had been fatally ***wounded*** but ***was healed*** has led to its identification with Nero. - NLTSB

one of the heads . . Is this a reference to one of the Caesars or to the Roman Empire itself.?
With the suicide of Nero it looked like possible civil war in the Roman empire which would tear it apart. Three generals, Galba, Otho, and Vespasian vied for the leadership. Vespasian, who had been leading the war against the Jews won out. and the Empire revived.

mortally wounded . . It was a fatal wound which would have killed the beast.
It should be observed that the wounded "head" of v.3 is elsewhere in the chapter a wound of the whole beast (Rev_13:12; Rev_13:14). - EBCNT

his deadly wound . . Lit., **the stroke of his death**. ["*as slain to death"*]- CBSC

its fatal wound had been healed . . The civil was that could have destroyed the strength and might of the Roman Empire was averted and under Vespasian and later his sons, Titus and Domitian, it regain all it's strength

and glory.

all the world marveled . .
Premillennialists take the beast's wound as a parody of the Lamb's wound (Rev_5:6) and resurrection and t***he whole earth was astonished*** should have been the response to Christ's resurrection.

÷Rev_13:4
Rev_13:4

worshipped the dragon . . Remember the Dragon is Satan. The Beast is Rome. With the Roman emperors claiming deity people are actually worshiping Satan. Worshiping anyone or anything taking the place of the Living God is worshiping Satan.

who gave authority . . Rather, *because he gave his authority***.** The power of the beast was Satanic.

worshiped the beast . . . Likely a veiled reference to empeor worship. - FSB
Likely refers to idolatrous emperor worship, which John holds to be satanic (see note on Rev_2:13). **-** NIVZSB

Who is like the beast? . . People praised the might and glory of Rome in the likeness of Israel's praises of Yahweh's uniqueness in the Old Testament (e.g., Exo_15:11; Psa_35:10; Isa_40:25).

Who is able to make war with him? . . Rome was conquoring all! From Britan to the Middle East. It was the longest lasting Empire the world had seen. But eventually it faced God's judgment as well. But the answer to this question will come in chapter 19. (Rev_19:20)
Remember, that individuals will face God in judgment at the end when Christ returns, but nations face God's wrath and judgment in the life time.

Who can wage war against it? . . Ironically recalls Rev_12:7-8, where Michael and the angels overpower the dragon.

÷Rev_13:5
Rev_13:5

given to him . . The beast of verse 4. The phrase "was given" would indicate that this was within God's permissive will. Rom_13:1-3. Because God allows something doesn't mean He approves. God even uses evil empires for His own purpose, i.e. Assyria and Babylon in the OT time.

mouth . . Those who spoke for the empire. Roman emperors made themselves "gods."

speaking great things and blasphemies . . A further allusion to Dan 7 (compare Dan_7:8, Dan_7:11; Dan_7:20). - FSB

forty-two months . . The final 3½ years—1,260 days—of the Daniel's 70th week (Dan_9:26-27), was a time of great tribulation for both Jerusalem and the saints, Mat_24:15; Mat_24:21-22; Mat_24:34 . During this period Nero was also persecuting Christians killing both Peter and Paul, see Rev_2:13.

forty and two months . . --Rev_13:5. Here is the third repetition of the *thousand two hundred and threescore days* of chapters eleven and twelve; and, as previously commented, it embraces the exact mathematical period from the date of Nero's order to Vespasion for the invasion of Judea to the fall of Jerusalem. This was the period

of time assigned to the emperor beast for the accomplishment of the destruction of Jerusalem and the obliteration of the Jewish state. - Wallace

÷Rev_13:6
Rev_13:6

And opened his mouth in blasphemy . . Especially Nero did this from AD 64 when Rome burned and he blamed the Christians to June AD 68 when Nero killed himself. This is perhaps what Paul prophesied in AD 51, 2Th_2:4.

a mouth speaking arrogant words . . This is an allusion to (1) "the beast" in Dan_7:8, Dan_7:11, Dan_7:20, Dan_7:25; Dan_11:30; ... "the man of sin" in 2Th_2:4. - Utley

his name . . This identifies God and summarizes all His attributes (cf. Exo_3:13-14). - FSB

his tabernacle . . the church.

those who dwell in heaven . . The True Living God and His angels. Act_17:24.

and them that dwell . . "*And*" should apparently be omitted, so that "them that tabernacle in Heaven" is in apposition with the "tabernacle" of God itself. - CBSC

them that dwell . . The identification of God's **dwelling** as **those who dwell in heaven** confirms that the measured sanctuary (Rev_11:1) symbolized the worshipers in it. Likewise, the "holy city" is the Lamb's church-bride (Rev_21:2, Rev_21:9-27; see Eph_2:22). - ESVSB

dwelling place . . Likely refers not to a physical temple but to God's people "who live in heaven" (Rev_11:1; Rev_21:3). - NIVZSB

÷Rev_13:7
Rev_13:7

make war with the saints . . Nero blamed the Christians in AD 64 and began his persecution. Jewish Christians got caught in the Jewish war as well. Paul accused of turning the world upside down, Act_17:6.
cf. Mat_24:16-22;

war with the saints . . For the sense cf. Dan_7:21 and Dan_11:7: the latter proves that "the Saints" (i.e. the holy people of God) are to be understood as Christians, not as Israelites. - CBSC

> This war on His saints is mentioned in Dan_7:21, Dan_7:25. It refers to the physical death of God's people. There is a time when the enemy seems to be the victor (like Calvary), but Revelation and Daniel teach that it is short-lived! Notice that God's people are protected from the wrath of God, but not from the wrath of the beast. God allows evil an apparent victory in order to reveal its true intentions and nature. - Utley

every tribe, tongue, and nation . . Some think this is simply describing the extent of the Roman Empire while others affirm that Satan's influence and sin has gone into every conor and pocket of the world.

÷Rev_13:8
Rev_13:8

worship him . . Emperor worship -- burning incense to the Caesar.

Book of Life . . Rev_21:27;

slain from the foundation of the world . . This translation could mean that Christ's saving death was always part of God's plan of salvation (compare 1Pe_1:19-20). - FSB

The Lord Jesus who died to purchase the salvation of those whom God had chosen was fulfilling an eternal plan. - MSB

The phrase *"**the foundation of the earth**"* is used several times in the NT (cf. Mat_25:34; Joh_17:24; Eph_1:4; 1Pe_1:19-20). There is also a very similar phrase in Mat_13:35; Luk_11:50; Heb_4:3; Heb_9:26 and Rev_17:8. - Utley

÷Rev_13:9
Rev_13:9

let him hear . . Repeats the exhortation from chs. 2 and 3 (see Rev_2:7 and note). This phrase omits "*what the Spirit says to the churches*" as in the 7 letters to the churches.

The fact that these phrases relate to the churches seems to imply that the next phrase (Rev_13:10) is also directed to the people of God. - Utley

÷Rev_13:10
Rev_13:10

leads into captivity shall go into captivity, he who kills .. A proverb repeated by the Lord Himself in Mat_26:52. Evil has within it it's own destructive power. Gen_9:6 ; Jer_43:11; Mat_26:52 .

This proverb gives assurance to Christians that Rome itself, or any evil, will end up receiving what it gives out.

here is patience (perseverance) . . A bright ray of sunshine in this chapter. Be steadfast - in the midst of beasts and dragons, "God is not mocked!" The saints know that God is just and will deal with his enemies himself, it is not in our hands.

÷Rev_13:11

Rev_13:11

another beast . . This second beast (the land beast, or false prophet) is a lieutenant to the first, who will enforce the worship of the first beast, and sentencing to death those who disobey, Rev_13:15, and by requiring a mark on the hand or forehead in order that men may buy and sell, Rev_13:16-17., it acts like trade guilds, or a state religion that requires obedience to obtain certification to do business.

like a lamb . . The second beast resembles the Lamb, but its lying words expose its real nature; it is **like a dragon** (cf. Rev_12:15; Rev_16:13-14; Rev_19:20). - ESVSB

The Land Beast -
Looked like a lamb, spoke like a dragon.
Two horns like a lamb (small), later identified as "the False Prophet".

This beast appears to be the Religious Arm that brought about the worship of Rome. The Pagan worship system.

I think that today we would refer to the likeness of this beast as "*the media*" - that is, the current Roman historians, newsmakers, and gossip spreaders were beginning to distinguish Christians from the Jews and saying all manner of ill things about them; that they hated the gods (were atheists) were cannibals (ate one on Sundays), etc. and railed against the worship of other gods (against drinking bouts and sexual orgies).

[This land beast would not be Jewish, for that is pictured next under the term of the Harlot, Babylon!]

÷Rev_13:12
Rev_13:12

authority of the first beast . . This beast acted with authority from Rome, thus probably state sanctioned religious authorities, or state sponsored trade guilds.

causes .. worship the first beast . . Also called a False Prophet supporting the beast, Rome.

Pliny the Younger wrote to the emperor Trajan (AD 98–117) that people charged with being Christians were summoned under threat of execution to pray to Roman gods, make offerings to the emperor's statue, and revile Christ's name. - NIVZSB

who deadly wound was healed . . Rome survived a possible death keel from civil war by opposing generals trying to claim the emperor-ship of Rome and was saved and revived by Vespasian and his sons.

÷Rev_13:13
Rev_13:13

great wonders . . Perhaps such as Simon the Sorcer had been noted form, Act_8:8-9 and Bar-Jesus in Act_13:6-8 ; and Act_14:11.
Mat_24:24; Mar_13:22; 2Th_2:9.

makes fire comes down . . This identifies the land-beast as making religious claims and asserting itself like miraculous working prophets of old, as Elijah did in 1Ki_18:38 and 2Ki_1:10-12.
These counterfeit signs are done to give credence to the first beast.
Amazing wonders are not automatically signs of God (cf. Exo_7:8-13.

making fire come down from heaven . . The false prophet (the second beast) counterfeits God's judgments to bolster the specious claim that the first beast is divine (cf. 1Ki_18:38; 2 Kings 1:10 - ESVSB

÷Rev_13:14
Rev_13:14

he deceives . . *Deception* is the name of the game for false religions,
Mat_24:23-24

signs which he was granted to do . . Something that was within God's permissive will. (Rev_13:14; cf.

Rev_19:20; Deu_13:1-4; 2Th_2:9) God is able to use evil to accomplish his purposes.

make an image to the beast . . Another allusion from Dan_3:4-6.
The false prophet worked as the beast's "Minister of Propaganda." (Bruce, p. 653)

In John's day, images, busts, and statues were set up throughout the empire in tribute to the deified emperor. This was especially prevalent in areas where the emperor would likely never travel. Having these images gave an identity to the people's god and promoted nationalism throughout the land. In contrast to the gods in the Greek and Roman pantheons, the emperor and the benefits he bestowed were thought to be tangible manifestations of divinity and goodness. Christians who refused to take part in emperor worship were branded as ungrateful, unpatriotic, unholy, and undeserving of the emperor's benevolence.- FSB

wounded by the sword . . This seems to affirm the wound was from warfare. Civil war within the Roman Empire.

÷Rev_13:15
Rev_13:15

give breath to the image . . Possibly hyperbolic language used to express the authority that the false prophet and the images had. The command to worship and the threat upon the disobedient was so real that the images themselves seemed to be demanding allegiance. - FSB

image of the beast . . The worship of Caesar images held the power of life and death.

as many as would not worship . .
Pliny the Younger wrote to the emperor Trajan (AD 98–117) that people charged with being Christians were summoned under threat of execution to pray to Roman gods, make offerings to the emperor's statue, and revile Christ's name. - NIVZSB

÷Rev_13:16
Rev_13:16

rich and poor . . The trade guilds made sacrificial offerings that Christians could not engage in. Each trade and every city had its patron "god." Certificates were given to show that such a one had participated in sacrifice to the gods and to Caesar. Without such a certificate one could not legally trade and sell.

The Christians were considered "atheists" because they would not recognize Caesar as god.

mark .. hand..forehead . . As the saints were sealed unto God in 7:3, here the evil one mimics God's action by marking his own. The Greek word implies an animal brand or a seal on a governmental document.
Because of the location of the sign, some have thought that it was a perversion of a Jewish phylactery (cf. Deu_6:8). Others assume that it relates to the first century Roman culture, in which slaves were branded with their owner's name or soldiers tattooed in honor of their general. - Utley

a mark . . In the ancient world religious branding was a common way to display devotion to a particular deity. The Greek word *charagma* (meaning "mark, brand, stamp") describes the imperial logo on commercial documents, merchandise, and coinage. - FSB

mark . . Demonstrates absolute loyalty and perhaps ownership. There is no neutrality: one has either the beast's mark or God's seal (Rev_7:3-4; Rev_14:1). It may reflect the ancient practice of branding or tattooing

disobedient slaves, soldiers, and loyal adherents to certain pagan cults. - NIVZSB

marked on the right hand or the forehead . . The Israelites bore God's law on their hands and foreheads to signify his authority over their deeds and thoughts (Deu_6:8). Neither the beast's mark nor the seal of God on believers' foreheads (cf. Rev_7:3; Rev_14:1; cf. also Exo_28:36-38; Eze_9:4) have to be understood as physical features, though they may be that. Both symbolize the spiritual control of heart allegiance and behavior, either by the beast or by the Lamb; but God's seal secures safety. - ESVSB

÷Rev_13:17
Rev_13:17

no one buy or sell . . The beast no only demands worship and also controls financial dealings.

able to buy or to sell . . There would be economic depression and poverty for those who would not bear the mark. The church in Smyrna may have already been feeling these effects (see note on Rev_2:9). - FSB

The mark of the beast . . see ***notes*** on previous verse, Rev_13:16.
* If the mark of God on his people was not literal why believe this one is?

The idea comes from owners branding their slaves.

[In 3 Maccebees 2:28 -99 , a decree from Antiochus was to have had pagan gods names tattooed (branded) on their bodies ... it reads:

> 28"None of those who do not sacrifice shall enter their sanctuaries, and all Jews shall be subjected to a registration involving poll tax and to the status of slaves. Those who object to this are to be taken by force and put to death; 29those who are registered are also to be branded on their bodies by fire with the ivy-leaf symbol of Dionysus, and they shall also be reduced to their former limited status."]

the number of his name . . In Hebrew and in Greek, *letters* were used for *numerals*, every letter having its own proper significance as a number. - CBSC

÷Rev_13:18
Rev_13:18

This calls for wisdom . . We may not know for sure for two reasons: "wisdom" has the definite article and may be referring to 1) supernatural wisdom and 2) understanding - 1Co_12:8 And just because we don't know for sure, doesn't mean the seven churches of Asia did not know.

There were in all of the churches the spiritually endowed teachers, who possessed the **"spiritual gifts"** of the inspiration era, as recorded in chapters twelve and thirteen of First Corinthians. In the catalog of such gifts were listed the special endowments of **"wisdom," "discernment," and "understanding."** This agrees with the words of the text, ***here is wisdom,*** and ***let him that hath*** understanding count the number. These supernaturally endowed teachers in the churches could certainly decipher the cryptogram. - Wallace

it is the number of a man . . John then gives a clue as to the identity of the owner mark by employing *gematria*—the practice of assigning numbers to letters of the alphabet. His number is 666. John hides the man's identity, perhaps because revealing the name would place him and his readers in danger.

I believe it to be the number of **Nero Caesar** = 666. He gave the order for the destruction of Jerusalem.

Nero Caesar (adopted by many modern interpreters) is convincing - CBSC
"Nero Caesar," written in Hebrew characters, add up to 666 - ESVSB
The reference could be to "Nero Caesar," whose name if written in Hebrew characters adds up to 666.- NIVZSB
One of the most popular interpretations is a Hebrew rendition of "Neron Caesar," which equals 666 - Lenski

No name could be more conclusive and decisive than that of Nero Caesar--the ruling emperor. The Hebrew tongue was employed in **Rev_16:16** in the symbol of Armageddon, and for less reason than justifies Hebrew ciphers in this case. In **Rev_17:11** the beast was visualized as the sixth ruling emperor in succession from Julius Caesar. - Wallace

The prophets and teachers in the New Testament churches were not professional cryptographers, but being the recipients of **"spiritual gifts"** by apostolic impartation, they possessed inspired powers to discern that which the ordinary mind could not discover. It is not without reason that **1Co_12:8** and **1Co_13:2** would include the necessary power to decipher the code of **Rev_13:18** to the members of the churches involved in these calamitous developments and trying experiences, which were so immediately present with them, but so remotely past to us. - Wallace

You can see from various commentaries and their alphabetical tables that there are many suggestions made about the identity of the "666."

[Modern "prophets" have applied the 666 to Kissinger, Hitler, Ronald Wilson Reagan, etc.]

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Rev. 13 *is full of gloom and despair - But Revelation doesn't end with ch. 13. Sometimes our lives may have some gloom and despair, but it doesn't end that way.*
Message: *Everything that could Christians and their faith - is in the end destroyed itself!*

Ch. 14 *is the counterpart to ch. 13. A message of Hope and Comfort - the Lord and His Host!*

Rev_14:1

Rev_14:1

Rev. 13 *is full of gloom and despair - But Revelation doesn't end with ch. 13. Sometimes our lives may have some gloom and despair, but it doesn't end that way.*

Message: *Everything that could harm Christians and their faith - is in the end destroyed itself!*

Ch. 14 *is the counterpart to ch. 13. A message of Hope and Comfort - the Lamb and His Host!*

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Chapter 14 - God's Righteous Judgments (144,000)

The Beginning of Christianity, Rev_14:1-5
The Gospel is Preached, Rev_14:6-7
Babylon's Fall Proclaimed, Rev_14:8
Empire and Emperor Worshippers Warned, Rev_14:9-11
The Patience of Saints, Rev_14:12-13
The Reaping of the Good Harvest, Rev_14:14-16

The Reaping of the Vine of the Earth, Rev_14:17-20

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14:1–5 In vv. 1–5, the Lamb is pictured standing with His 144,000 troops (see 7:4 and note) on Mount Zion. This passage answers the question of what happens to those who refuse the mark of the beast (Rev_13:16): They are marked with the name of the Lamb and His Father, and they are victorious. -FSB

Rev_14:1

And I looked . . (Greek *kai eidon*) introduces three scenes in chapter 14 (vv. 1, 6, 14), as this phrase did twice in chapter 13 (vv. 1, 11). "Behold" (Gr. *idou*, cf. v. 14) calls special attention to the greatness of the sight that John saw here. - Constable

a lamb .. see note on Rev_5:6. A lamb (lit. "a little, pet lamb"). God required the Jews to bring the Passover lamb into their houses for 4 days, essentially making it a pet, before it was to be violently slain (Ex. 12:3, 6). This is the true Passover Lamb, God's Son (cf. Is. 53:7; Jer. 11:19; John 1:29). - MSB

Mount Zion . . Zion originally referred to the Jebusite stronghold captured by David (2Sa_5:6-7). It later came to symbolize the city of God, from which He exercises His reign (Isa_24:23; Heb_12:22). - FSB

on the mount Sion . . Probably the earthly one—the heavenly Jerusalem of chap. 21 has not yet appeared. And in Rev_11:7-8 we had an intimation that the seer's gaze was now directed to Jerusalem: Babylon, though *mentioned* in Rev_14:8 - CBSC

144,000 . . see Rev_7:4 The picture is from Eze_9:1-8

with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand . . This is the same group of the redeemed as in Rev_5:9; of the sealed in Rev_7:4-8; of those washed in the Lamb's blood in Rev_7:14-17. Therefore, in my opinion, this stands for the people of God, the saints, the church. For the full note on the identity of the 144,000, see Rev_7:4. - Utley

his Father's name . . Read, **His Name and His Father's Name**. Notice that it is assumed as understood, that the Lamb is the Son of God. See notes on Rev_3:12; Rev_7:3. - CBSC

written on their foreheads . . Deliberately contrasts the beast's mark in Rev_13:16-18 (compare Rev_7:3; Rev_9:4; Rev_22:4). - FSB

÷Rev_14:2
Rev_14:2

heard a voice . . (a sound) The Greek word used here can mean "sound" or "voice." It refers to the song of the 144,000 (Rev_14:3). - FSB

I heard a voice from heaven, like . . These descriptive phrases were used of God's voice in Eze_43:2, of Jesus' voice in Rev_1:15, and of the heavenly multitudes' voices in Rev_19:6. Often it is used to denote that the speaker is in heaven (cf. Rev_4:5; Rev_11:19; Rev_16:8). - Utley

a voice . . cf. Rev_1:15. It is not clear if this "voice" (singular) is the same as the "they" in verse 3. There, the "they" is the singing of the harpers who are redeemed and are playing and singing apparently a joyous song of

victory, Rev_14:8.

many waters . . NIV **rushing waters … thunder . .** Deafening, joyful praise by the heavenly multitude (Rev_19:6). **harpists.** See note on Rev_5:8; cf. Rev_15:2. - NIVZSB

like the sound of loud thunder . . The other thunderous voice in Revelation followed the Lamb's first initiation of judgment (see 6:1). - FSB

voice of harpers . . NASB "like Harpers"

The singers with their **harps** will reappear beside the sea of glass (Rev_15:2-4; see Rev_4:6); their song indicates that they are redeemed. - ESVSB

These people had died and were already with the Lord, which might explain why John did not include the content of their refrain for readers still in the battle of life (cp. 2Co_12:4). - NLTSB

as the voice … great thunder . . It was as loud and as *multitudinous* as these, but was harmonious, and apparently articulate. - CBSC

harpists playing on their harps . . Harps in Revelation often connote victory. It is later prophesied that [in Jerusalem] ... will no longer hear the sound of harps (Rev_18:22). - FSB

÷Rev_14:3
Rev_14:3

sang . . = or "were singing" present tense.

a new song . . - "as it were" A song that could not have been sung under the Mosaical dispensation. A song apparently about "redemption" by the Lamb of God, the Christ. Joh_1:29.

new song . . The song of redemption, which is being sung by all the redeemed saints in one gigantic choir. They are rejoicing over the accomplishment of God's entire redemptive work before Christ's return (cf. Psa_33:1-3; Psa_40:3; Psa_96:1; Psa_144:9-10; Psa_149:1; Luk_15:10; *see note on* Rev_5:9). - MSB

they sang a new song before the throne . . This is an allusion to Rev_5:9. The "they" could refer to (1) the angelic creatures who sing the song in Rev_5:9 or (2) the song of the one hundred and forty-four thousand in the concluding part of v. 3 and Rev_15:2. This new song is an allusion to Isa_42:10 and Psa_33:3; Psa_40:3; Psa_96:1; Psa_98:1; Psa_144:9; Psa_149:1. - Utley

144,000 . . This is another indication that **144,000** should not be taken as a literal number; they represent those who have been redeemed (see notes on Rev_7:1-17; Rev_7:4-8). - ESVSB

÷Rev_14:4
Rev_14:4

these . . Three occurrences of "these" (Greek. *houtoi*) in this verse identify the 144,000 - Constable

They have kept themselves as pure as virgins . . (literally *They are virgins who have not defiled themselves with women*): Referring to men as *virgins* is a metaphor for the faithfulness of God's people. The image might refer to the church as the virgin bride of Christ (see 2Co_11:2; Eph_5:25-27); it also suggests that the church constitutes soldiers in a holy war that are required to keep themselves chaste (see Deu_23:9-10; 1Sa_21:5). -

NLTSB

not defiled . . . These had not committed spiritual fornication with the Harlot of Rev_14:8.

for they are virgins . . Indicates that they have remained loyal to Christ and have not defiled themselves by compromising with the world (compare Rev_19:7-9; 2Co_11:2). - FSB

follow the Lamb. Recalls Jesus' teaching that disciples must adhere to his teaching and example, which entails endurance of suffering and hostility (Mar_8:34-36; Joh_10:3-4; 1Pe_2:21). - NIVZSB

who follow the Lamb . . This indicates partisanship [discipleship and service] for Jesus Christ. The victorious 144,000 are unwaveringly loyal to Him, whatever the cost (cf. Matt. 16:24; Mark 10:21; Luke 9:23; John 10:27; 12:26; 14:15). - MSB

redeemed . . who ***have been purchased*** for God. NLTSB

firstfruits . . The first fruits belonged to the Lord: Num_18:11-12 ff; The offering of the firstfruits served as an acknowledgment to God for His gracious provision at harvest time (see Exo_23:16, Exo_23:19).

The Jewish Christians (from the 12 tribes), not literal in number, but figurative, symbolic. The Jewish Christians were the first-fruits, but there were other sheep also ... Joh_10:16. Seen earlier in Rev_7:4

Some see firstfruits as the first large group of redeemed Israel. - MSB

. Firstfruits language is applied metaphorically to initial converts in a region (the Greek word for "firstfruits" is translated "first convert" in Rom_16:5 and "first converts" in 1Co_16:15), to Jesus' resurrection (1Co_15:20, 1Co_15:23) - NIVZSB

In what sense was Jesus "the begotten one" or the "firstborn" one? Because he had all preeminence and authority. Psa_2:7-12 ; Act_4:22 ff.]

÷Rev_14:5
Rev_14:5

no guile . . no deceit, hypocrisy. Perhaps an allusion to Zep_3:13; cf. Isa_53:9. 1Jn_2:22

they have told no lies . . (NLT) : John teaches that liars will never enter heaven (Rev_21:8, Rev_21:27; Rev_22:15; see also Joh_8:44). The followers of Jesus speak and live the truth (see also Joh_8:32; Joh_14:6). - NLTSB

The "lie" that brings "blame" refers to the blasphemy of the beast worshipers who deny the Father and the Son and ascribe vitality to the beast by believing his heresies and worshiping his image (Rev_21:27; Rev_22:15; see also Joh_8:44-45; Rom_1:25; 2Th_2:9-11; 1Jn_2:4, 1Jn_2:21-22, 1Jn_2:27). - Lenski

without fault . . (blameless), Like their Lord; they reflect His character and fidelity. - FSB

÷Rev_14:6
Rev_14:6

I saw . . Common language throughout the book indicating a new vision or a new scene in an existing vision. - FSB

another angel . . = angel (messenger) cf.
Three angels proclaim the hour of (1) divine judgment, [there was still hope - Lenski]; (2) Babylon's fall Rev_14:8 and the (3) Rev_14:9 wrath of God upon the beast's worshipers,

[Judgment] How is it good news? The intent of the gospel message is that people should fear God and worship him. John is perhaps showing the final fulfillment of Mar_13:10. Moreover, we must never forget that the announcement of divine judgment can never be separated from the proclamation of God's mercy. The gospel is "eternal" because it announces eternal life (Joh_3:16). - Lenski

another angel . . Different from the many mentioned before, *perhaps* especially distinguished from the one who appears in ch. 10, but see Rev_14:17; Rev_18:1, where such a reference is hardly possible. - CBSC

midst of heaven . . From a Greek term ("mid-heaven") denoting the point in the noonday sky where the sun reaches its zenith. This is the highest and brightest point, where all can see and hear. - MSB

fly in midst of heaven . . (flying directly overhead) The last time this phrase was used (Rev_8:13), a threefold woe was announced—similar to what occurs here. - FSB

everlasting gospel . . = Mat_24:14 The gospel was to first be preached to the world - See Rev_14:7 for his message.

the everlasting gospel . . The angel is preaching the good news concerning everlasting life and entrance into the kingdom of God (cf. Mat_24:14; 1Co_15:1-10).
He is urging the people of the world to change their allegiance from the beast to the Lamb. It is also called in the NT the gospel of God, the gospel of grace, the gospel of Christ, the gospel of peace, the glorious gospel, and the gospel of the kingdom. It is good news that God saves by the forgiveness of sin and opens His kingdom to all who will repent and believe. The whole world will hear this preaching by the angel as God graciously calls all to salvation. - MSB

gospel . . No doubt "gospel" is used in its constant N. T. sense; and the gospel is called "everlasting," as declaring the eternal truth of God. The preaching of the Gospel here stands in the same relation to God's Judgement as in St Matt. 24:14. But notice, that the name is applied to the *whole* truth of God - CBSC

to those who live on the earth . . It is significant that the "gospel" here is for those who live (dwell) on earth and this is used often in Revelation of unbelievers.
Some see this as a fulfillment of Mat_28:18-20 or more specifically, Mat_24:14 and Mar_13:10. The content of this gospel is much like the message of John the Baptist (cf. Luk_3:3-14), or Jesus' statement to the evil one in Mat_4:10. The message of judgment is a significant element in this gospel. Verses 6–7 are significant, for they show us that all of these God-sent judgments on lost mankind are for the purpose of redemption (cf. Rev_9:20-21; Rev_16:9, Rev_16:11). - Utley

every nation, tribe. tongue, and people . . cf note at Rev_10:11 .

÷Rev_14:7
Rev_14:7

loud voice . . The voice of the angel of Rev_14:6.
The angel spoke loudly revealing his urgency and concern. - Constable

fear God and give glory to Him . . This is the theme of Scripture, calling people to give honor, glory, worship, and reverence to God (cf. Pro_23:17; 1Pe_2:17). *See notes on* Rom_1:18-21. - MSB

Mankind is commanded to respond to God in decisive acts of faith: **(1)** to come to him in faith, believing Heb_11:6; **(2)** to come in repentance, Luk_13:3; **(3)** to confess one's allegiance to the Lord, Rom_10:9-10; **(4)** to show one's allegiance in baptism, Mat_28:19-20, Mar_16:15-16; (5) to live a life that give honor and glory to Him, 1Ti_4:12.

hour of judgment has come . . Not the final judgment of every individual, but the judgment of "Babylon", Jerusalem, see the next verse Rev_14:8. God judges nations in the life; it is as individuals we will stand before God at the last day 2Co_5:10.

because the hour of His judgment has come . . The term "hour" is significant in the Gospel of John (cf. Joh_2:4; Joh_4:21, Joh_4:23; Joh_5:25, Joh_5:28; Joh_7:30; Joh_8:20; Joh_12:23, Joh_12:27; Joh_13:1; Joh_16:21, Joh_16:32; Joh_17:1). It speaks of the divine timing of a preset event (the Day of the Lord, cf. Rev_14:15 and Rev_9:15). - Utley

worship Him who made . . The angel calls his audience to worship the true God as opposed to the beast. - FSB

Creation is the great proof of God, which preachers will appeal to as the ground for all people to believe in Him and worship Him (cf. Rev_4:11; Rev_10:6; Joh_1:9; Act_14:15-17; Act_17:23-28). - MSB

the sea, and the fountains of waters . . Distinguished as (so to speak) different elements, as in Rev_8:8, Rev_8:10, Rev_16:3-4. - CBSC

The positive response to this invitation appears in Rev_15:4 and the negative response in Rev_16:9, Rev_16:11 and Rev_16:21. The reason for fearing God is that the hour of His judgment has come. This is the very last chance that these unbelievers will have to change their allegiance from Satan to God ... - Constable

The judgment upon Jerusalem is announced in the next verse and the continuing chapter shows how sever it will be.

Rev_14:8
Rev_14:8

another angel . . see Rev_14:6. The second of three angels who make proclamation in this vision.

Lack of response to the first angel's message causes a second angel to pronounce this judgment. - MSB

Babylon .. that great city . . Isa_21:9**;** Used figurative for Jerusalem (cf. Rev_11:8 "***where also our Lord was crucified"***) probably for several reasons: 1) because of it's treatment of the prophets of God, Mat_23:29-31; Mat_23:34-36; Luk_11:20; ; 2) it's rejection of God's Son; Luk_20:13; Mat_23:37; (3) it's persecution of apostles and Christians - Rev 18.20.

Initial announcement of Babylon's divine judgment (cf. Rev_16:19; Rev_17:5; Rev_18:2); alludes to Isa_21:9. Babylon was the arch-oppressor of God's people, destroying Solomon's temple and taking Israel into exile (2Ki_25:1-28; Dan_1:1-2). - NIVZSB

is fallen, is fallen . . Repeated for emphasis and to communicate the complete devastation ... The full discussion of Babylon's fall is in Rev 16.19 and chapters 17 and 18.

The fall of Jerusalem was God's vengeance upon them for all their persecution of God's apostles and

prophets; **Luk_18:7; Luk_18:8; Luk_21:22; Rom_12:19; Rom_13:4; 1Th_4:6; 2Th_1:8; Heb_10:30; Rev_6:10; Rev_18:20; Rev_19:2;**

made all nations drink . .

the wine of the wrath of her fornication . . There is a blending of the two views: she makes them **drink** of the cup of her **fornication**, Rev_17:2, and she is made, and they are made with her, to **drink** of the cup of God's **wrath**: . Rev_14:10, Rev_16:19. In Rev_18:6, as in Jer_51:7, from which the image is taken, there is, as here, a combination of the two. - CBSC

wrath of her fornication . .

has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality . . . NASB The allusion is to Jer_51:7-8 (cf. Rev_17:2, Rev_17:4; Rev_18:3). The term "passion" is the Greek term "*thumos*," which relates to an outburst of emotion (cf. 17:2, 3; 18:3). Those who drink Babylon's wine will drink YHWH's wine (cf. Rev_14:10)! - Utley

> The angel personified Babylon as a temptress who gives wine to a man to seduce him to commit fornication (cf. Rev_17:2, Rev_17:4). The man would not choose to drink this wine without her influence. However what this man drinks comes ultimately from the cup of God's wrath that He gives, indirectly through Babylon, to those whom He will punish (cf. Rev_14:10; Psa_60:3; Psa_75:8; Isa_51:17, Isa_51:22). This wine not only leads all who drink it to commit sexual licentiousness but every kind of excess that expresses unfaithfulness to God (cf. Rev_17:1-2; Rev_17:5; Rev_17:15-16; Rev_18:3, Rev_18:9; Rev_19:2). - Hughes, p. 162.

÷Rev_14:9
Rev_14:9

a third angel . . Read, **another angel, a third**; first angel = Rev_14:6; second angel = Rev_14:8

> A **third** angel announces that the beast's worshipers (like the prostitute Babylon, 16:19) will **drink the wine of God's wrath** and endure constant torment in eternal restlessness. - ESVSB

followed them . . Followed the two previous angels.

a loud voice . . Apparently wanting everyone to hear and know and stressing urgency.

if . . This is a FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE with two verbs, "worships" and "receives." Some humans, many humans, will commit these idolatrous acts. This is the exact opposite of receiving God's Messiah in Rev_14:7 and Rev_14:12. Those who do will experience the wrath of God (cf. v. 10). - Utley

worships the beast ... receives mark . . Rev_13:14-15; Rev_13:8

÷Rev_14:10
Rev_14:10

he himself . . the one worshipping the beast.

also drink . . They will be forced to drink; they will receive the wrath of God.

cup of His indignation . .

poured out without mixture . . Lit. **mixed unmixed**: there is prob. nothing meant but the sense of the A. V., the "pouring out" of wine being *usually* a process of "mixing." But the paradoxical form of expression comes from the LXX. of Psa_75:8, where the word "red" (or perhaps "foaming," "fiery") is translated by "unmixed," proving that St John knows and uses the LXX. version, though he corrects it when necessary. - CBSC

poured out full strength . . It was unmixed—not weakened by diluting with water. For the cup of wrath imagery, see Jer_25:15-29. - FSB

He shall be tormented . . [Such] will suffer the outpouring of God's collected wrath, done with the full force of His divine anger and unmitigated vengeance (cf. Psa_75:8; Isa_51:17; Jer_25:15-16).

Divine wrath is not an impulsive outburst of anger aimed capriciously at people God does not like. It is the settled, steady, merciless, graceless, and compassionless response of a righteous God against sin. - MSB

fire and burning sulfur … smoke . . This description of judgment (see also Rev_19:20; Rev_20:10, Rev_20:14-15) echoes God's judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 18:16–19:28). • Those condemned to a fiery end will suffer ***in the presence of the holy angels and the Lamb*** (cp. Luk_16:22-24). - NLT

fire and brimstone . . This is an allusion to God's judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah (cf. Gen_19:24, Gen_19:28; Isa_34:8-10; Luk_17:29; Jud_1:7). Torment is the ultimate fate of the two beasts (cf. Rev_19:20), of the evil one (cf. Rev_20:10), and of unrepentant mankind (cf. Rev_20:15; Rev_21:8). - Utley

> This association with judgment was expanded to describe a place of judgment. Jesus used the garbage dump south of Jerusalem in the valley of the sons of Hinnom (*Gehenna*) as a symbol of eternal punishment (cf. Rev_20:10, Rev_20:14-15). - Utley

with fire and brimstone . . These are two elements that are often associated in Scripture with the torment of divine punishment (Gen_19:24-25; Isa_34:8-10). Here the reference is to hell, the lake of fire (cf. Rev_19:20; Rev_20:10; Rev_21:8). Brimstone is a fiery sulfur.- MSB

Sulfur is a foul-smelling element that burns extremely hot. - FSB

in the presence of . . They may be able to observe the joyous fates of those who chose to worship the Lamb rather than the beast. - FSB

***in the presence*, &c . .** It is impossible to translate these words otherwise: they prove that the holy angels, and the Lamb Himself, acquiesce or something more in the justice and necessity of God's awful judgements. - CBSC

Rev_14:11
Rev_14:11

HELL

Rev_20:14-15, lake of fire, (Mat_18:9)
Mat_25:30, outer darkness (Mat_22:13)
Rev_14:11, torment, (Luk_16:23)
Mat_25:46, eternal punishment
Mar_9:47-48, Mat_10:28

Who will be there?
2Th_1:7-8, Rev_21:8, 2Pe_2:20-21, 1Pe_4:18, Rev_20:15, Mat_5:22, 2Pe_2:4

smoke of their torment . . Alludes to Isa_34:10 (of Edom); cf. Rev_19:3 (of Babylon). - NIVZSB

The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever . . shows that hell is eternal, and that the wicked are not annihilated and put out of existence at death. - ESVSB

torment ascends forever and ever . . A reference to the eternality of hell (cf. Mat_3:12; Mat_13:41-42; Mat_25:41; Mar_9:48). Torment is the ceaseless infliction of unbearable pain (cf. Luk_16:23-24), here prescribed for all who are loyal to Satan's leader. - MSB

> **the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever"** I wish that I could believe in universalism or at least in a second opportunity to respond to the gospel, but according to the Scriptures humans must respond to God's offer in faith (cf. Mar_1:15; Act_3:16, Act_3:19; Act_20:21) while they live (cf. Heb_9:27); if they refuse to respond, the consequences are ultimate and eternal (cf. Mar_9:47-48; Mat_25:46; Joh_5:29; Act_24:15; 2Th_1:6-9). The permanent punishment of the wicked is compared to the transitory suffering of the saints. This is supported in the phrase "they will have no rest day and night," while in Rev_14:13 the saints do have rest. - Utley

no rest day or night . . Idolaters' unending anguish contrasts with the ceaseless praise in heaven (Rev_4:8). - NIVZSB

÷Rev_14:12
Rev_14:12

patient endurance of the saints . . Refers to their perseverance in the pursuit of righteousness and faith. Luk_13:10, this is an encouragement for believers but with a view toward eternal destiny: Those who persist in faith and do not take part in the worship of the beast will avoid the second death and receive divine blessing (see Rev_14:13; Rev_20:12-15). - FS

> The threat of ***persecution*** and death was very real to the Christians first reading this letter, so John calls God's people to obedience and faithfulness (see Rev_2:10; Rev_3:10; Rev_12:17; Rev_13:10). - NLTSB

> The worshipers of the beast will be unable to rest day and night, in contrast with the saints who will "rest" from their labor (v.13). While the beast worshipers had their time of rest, and while the saints were persecuted and martyred, in the final time of judgment God will reverse their roles (Rev_7:15 ff.; cf. 2Th_1:6-7). - Lenski

÷Rev_14:13

Rev_14:13

> Spoken three times for EMPHASIS -- We should really believe it!
> 1) Voice from heaven
> 2) A holy apostle to write it
> 3) Yea, by the Holy Spirit

heard a voice . . This "voice" was probably the Lamb's (Rev_1:10-11, Rev_1:19; cf. Rev_10:4, Rev_10:8; Rev_11:12; Rev_14:2; Rev_18:4; Rev_21:3). - Constable

> A dramatic ***voice from heaven*** once again instructs John to ***write*** (see Rev_1:11, Rev_1:19; Rev_21:5; cp. Rev_10:4). • ***Blessed are those who die in the Lord:*** God desires that those who endure persecution be with

him and enjoy his blessings and ***rest***. - NLTSB

Write . . See Rev_1:11, Rev_1:19; Rev_2:1, Rev_2:8, Rev_2:12, Rev_2:18; Rev_3:1, Rev_3:7, Rev_3:14; Rev_19:9; Rev_21:5. This has been John's command from the beginning of the book. - FSB

Blessed are . . A second of seven beatitudes in Revelation (Rev_14:13; Rev_16:15; Rev_19:9; Rev_20:6; Rev_22:7, Rev_22:14), reminiscent of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Mat_5:3-11).

It is important for the saints to know that they are precious in God's site, cf Psa_116:15.

die in the Lord . . Cf. 1Th_4:16. In union or in a right relationship with the Lord.

from now on . . John anticipates several martyrdoms in the near future. - FSB

Yes,, says the Spirit . . The Holy Spirit added (cf. Rev_22:17) that they would also experience blessing because they would be at rest beyond the grave and because God would then reward their faithful deeds (cf. 1Ti_5:24-25; Heb_6:10). In contrast, the beast-worshippers have no rest (Rev_14:11) and receive punishment for their unfaithfulness to God (Rev_14:10). - Constable

says the Spirit . . The one who addresses the churches (Rev_2:7) and inspires prophecy (Rev_19:10) here speaks directly (Rev_22:17), confirming the exhortation and promise in Rev_14:12-13. - NIVZSB

they will rest . . The martyrs "wait a little longer" (Rev_6:11) before entering the eternal "Sabbath-rest" for God's people (Heb_4:9-10). - NIVZSB

that they may rest . . The construction probably is, "who die that they may rest"—the sense is, "Yea, they are indeed blessed, for the result, and the providential end, of their dying is, to bring them to rest." - CBSC

and their works . . Read, **for their works**. - CBSC

do follow them . . More accurately, **follow with them**: there is therefore hardly any resemblance to 1Ti_5:24-25. The meaning of the passage is much the same as 1Th_4:15 —we are not to think of the holy dead as if they missed (and as if the dead of the last days *only just* missed) the glories of the Lord's coming: for they and their good works are kept by Him safe against that day, ready to share in its glories. - CBSC

÷Rev_14:14
Rev_14:14

Then I looked . . (Greek *kai idou*) again marks a new scene and an advance to another important subject. The whole description is very similar to Daniel's ... (Dan_7:13-14). - Constable

a white cloud . . The cloud probably represents the glory of God, the shekinah. Exo_13:21; Exo_40:38.

sat one like the Son of Man . . See Rev_1:13 John draws on the vision of the Ancient of Days in Dan 7 and the vision of the angelic figure in Dan 10 in the following verses (see Dan_7:9; Dan_10:5). During His ministry, Jesus used Daniel's son of man terminology in reference to Himself (e.g., Mat_10:23; Mat_11:19). - FSB [Joh_5:27]

The person John saw was evidently Jesus Christ, though some commentators [Utley] think he was an angel in view of Rev_14:15. - Constable

The doubt that this one sitting on the cloud is that in Rev_14:15 another angel calls to him saying the time had come to reap, and other angels with him do the reaping. - WG

sitting on the cloud *was* one like a son of man, . . The same identity problems in chapters 6 and 10 apply to these two verses. Is this a description of the divine Messiah or just another angel serving on His behalf? I think it is another powerful angel, because (1) this is in a series of angels (cf. Rev_14:15, Rev_14:17, Rev_14:18); (2) Mat_13:39, Mat_13:41-42, Mat_13:49-50 says that angels will gather and separate people at the end-time (some for blessing and some for judgment); and (3) an angel commands him. - Utley

Son of Man . . is a title Jesus used for himself (see Mat_8:20; Mat_9:6; Mat_12:8; Mar_2:10; Mar_9:31; Luk_9:22; Luk_22:69; Joh_3:13-14). - NLTSB

Son of Man . . *See note on* Rev_1:13. The imagery of the Lord on a cloud is from Dan_7:13-14 and emphasizes magnificent majesty (cf. Rev_1:7; Mat_24:30; Mat_26:64; Act_1:9-11). - MSB

on His head a golden crown . . John saw Him wearing a victor's crown (Gr. *stephanon*). But being "golden" indicates royalty.

A gold crown . . is a symbol of status or power, clearly distinguishing Jesus from the angels (see Rev_4:4; Rev_6:2; Rev_9:7; Rev_12:3; Rev_13:1). - NLTSB

golden crown . . The victor's crown, a laurel wreath, worn by those who celebrated victory in war or athletic competition. Christ now wears this particular crown, in this case made of gold, as a triumphant conqueror coming out of heaven to prevail over His enemies. - MSB

crown . . the Figure on the Cloud is crowned with a victor's wreath wrought in gold, στέφανος χρυσοῦς, contrasting sharply with the στ. ἀκάνθινος of the Passion (Mar_15:17), but not an imperial διάδημα; the crowned Christ is here the Conqueror rather than the King. He comes however not to conquer—this He has already done (Rev_3:21)—but to reap, and His hand carries not a sword but a sickle, sharp and ready for its work. - Swete

a sharp sickle . . a tool with a handle and a sharp curved blade used for reaping. A larger one was used for reaping grain, and a smaller size used for reaping grapes. Here it appears to be one used for reaping grapes. Joe_3:11-13. Rev_14:18

In Rev_14:1-20 we have the picture of a judgment. Taken in context it is the judgment upon the "Babylon ... that great city" which is introduced in Rev_14:8 and those with the mark of the beast Rev_14:9-10.

Rev_14:15
Rev_14:15

A call for reaping came from God (Is it a peaceful reaping?)
1) A reaping by the Lord of the saved [?]
The Gospel into all the world.
2) Or a reaping of judgment. [Rev_14:19]

another angel . . There is a series of angels involved in the reaping. Rev_14:15, Rev_14:17, Rev_14:18); The "another" is one of this series, and in Greek this implies that the previously name person (Rev_14:14) is an angel also. - WG

But comparing Rev_14:6, it appears that the angel may be called "another" simply to distinguish him from those of *vv.* 6, 8, 9: and then no inference whatever can be drawn as to the figure of *v.* 14. - CBSC

came out of the temple . . The temple in heaven (Rev_11:19) on the one on Mount Zion, Rev_14:1, which again points to this as a judgment upon Israel. See note on vs. 1 (Rev_14:1), that this is earthly Mt. Zion (CBSC).

Some [Swete] would say that this angel comes from the temple, the very sanctuary and presence of God, with a instructions from God informing the One like the Son of Man that it is time to reap. - WG

Ἄλλος here looks back to Rev_14:9, not to the human form on the cloud just described. Another angel—the fourth in this context—comes forth from the Sanctuary (cf. Rev_11:19, Rev_14:17, Rev_15:5 ff., Rev_16:1, Rev_16:17), i.e. from the Presence of God, carrying to the Reaper the command of the Lord of the Harvest (Mat_9:38) to begin His work. Even the Son does not fix or even know the time, which it belongs to the Father to determine (Mar_13:32, note; Act_1:7). - Swete

crying with a loud voice . . This has the ring of urgency!

to Him who sat on the cloud . . This seems to be instructions from the angel to the one on the cloud, which seems like an angel commanding Christ if He is the one on the cloud!

This seems to make the one on the cloud who is "like the Son of Man" an angel who is acting on behalf of the Christ. - WG

thrust and reap . . In view of Rev_14:19 this appears to be a reaping of wicked who do not " the keep the commandments of God" (Rev_14:12). - WG

It *may* be implied, that the Son of Man does not reap Himself—cf. St Matt. 24:31. See on the next verse. - CBSC

Time is come . . = NOW! The reaping in 1st century, during the time of the readers of the seven churches, not our day, or Second Coming, but a judgment upon Babylon which has just been introduced, Rev_14:7-8.

Ripe . . Lit. **is dried**; hence R. V. "is over-ripe"; possibly a more literal translation than St Mark's, l.c. [Mar_4:29], of our Lord's words in the parable, to which there is probably a reference. - CBSC
The harvest is an OT figure used for divine judgment (Hos_6:11; Joe_3:13), especially on Babylon (Jer_51:33). Johnson, p. 543.

the harvest of the earth is ripe. Many scholars interpret this harvest as divine judgment on the wicked as in Rev_14:18-19 and Joe_3:13, though this harvest may refer to the gathering of God's people, called "firstfruits" in Rev_14:4 (see note there) and "the wheat" in Mat_13:30. - NIVZSB

Rev_14:16
Rev_14:16

thrusts in . . Lit. **cast**: but the word is used in much milder senses, e.g. of the Lord "putting" His fingers in the deaf man's ears, St Mar_7:33. The A. V. can therefore be defended: but it is perhaps likelier, that He Who sat on the cloud *threw down* the sickle, for others (unnamed angels) to reap with. - CBSC

the earth was reaped . . . In Jer_51:33, ... the image of harvest is used of the time of God's *vengeance*, and so

Joe_3:13, where, as here, it is combined with that of the vintage. - CBSC

Utley believes there are two harvest pictures here. One, the harvest of grain (the Elect), and the other of grapes (the wicked.) The question here is, are there two different *sickles* picture here, or just one? - WG

14:14–16 There are two different harvests described in Rev_14:14-16 and Rev_14:17-19. The first is a grain harvest and the second a grape harvest. If this distinction can be maintained (in Joe_3:13 the two crops are viewed as one judgment), the first refers to the harvest of the righteous (cf. Mat_9:37-38; Mat_13:30, Mat_13:38; Mar_4:26-29; Luk_10:2; Joh_4:35-38), while the second grape harvest mentioned in Isa_63:2-6; Jer_51:33; Lam_1:15; Joe_3:13 and Rev_19:15 refers to the wicked. - Utley

If the Lord's harvest of grain in Rev_14:16 is of His Elect that is pictured by the angels (cf. Mat_9:37-38; Mat_13:30, Mat_13:38; Mar_4:26-29; Luk_10:2; Joh_4:35-38), this would be the Lord rescuing his Elect out of Jerusalem before His judgment upon that city that rejected Him, (Luk_21:18-24; Mat_24:16-22; and the second harvest of the grapes for the winepress is his judgment upon the city of Jerusalem itself, Luk_21:24-28; Mat_24:23-36 . - WG

÷Rev_14:17

Rev_14:17

another angel . . In this series of angels, Greek, ἄλλος ἄγγελος "another angel of the same kind".
The fifth angel in this group came out of the heavenly temple ready to execute judgment (cf. Mat_13:30, 39–42, 49–50). - Constable

came out of the temple . . As coming from God's sanctuary also. Question: if he is coming directly from God, why is an "angel from the altar" giving him the instructions to reap the fully ripe grapes? See Rev_14:18 for the answer.

the temple which is in heaven , , This refers to the spiritual tabernacle in heaven (cf. Heb_8:2; Heb_9:11, Heb_9:23-24). - Utley

also having a sharp sickle . . Is his sickle the same kind? are there multiple angles with multiple sickles performing the harvest, (Mat_13:39, Mat_13:41-42, Mat_13:49-50; Mat_24:31), ; or is this one the picture of a grape-harvesting sickle as this angel is instructed by the one in Rev_14:18 to gather the grapes for the winepress of God's wrath. - WG

he also had a sharp sickle . . Christ performed the first harvest; the grape harvest will be performed by angels (compare Mat_13:41-42). - FSB

÷Rev_14:18

Rev_14:18

another angel . . Another angel—the sixth—brings to the Angel of vengeance a message of Divine authority to begin the vintage.

Another angel, the sixth in this chapter, came out from the golden altar of incense in heaven (Rev_8:3). This is probably an allusion to his responding to the Tribulation saints' prayers for vengeance from under the altar (Rev_6:9-10).

His "**power over fire**" may indicate his authority to execute punishment. It seems clear from verse 19 that this angel was addressing the angel with the sickle, not Jesus Christ. - Constable

from the altar . . where the saints cried for vengeance from under the altar, Rev_6:9.

> The Angel-reaper of the Vintage proceeds from the Altar, where he is in charge of the fire; cf. Rev_16:6, note. Earlier passages in the Book refer to the Altar of Burnt Offering (Rev_6:9, Rev_11:1), and the Altar of Incense (Rev_8:3, Rev_8:5, Rev_9:13); here and in Rev_16:7 there is nothing to shew which of the two is intended. If the former, we are reminded of the blood of the martyrs which cries for vengeance; if the latter, of the prayers of the saints by which the end is hastened. - Swete

who had power over fire . . Angels have power over the wind (cf. Rev_7:1), over fire (cf. Rev_14:18), and over the water (cf. Rev_16:5). This reflects rabbinical Judaism's concept of angelic involvement in the natural world. Although the NT does not emphasize this, that does not mean that it is inaccurate (cf. Heb_1:7, Heb_1:14). - Utley

who had power over fire . . This angel is associated with fire on the altar, which represents the prayers of the saints (Rev_6:9-11; Rev_8:3-5). Fire refers to the constantly burning fire on the brass altar of the Jerusalem temple. Twice daily the priest would burn incense with that fire and offer the burning incense in the Holy Place as a symbol of the people's prayers (*see notes on* Rev_5:8*;* Rev_6:9*;* Rev_8:3). This angel is coming from the heavenly altar to ensure that all the prayers of all the saints for judgment ... are answered. He calls for judgment to start. - MSB

grapes are fully ripe . . NOW! - **The vine =** Israel-- the reaping of vengeance that those under the altar had been calling for.

÷Rev_14:19

Rev_14:19

gathered the vine . . The vine = Israel-- the reaping of vengeance that those under the altar had been calling for in Rev_6:9-10. (see note on Rev_6:10)

winepress . . a reaping of judgment. Isa_63:2-3; Lam_1:15; Joe_3:13;

winepress . . In the ancient world, grapes were placed in troughs and trampled before collecting juice for fermentation, a vivid OT image for God's crushing the wicked nations in furious "wrath" (cf. Rev_19:15; Isa_63:1-6). - NIVZSB

the great winepress of the wrath of God . . This reaping involves not just harvesting, but crushing in a winepress (compare Isa_63:3; Rev_19:15). - FSB

÷Rev_14:20

Rev_14:20

winepress . .

> A **winepress** extracts juice from grapes. It was a large, enclosed stone structure into which baskets of grapes were poured. Workers stood inside the winepress and trampled the grapes as they were added. The juice from the clusters flowed out of the winepress through a channel cut into the wall and into a vat or bucket placed beneath the structure. John uses this image to vividly portray the fate of unbelievers: They will be trampled underfoot like grapes in a winepress, and their blood will flow profusely. - FSB

trampled . . The ***ripe*** … ***grapes*** (see Amo_8:2) that are ***trampled in the winepress*** emphasize God's power to judge (see Rev_19:15; Joe_3:13). - NLTSB

outside the city . . Their blood is shed **outside the city** (probably Jerusalem), where all defiled things belong (cf. Rev_21:27). - ESVSB

outside the city . . Winepresses were built outside cities and towns; here, ***the city*** is Jerusalem. - NLTSB

the city . . They were trampled there **outside the city**, probably Jerusalem (cf. "the great city" in Rev_11:8). - BKC

blood up to horses brides . . = (about 5 ft deep); figurative of much much bloodshed!

up to horses' bridles . . Since no horses are mentioned in the context this appears to be an idiom or a metaphor for a large amount of something, here of the red bloodshed of the saints' enemies.

for 1600 furlongs . .or about 182 miles. From North to South of Israel was about 200 miles.

The exact distance is uncertain. Some say (1) 165 miles; (2) 184 miles; or (3) 200 miles. The exact words are 6,600 [sic] furlongs. This is an unusual symbolic number. Some say that it refers to the distance from Dan to Beersheba, which means judgment symbolically covering the entire Holy Land. - Utley

÷Rev_15:1
Rev_15:1

Chapter 15 - **The Song of Moses**: The Seven Last Plagues

(Not the song composed at the crossing of the Rea Sea, Exodus 15, as comes to many minds first, [That was Miriam' song] but Moses' Song of Deu_31:19; Deu_31:22 ; Deu_31:30 ; Deu_32:1)
The Angels of the Last Plagues Introduced, - Rev_15:1
The Testimony of Redeemed Jewish Christian, - Rev_15:2-4
The Angels of the Last Plagues Make Their Appearance From the Temple of God in Heaven, - Rev_15:5-8

Chapter heading = **The Seven Last Plagues**

The seven bowls which are introduced in chapter 15 and described in chapter 16 are the third in a set of three cycles of divine plagues sent for the purpose of redemption (cf. Rev_9:20-21; Rev_14:6-7; Rev_16:9, Rev_16:11). Each cycle gets progressively more severe: 1/4, 1/3, and total destruction. This is possibly based on "the cursing and blessing" section of Deut. 27–28. - Utley

15:1–16:21 The third and final cycle of seven judgments (see note on 6:1–16:21) is introduced with a vision of God's victorious people singing a hymn of praise (15:2–4). Then a scene of the Temple is presented (15:5–8), from which angels emerge bearing the bowls of God's judgment upon the earth (16:1–21). - NLTSB

And I saw . . (Greek kai idou) again introduces a new scene, this time in heaven (cf. Rev_13:1, Rev_13:11; Rev_14:1, 6, 14; Rev_15:2, 5)

another great and marvelous sign . . Ἄλλο σημεῖον looks back to Rev_12:1, Rev_12:3. This view of the appearances as 'signs' belongs exclusively the second half of the Apocalypse, and serves to connect the present vision with the series which began with the Sign of the Sun-clad Woman. - Swete

sign . . = symbol or figurative illustration about God's judgment or wrath.

John's explanation here in Rev_15:1 is that these seven last plagues ***"fill***" up the wrath of God.

seven angels . . These appear to be a different set of seven angels from the seven in Rev_8:6.

Here preparation is made (as in 8:2) for another sevenfold series of visions. - CBSC

This final "sign" relates to the preceding great signs of the woman in Rev_12:1 and the red dragon in

Rev_12:3. These seven angels should not be confused with the two groups of three angels in the preceding chapter (Rev_14:6-20) or with any other previous group of angels. - BKC

marvelous . . The adjective "marvelous" (G2515 θαυμαστός (*thaumastos*); cf. Rev_15:3) is added because John understood the seven angels to represent that Gods wrath is completed (GK 5464)—i.e., the "last" (GK 2274) plagues—and they are awesome as well as final in character. - EBCNT

having seven plagues . . They are not suffering from the plagues but are responsible for delivering them upon the earth. - FSB

seven last plagues . . Introduces the bowl judgments in Rev_16:1-21; cf. Rev_21:9). - NIVZSB

the wrath of God is complete . . The final set of seven judgments upon the earth following the seals and the trumpets. - FSB

It denotes at once the finality and the completeness of the visitation. - Swete

wrath ... complete . . This cycle of ***seven last plagues*** (15:1–16:21) brings ***God's wrath*** against his enemies ***to completion*** (see Rev_16:17; Amos 1–2; Rom 1:18–2:16). Revelation returns later to the subjects of God's wrath (Rev_19:15-21). - NLTSB

÷Rev_15:2

Rev_15:2

And I saw . . (Greek *kai idou*) again introduces a new scene, this time in heaven (cf. Rev_13:1, Rev_13:11; Rev_14:1, 6, 14; Rev_15:2, 5)

a sea of glass mixed with fire . . See Rev_4:6, The addition of fire here may be a reference to judgment. - FSB

a sea of glass mingled with fire . . Probably describes an optical appearance much like that of Rev_21:18, Rev_21:21. It gives no reason for doubting that this is the same sea of glass as in 4:6: it is not till now that the Seer's attention is specially directed to it, and he now describes it in more detail than before. - CBSC

those who have the victory . . Includes martyrs and survivors who did not succumb to pressure and persecution.

them that had gotten the victory over . . Lit. **them that overcame** [the same word as "him that overcometh" in chapters Rev_2:3] **from** …: them that, as we might say, "fought their way clear of" all these dangers and temptations. R. V. "come victorious from." - CBSC

beast . . = Rome

second beast . . = Religious arm or Rome, ("the media" WG; paganism, the emperor worship cult)

(Some, as Franklin Camp say it represents Judiazing teachers.)

number of name . . = 666, Caesar Nero.see note on Rev_13:18.

John see the victors on a sea of glass, which was about the throne of God, having harps of God. (Praising God)

standing on the sea . . Reference is to the "sea of glass" not to a literal sea (Rev_21:1).

But perhaps no more is meant than when we speak of a town lying "*on* the sea:" this is supported by the fact that Israel sung the song of Moses on the *shore*, after their passage. And the Greek preposition used, though naturally translated "on," is the same as in the phrase "stand *at* the door" in Rev_3:20. - CBSC

standing on the sea of glass . . Some translations have "on" (NASB, NKJV), and some have "beside" (NRSV) or "by" (TEV, NJB). The Greek preposition's basic meaning is "upon." This metaphor speaks of those

overcomers being close to God. The "sea" in Revelation stands for a separation between a holy God and sinful creation. This sea is completely removed in 21:1 when full fellowship is restored. - Utley

harps . . It does not appear that these harpers are the same as those in Rev_5:8; nor Rev_14:2. (CBSC)

harps of God . . Signifying joy, gladness, celebration over their victory. It reads as though God had given (or caused them to be given) the harps.

:Rev_15:3
Rev_15:3

the song of the Lamb . . There are not two songs, but one. It describes deliverance for God's people and judgment for their enemies (compare Rev_5:9-13; Rev_7:10-17). - FSB

the song of Moses, the slave of God . . In Exodus, the song of Moses marveled at God's wonders, character, and majesty, similar to the song in Rev_15:3-4 (see Exo_15:1 –21; Deu_32:1 ff). - FSB [Deu_31:30]

the song . . These martyrs sang two songs as seems clear from the repetition of the words "the song." Moses recorded two songs in praise of God's faithfulness and deliverance of the Israelites. Of these the one in Exodus 15 seems slightly more appropriate for these martyrs to echo than the one in Deuteronomy 32 because it is a song of victory. Nevertheless they both contain similar emphases. - Constable

the servant of God . . Exo_14:31 is particularly referred to; but also in Num_12:7; Jos_1:1-2, Jos_1:7, Jos_1:13, Jos_1:15, Jos_22:5; Psa_105:26 "the servant of the Lord" is used as a special honourable title of Moses: cf. Heb_3:5. - CBSC

song of the Lamb . . See Rev_5:8-14. These two songs celebrate two great redemptive events: 1) deliverance of Israel by God from Egypt through Moses; and 2) deliverance of sinners by God from sin through Christ. - MSB

the song of the Lamb . . For the Lamb has redeemed them, as Moses redeemed Israel. "The song of the Lamb" is not a *different* song from "the song of Moses," but the same interpreted in a higher sense: well illustrated by the Christian use of Psa_114:1-8 and the other Passover Psalms, - CBSC

song of the Lamb . . The song of the Lamb seems to be a song not recorded elsewhere in Scripture, though some commentators have suggested several different Psalms. Probably this song follows in verses 3–4. - Constable

"of" . . In the case of both songs, the genative "of" is probably subjective: Moses and the Lamb were responsible for these songs, not the subjects of them. - Constaable

great and marvelous *are* Your works . . This statement from the song of the Lamb extols God's powerful works in creation as He providentially upholds the universe (cf. Psa_139:14). - MSB

Almighty . . God is omnipotent (cf. Amo_4:13). - MSB

O Lord God, the Almighty . . This is an allusion to the three most used OT titles for God (cf. Rev_1:8; Rev_4:8; Rev_11:7; Rev_16:7). "Lord" refers to YHWH, the Savior, Redeemer, Covenant God. "God" refers to *Elohim*, the Creator, Provider and Sustainer of all life on earth. The "Almighty" refers to *El Shaddai*, the Patriarchal name for the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (cf. Exo_6:3). - Utley

King of the saints . . Read, **of the nations** or **of the ages**; the best editors are divided in their preference for one of these readings, but both are better attested than that of the received text. See Jer_10:7, which no doubt is

quoted, in these words and the clause following, and perhaps decides the balance of probability in favour of "nations." - CBSC

King of the nations . . (some manuscripts read *King of the ages*), not a localized deity attached to one nation or to a human monarch with limited authority. - NLTSB

King of the nations . . In keeping with the angel's eternal gospel (Rev_14:7), the **King of the nations** will be feared, glorified, and worshiped by
all nations (Psa_86:9; Jer_10:7) for his **righteous acts** of judgment (Psa_98:2). - ESVSB

÷Rev_15:4

Rev_15:4

Who would never fear, Lord . . A rhetorical question: all will fear and glorify His name. See Exo_15:11. - FSB

This rhetorical question (cp. Jer_10:7) assumes that only a fool would fail to do so (cp. Rev_14:7; Rev_16:9; see Psa_14:1; Psa_53:1). - NLTSB

holy . . Not the same word as is applied to God in Rev_4:8 &c., but ordinarily used of human piety or holiness—and in that sense applied to our Lord, in His human character, in Heb_7:26. It is only used of God here and in Rev_16:5 (the true text): in both places the sense is that God is "justified in His saying and clear when He is judged." - CBSC

all nations will … worship . . Some will be forced to acknowledge God (cp. Php_2:10-11), but all will recognize that God's ***deeds*** and judgments ***have been revealed*** and are ***righteous*** and just. - NLTSB

all nations will come and worship . . Alludes to Psa_86:9. The Almighty, not the beast, is the true sovereign who will duly receive worldwide worship (cf. Rev_7:9-10; contrast Rev_13:8, Rev_13:14). - NIVZSB

judgments . . God's holy and perfect character inevitably demands that He judge (cf. Psa_19:9; Nah_1:3, Nah_1:6). - MSB

thy judgments . . Rather, **righteous acts**, cf. Rev_19:8. The word occurs only once besides in the N. T., Rom_5:18. - CBSC

Judgments manifest . . = Josephus says 1,300,000 killed in 42 months.

÷Rev_15:5
Rev_15:5

After these things I looked . . (Greek *meta tauta eidon*) indicates a transition to a new vision and a new subject: the bowl judgments. These are in a category of their own. John saw the heavenly temple opened. This gave the seven angels who carried the bowl judgments egress from God's presence. He is the one who sends them. - Constable

> **καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα εἶδον . .** A formula which usually introduces a new and important vision; cf. 4:1, note. The Seven plague-laden Angels form the most striking group since the Seven Angels of the Temple (rev 8:1). - Swete

temple of testimony . . The "tabernacle of testimony" refers to the temple as the building that housed God's law, - Constable

temple, the tent of the testimony . . This description emphasizes the tabernacle as the site of God's covenant

testimony (compare Num_17:7). The judgments that are about to take place flow from people's rejection of God. - FSB

the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony . . This refers to the ark of the covenant in the Holy of Holies (temple) where God dwells (*see note on* Rev_11:19; cf. Num_10:11). - **MSB**

temple ... testimony . . Rev_11:19. For the phrase "Tabernacle of the Testimony" (or "Witness"—the word is the same) cf. Act_7:44; see Num_1:50). - CBSC

the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened . . In Rev_4:1 a door in heaven was opened for John; in Rev_11:19 the Ark of the Covenant appeared in the temple for believers to see.

> Now the entire heavenly tabernacle appears (cf. Exo_38:21; Num_10:11; Num_17:7; Act_7:44).
>
> This OT allusion is developed in Heb_9:23. This literary unit uses the Exodus and the wilderness wanderings period as an OT backdrop. This symbolizes the second, ultimate exodus from bondage (bondage to sin).- Utley

yemple of the tabernacle . . - the open temple in heaven was a tabernacle of testimony - where God's Word was! Is it speaking of The Most Holy Place? Mat_23:34

> Swete points out how John follows the usual LXX pattern in alluding not to the Solmon's Temple or its successors, but to the Tabernacle in the wilderness, the "Tent of Witnesses" Num_9:15; Num_17:7; Num_18:2; Exo_27:21; as also Westcott points out in *Hebrews*, p. 234.

heaven . . = His Word is there-- The N.T. covenant scriptures
(Parallel idea to the two tables of Law retained in the Tabernacle from Sinai. Now God's new covenant; Word made sure in heaven's tabernacle.

was open . . Similar to Rev_11:19. The opening of temple doors or gates could signal judgment, such as in the Deuterocanonical work 3 Maccabees 6:16–21. A parallel is found in Virgil's *Aeneid* where the temple of Janus in Rome was opened prior to battle. - FSB

> "***Was opened in Heaven***" would give the sense, more accurately than the order of the A. V. - CBSC

÷Rev_15:6

Rev_15:6

out of the temple . . These seven angelic beings come from the very innermost part of heaven's temple, which shows their authority because they come from the very presence of God. - Utley

> The Sanctuary is not opened here as in Rev_11:19, for the purpose of revealing the Ark of the Covenant, but to allow the Seven Angels to issue in procession from the Presence-Chamber. The angels of Rev_14:15, Rev_14:17 f., also came forth from the Sanctuary, but singly and with less solemnity; the curtain was not drawn back to let them pass. - Swete

seven angels . . - Clothed like priests, - Rev_1:13 by these garments we associate them with Jesus of ch. 1. Rev_1:13.

having . . We should probably read "which had": we see in *v.* 7 that they did *not* come out having them [for they are given them in the next verse by one of the living creatures]. [- CBSC

seven plagues. The final, most severe judgments from God, described in chap. 16 (*see note on v. 1*).

dressed in clean, bright linen garments . . Typical clothing for angelic figures (see Dan_10:5; Dan_12:6-7; Eze_9:2; Eze_10:2). - FSB

Linen, a symbol of purity, was also worn by the priests when performing their duties (see Lev_16:4, Lev_16:23; Exo_28:39-43; see also Eze_9:2-3; Dan_12:6-7). The function of these angels is not intercession; they are agents of judgment. The linen therefore represents the purity and justice of God's judgment. - NLTSB

girded with golden belts . . These angels resemble the figure from Dan_10:5 [the Son of Man] and the glorified Christ in Rev_1:13. - FSB

linen … golden bands . . The fabric represents holiness and purity (Rev_19:14). These are belts or girdles, running from the shoulder to the waist, that each of the 7 angels wear over his garments. The bands demonstrate riches, royalty, and untarnished glory. - MSB

Their dress is described as (1) "linen" which was worn by priests in Exo_28:4; or (2) the ASV translates this as "precious stone" which follows the Greek uncial manuscripts A and C, and may be an allusion to Eze_28:13 as the angelic clothing of Eden. - Utley

gold sashes across their chests . . [These] probably symbolize their divine mission as ministers of justice on God's behalf (cp. Rev_1:13). - NLTSB

Their snow-white linen tunics are girded high ... (Rev_1:13) with golden belts, the symbols of royalty or of priestly functions; they are [ministering spirits] (Heb_1:14), and they are vested for their liturgy. - Swete

÷Rev_15:7
Rev_15:7

one of the four living creatures . . One of the living creatures (Rev_4:6) gave each angel a bowl full of God's wrath.

It is interesting that God described the prayers of the saints as being held in bowls in Rev_5:8. These prayers thus connect with the outpouring of these judgments in a suggestive cause and effect relationship.

The two sets of bowls in chapters five and here are different, however, and they contain different things. The priests in Israel's earthly temple also used bowls in their worship (1Ki_7:50; 2Ki_12:13; 2Ki_25:15). - Constable

vials . . = bowls. The bowls are filled with God's wrath which they will be pouring out upon the enemies of the saints.

Bowls are also mentioned in Rev_5:8 where they contained the prayers of the saints.

seven golden bowls . . These are shallow saucers, familiar items often associated with various functions of the temple worship (1Ki_7:50; 2Ki_12:13; 2Ki_25:15), such as wine (Amo_6:6) and blood sacrifice (Exo_27:3). Their flat shallowness pictures how the divine judgments will be emptied instantly rather than slowly poured, drowning those who refused to drink the cup of salvation. - MSB

full of the wrath of God . . cf. Rev_11:18; Rev_14:10;

There is a connection throughout Revelation to the prayers of His persecuted children and the wrath of God on unbelievers. - Utley

golden bowls … wrath of God. Recalls the bowls that hold the prayers of God's people who cry out for vindication (see note on Rev_5:8; cf. Rev_6:9-10; Rev_8:3-5). - NIVZSB

God who lives forever and ever . . The reference to the living God "who lives forever and ever" adds more solemnity to an already solemn scene (cf. Rev_10:6; Deu_32:40; Heb_10:31). - Constable

÷Rev_15:8
Rev_15:8

smoke from the glory . . Alludes to the theophany at Sinai (see Exo_19:16-18). [Exo_40:34-35] Smoke or cloud often accompanies a visible manifestation of God's presence (1Ki_8:10-11; Isa_6:4). - FSB

> This was a common OT description of the presence of God (cf. Exo_19:18; Exo_40:34; 1Ki_8:10-11; Isa_6:4). This is an allusion to the *Shekinah* cloud of glory which represented God's presence to Israel during the Exodus. But because of the contextual connection with the bowls, it may refer to the abundance of incense representing the prayers of God's children for justice. - Utley

and from his power . . On this occasion the smoke proceeds from (ἐκ) the Divine glory and power, i.e. from the personal character and attributes of God and His boundless resources, two grounds of undying fear to His enemies. - Swete

no man was able to enter the temple . . Allusion to Exo_40:34-35 where Moses was not able to enter the temple because of the cloud and the glory of the Lord. Neither priests in 1Ki_8:11.

> His awesome presence in the temple until the plagues are finished (Rev_16:17) prohibits even angels from entering it (cf. Isa_6:4; Hab_2:20). - EBCNT

till the seven plagues ... were fulfilled . . This possibly means that there was no stopping God's wrath once it had begun. This wrath is difficult to correlate theologically with Rev_16:9 and Rev_16:11, which implies that redemption is still the purpose of the last bowl - Utley

> The plagues being for redemptive purpose indicates there was time after the plagues for repentance. These plagues then symbolize a judgment upon "Babylon", the "harlot" Jerusalem, giving repentant Jews an opportunity to still embrace the Son of God as Savior. - WG

÷Rev_16:1
Rev_16:1

Chapter 16 - The Seven Bowls of Wrath

The Seven Last Plagues (ch. 15 & 16)

Orders From Heaven, - Rev_16:1
The First Bowl, -Rev_16:2 ..Earth
The Second Bowl, - Rev_16:3 ..Sea
The Third Bowl, - Rev_16:4-7 ..Rivers
The Fourth Bowl, -Rev_16:8-9 ..Heavenly bodies
The Fifth Bowl, - Rev_16:10-11 ..Throne (seat) of the Beast
The Sixth Bowl, -Rev_16:12-14 ..River Euphrates
Blessed Assurance, -Rev_16:15
Armageddon, -Rev_16:16 (Mountain of Megeddo
The Seventh Bowl, - Rev_16:17-21 ..It is done! Finished! Complete!

[The 7 vials are similar to trumpets, ch. 8; ***"vials***"= bowls.]

a great voice out of the temple . . Rev_15:8 indicates this must be the voice of God. This last group of angels coming from the temple show they have the ultimate authority from God to do their assignment.

loud voice . . [**mighty voice]** . . While generally anonymous in Revelation, this likely refers to God's voice; no one could enter the temple because His presence was there. - FSB

great loud . . There is a frequent use of the Greek adjective μεγαλης (*megales)* in this chapter. The NASB translators rendered this word "loud" here and in verse Rev_16:17; "fierce" in verse Rev_16:9; "great" in verses Rev_16:12, Rev_16:14, Rev_16:18 (twice), and Rev_16:19 (twice); and "huge" and "severe" in verse Rev_16:21. (cf. Constable)

(The word also occurs nine times in chapter 18, which is an elaboration on the seventh bowl judgment introduced in Rev_16:17-21 - Constable

Go your way . . God's command to the angels to go do His bidding. The time has come for them to do the task He has for them.

upon the earth . . Lit., ***into the earth***, here and in the next verse. - CBSC [εἰς, as in Rev_14:19]

Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God . . This is an OT symbol for the judgment of God on unbelieving nations (cf. Psa_79:6; Jer_10:25; Eze_22:31; Zep_3:8). This term is used often in this context for God's wrath on unbelievers (cf. vv. 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 10, 12, 17) because of their blasphemy (cf. Rev_16:9), their persecution of believers (cf. rev 16.6) and their stubborn refusal to repent (cf. Rev_9:20-21; Rev_16:9-12). - Utley

÷Rev_16:2

Rev_16:2

First Plague = Judgment against the Earth

went . . Lit., **went away**, from the Angels' place in Heaven before the Temple to the *edge* or "window" whence they can look down upon the earth. - CBSC

We may pictures the angels stepping forward, one by one to discharge their tasks in orderly fashion. (Swete)

poured out .. upon the earth . . When the **first** bowl is **poured** out **on the earth**, it will afflict not the land itself (contrast the first trumpet, Rev_8:7) but earth's inhabitants, who bear the beast's **mark**, - ESVSB

a foul and loathsome sore . . Describes oozing, open wounds or ulcers, corresponding to Exo_9:8-12. - FSB

Some see this as related to Deu_28:35, which is the cursing and blessing section of Moses' covenant renewal. - Utley

a foul and loathsome sore . . The Septuagint (LXX) uses the same Gr. word to describe the boils that plagued the Egyptians (Exo_9:9-11) and afflicted Job (Job_2:7). In the NT, it describes the open sores that covered the beggar Lazarus (Luk_16:21). - MSB

mark of beast . . cf. Rev_7:3; worshippers of Caesar were marked. Rev_13:16;

those who worshiped his image . . Rev_13:14-15;

÷Rev_16:3

Rev_16:3

second . . The second and third bowls parallel the second and third trumpets (cf. Rev_8:8-11) and also reflect the Exodus plagues of Exo_7:17-21. - Utley

The **second** bowl will turn the waters of **the sea** into **blood**, and all sea life will die. The first plague on Egypt (Exo_7:21) is magnified to universal dimensions. - ESVSB

angel . . Should be omitted, reading **the second**, as we had "the first" before. So in *vv.* 4, 8, 10, 12, 17. **- CBSC**

sea . . If those of the "earth" [v. 2] were the Jewish world, then those of the sea seems to represent sinful wicked Rome and the Gentile world.

the sea . . Various views as to whom the sea-men in this verse:

1. Gentiles who supported Rome suffered.
2. Jews supporting Rome suffered at hands of both Jews and Romans.
3. Jews inJudea and elsewhere were persecuting Christians (cf. James, brother of the Lord; Antipas, etc.)
4. Rome and Nero were putting to death Paul and Peter (AD 64) .

[I do not take the "***sea"*** to be literal, but representative of sinning and rebellous people or nations, Rev_17:15, other than Jews and how they also suffer the wrath of God, using Egypt as a literal model. cf. Rev_17:15, - WG]

blood as of a dead man . . This judgment and the one that follows mirror Exo_7:17-24 - FSB

If the "*sea"* is taken literal, as many premillennialist do, then the "*blood*" must also be taken literal. - WG

The Second Bowl corresponds generally with the Second Trumpet (Rev_8:8 f.), and both are suggested by the first Egyptian plague (Exo_7:14 ff.). In Egypt the Nile alone is smitten; in Patmos the Seer naturally thinks first of the sea. The Aegean, receiving the contents of the second angel's bowl, turns (as he had often seen it turn at sunset) to a blood red — ἐγένετο οἶμα =äÈéÈä רָם, Exo_7:19 —he adds ὡς νεκροῦ, which brings up the picture of a murdered man weltering in his blood; - Swete

every living creature in the sea died . . **I**n contrast to the one-third that perished as a result of the second trumpet judgment (see Rev_8:8). - FSB

This is reminiscent of the second trumpet (Rev_8:8-9), and of the first plague against Egypt (Exo_7:20-25). - MSB

÷Rev_16:4
Rev_16:4

third angel . . - his vial (bowl) poured out upon rivers and fountains

rivers and springs . . = Just as all the water in Egypt, John's literal model, became blood, so God's wrath upon all sinful nations and people will reach everywhere. Rev_17:15.

springs of waters . . An allusion to Exo_7:19 ff; simply indicating the completeness of God's wrath upon the

wicked. cf. Rev_17:15. - WG
The smiting of the springs prevented any such measures as the Egyptians took for evading the effects of the plague (Exo_7:24). - Swete

became blood . . Compare Rev_8:10-11, where the rivers and streams are made bitter. -FSB

blood . . Reflecting the Exodus plagues of Exo_7:17-21 (Utley).

÷Rev_16:5
Rev_16:5

angel of waters . . The angel who had the task of pouring out God's wrath on the waters.
Some ancient Jewish rabbis believed that all the various elements (wind, water, fire, cf Rev_14:18, see Utley's note there) had angels in charge of them.

the angel of the waters . . This may reflect the intertestamental Jewish apocalyptic terminology of I Enoch 66:2. In Revelation there has been an angel in charge of the wind (cf. Rev_7:1) and an angel in charge of fire (cf. Rev_14:8), so it is not unusual to see an angel in charge of the water. Again, angelic mediation is common in intertestamental apocalyptic literature. - Utley

Angels and archangels are portrayed as having special roles in the hierarchy of heaven (see Dan_8:16; Dan_9:21; Dan_10:13, Dan_10:21; Dan_12:1; Luk_1:19, Luk_1:26; see also *1 Enoch* 66:1–2). - NLTSB

You are righteous . . The angel pouring out God's wrath declares God's judgement and wrath is just.

This angel confirms ***these judgments*** as coming from God, who is both ***just*** and ***holy***. - *NLTSB*

You have judged righteous . . Verse 6 says that the eternal God will judge justly because they have killed the believers and preachers of the gospel (Rev_6:9-11; Rev_7:9-17; Rev_11:18; Rev_17:6; Rev_18:20). - MSB

The One who is etc. **. .** This phrase expresses God's eternality (cf. Rev_1:4, Rev_1:8; Rev_4:8; Rev_11:17). - MSB

÷Rev_16:6
Rev_16:6

for . . Introduces the reason God's judgments are just (vv. rev 16.5, rev 16.7) and recalls the martyrs' appeals for God to judge persecutors and avenge their blood (Rev_6:10; cf. Rev_18:20; Rev_19:2; Deu_32:43; 2Ki_9:7; Psa_79:10, Psa_79:12; Isa_49:26). - NIVZSB

they . . This verse identifies the recipient of this judgment as Jerusalem and its leaders, Mat_23:23-37.

shed the blood of saints and prophets . . Rev_11:18; Rev_18:20; God's wrath is poured out upon those who poured out the blood of His saints and prophets Mat_23:35-36. The author of Revelation reveals how Christ's prophecy is fulfilled.

... referring to those who shed the **blood of saints and prophets** (see Rev_17:6). Isa_49:26 promises that Israel's bloodthirsty oppressors will be forced to drink their own blood. The heavenly **altar**, under which the martyrs' souls pooled like sacrificial blood (Rev_6:9), agrees with the angel's judgment, echoing the song just sung by the victors (Rev_16:7; cf. Rev_15:3). People will receive from God exactly what they deserve

(see notes on Rev_20:12; Rev_20:13). - ESVSB

And you have given them blood to drink . . The punishment is described as fitting the crime (cf. Isa_49:26) though it is not literal but metaphorical.
The principle of *lex talionis* (the law of retribution), the basis of Roman and Jewish jurisprudence, means that God is completely just in judging and rewarding people on the basis of what they have done (see Rev_2:23; Rev_11:18; Rev_14:13; Rev_18:6; Rev_20:12-13; Rev_22:12). **- NLTSB**

It is their just due . . [they are worthy] . . [as they deserve] Cf. Here is God's vengeance, or recompense. You will reap what you sow. Jewish religious leaders had killed prophets which God had sent to them, Mat_23:29; Mat_23:31; Mat_23:34 Mat_23:37; Luk_11:47; Luk_13:34; and now the day of God's vengeance was upon them, Mat_23:35-36.

For ***Days of Vengeance***, see notes & links at **Luk_21:22; and Rev_18:20.**

For it is their just due . . God's judgment is fair and proper (cf. Exo_21:25-27; Lev_24:19-20; Heb_10:26-31). - MSB

"Pharoah tried to drown the Jewish boy babies, but it was his own army that eventually drowned in the Red Sea [Exo_1:22; Exo_14:28]. Haman planned to hang Mordecai on the gallows and to exterminate the Jews; but he himself was hanged on the gallows, and his family was exterminated (Est_7:10; Est_9:10). King Saul refused to obey God and slay the Amalekites, so he was slain by an Amalekite (2Sa_1:1-6)."

The saints refer to all believers, and the prophets are those who delivered messages from God to humankind (cf. Rev_11:18; Rev_18:24). The angel affirmed that those guilty of slaying the saints and prophets deserve what they get. They took lives contrary to God's will, and now God is taking their lives in exchange. - Constable

÷Rev_16:7
Rev_16:7

CF Rev_6:9, cf. 5th Seal where we saw souls under the altar that had been slain. This pinpoints this judgment as God's vengeance for the sheading of the blood of his saints.

heard another . .

from the altar . .

And I heard the altar saying . . The horns of the altar had already spoken in Rev_9:13. This seems to refer to (1) souls that are under the altar (cf. Rev_6:9; Rev_14:18) or (2) the prayers of God's children (cf. Rev_8:3-5). It may also be simply a personification for graphic emphasis. - Utley

Even so . .

Lord God Almighty . .

true and righteous are Your judgments . . This may be an allusion to Psa_19:9; Psa_119:137. This is a helpful reminder in the midst of such terrible persecution toward Christians (cf. Rev_15:4; Rev_19:2). God will set all things straight one day! - Utley

÷Rev_16:8
Rev_16:8

cf. Rev_6:12, Rev_8:12

fourth *angel* . . The effects of the fourth angels bowl is upon the sun.

In OT these metaphors of the "heavenly bodies" (sun, moon, stars) was in reference to the governing leaders in those nations (kings, princes, governors, judges, etc.) Isa_24:23; Eze_32:7-8;

scorch men with fire . . God's wrath on national leaders is pictured in this metaphor.

> This plague was the symbol of the punishment inflicted on the persecutors who had blasphemed God in the assumption of the powers and prerogatives of God by compelling the worship of the emperor's image; and had thus branded the mark in the hands and on the foreheads of all who bowed in submission. - Wallace

with fire (ἐν πυρί) . . Lit., "*in* fire." The element in which the scorching takes place. - VWS

÷Rev_16:9
Rev_16:9

men were scorched . . This shows this metaphor is about men; men who are anti-God and will not repent and thus they receive the wrath of God.

they blasphemed . . Instead of repenting. The proper response to God's judgments should be man's repentance.

> [When two 747 planes collided on the ground on Canary Island- the cockpit recording showed that the last word of the pilot was a curse with God's name!]

they did not repent . . The purpose of God's wrath is redemptive in the seals and trumpets (cf. Rev_9:20-21; Rev_14:6-7; Rev_16:9; Rev_16:11), even though stubborn, rebellious mankind refuses to repent. In the bowls the hope of repentance has passed; only judgment remains! - Utley

give Him glory . . Man's purpose in life is to glorify his Creator. These had turned against the Almighty Lord God.

÷Rev_16:10

Rev_16:10

Fifth Plague.

the throne of the beast [seat] . . The throne of Rome was afflicted. Again, God's wrath being poured out. Nero killed himself to avoid the order of the Senate-- causing a brief civil war!!

John might be alluding to Rome, the political power of his time. Built on seven hills (Rev_17:9), Rome's empire spanned the sea (Rev_13:1) and ruled the world (Rev_13:7). - NLTSB

kingdom full of darkness . . For a year the people didn't know who was going to emerge strong enough as there were three men who vied to take the throne, and it was Vespasion who came to power (AD 70)

The kingdom of the beast was *full of darkness* in Palestine. The same metaphor was used by Isaiah (Isa_13:10) to describe the fall of ancient Babylon; and Jesus adopted the same figure of speech (Mat_24:29) in foretelling the darkness that settled over the Jewish state in the fall of Jerusalem. The same use of the symbol was made here in verse *ten.* - Wallace

and they . . the "men" of v.8; the senate and other leaders in Rome "gnawed their tongue" in their distress; and rival to the throne killed off each other before Vespasian came in and took control.

gnawed their tongues . . a metaphor for the distress of the those around the "beast."

÷Rev_16:11
Rev_16:11

blasphemed the God of heaven . . The title "the God of heaven" was often used by Daniel Dan_2:18. It appears in the NT only here and in Rev_11:13.

their pains, and their sores . . They had "gnawed their tongue" in the metaphor, and now suffer the pain from it. The *pain-metaphor* would continue to fit the scorching of the sun in Rev_16:8-9; and the sores of the first bowl Rev_16:2.

...*gnawed their tongues for pain*--the symbol of retribution for the lies of deception and seduction their tongues had spoken; which was the method employed to brand the subjects of their deceit with the mark of emperor-worship. And in evidence of entire allegiance to the beast-power *verse eleven* declared that these representatives of Rome *blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.* - Wallace

and did not repent of their deeds . .

The plagues on Egypt were sent to expose the false gods of Egypt and cause the Egyptians to trust the God of Israel. The "curses" of Deut. 27–28 were sent to restore unbelieving Jews to faith and obedience.- Utley

"The Scriptures plainly refute the notion that wicked men will quickly repent when faced with catastrophic warnings of judgment. When confronted with the righteous judgment of God, their blasphemy is deepened and their evil purpose is accentuated." - Walvoord, *The Revelation* . . ., p.

235.

÷Rev_16:12
Rev_16:12

Sixth Plague: River Euphrates is dried up.

Sixth *angel* **. .** Lit "the sixth"

Euphrates . . Called "the great river" 5 times in Scripture (cf. Rev_9:14; Gen_15:18; Deu_1:7; Jos_1:4), it flows some 1,800 mi. from its source on the slopes of Mt. Ararat to the Persian Gulf (*see note on 9:14*). It forms the eastern boundary of the land God promised to Israel (Gen_15:18; Deu_1:7; Deu_11:24; Jos_1:4). - MSB

Euphrates . . This river was mentioned in Rev_9:13-19 [in the sixth trumper, here the sixth bowl of wrath] when the demonic army crossed its borders to torture mankind. - Utley

The point seems to be that a restrain is removed that holds back a judgment of God upon Babylon, like in the prophesies of Isaiah and Jeremiah. - WG

great river Euphrates . . The Euphrates River served as Rome's eastern border and protected Rome from invasion by the Parthian Empire. If the Euphrates were to dry up, Rome would be threatened. - FSB

The Jewish leaders in Jerusalem had hoped he Parthians would join their revolt against Rome (Josephus' ***Wars*** 7:4:2-3)
Referring to the way that the ancient Babylon was actually captured by Cyrus, by drawing off the water of the Euphrates into a reservoir, so as to make its bed passable for a few hours. Though not mentioned in **Dan. 5**, nor by Cyrus in his lately discovered account of the capture, there seems no doubt that this incident is historical: the details given in Hdt. I. 191 agree exactly with those of the predictions in Isa_44:27, Isa_45:3; Jer_50:38, Jer_50:44, Jer_51:30-32, Jer_51:36.- CBSC

water … dried up . . Recalls God's promises to judge Babylon and restore his people (Isa_11:15; Isa_44:27-28; Jer_50:38; Jer_51:36). - NIVZSB

water was dried up . . With its flow already reduced by the prolonged drought and intensified heat, God supernaturally will dry it up to make way for the eastern confederacy to reach Palestine (Is. 11:15). - MSB

the kings of the east . . Rather, **from the east**. In 17:16 we hear of the kings of the earth combining to attack Babylon, and the Euphrates *may* be dried up, only that the kings from the east may be able to advance to bear their part in the assault. - CBSC

the way of the kings from the east . .

÷Rev_16:13

Rev_16:13

three . . Apparently one each out of the mouth of the three here mentioned, thus three. - WG ["an unholy trinity" - MSB].

three unclean spirits . . In the next verse**,** Rev_16:14 "spirits of demons" that are liars and deceitful. A

deceiving spirit had lured King Ahab into battle, 1Ki_22:21-23. - WG

like frogs . . Like the plagues of Egypt, an allusion to Exo_8:1-15, God's judgment & punishment; not literal frogs, are in view here. Something to the Jewish mind was considered very vile and detestable, Lev_11:11; Lev_11:41. - WG

(It may well be that the church of John's day understood the very specific meaning of these symbols.)

Unclean spirits emerge as **frogs** (cf. Exo_8:2-11) from the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet in order to deceive world rulers with delusions of victory over "the Lord and … his Anointed" (Psa_2:1-2) - ESVSB

mouth of the dragon . . = Satan, The Devil; Rev_12:3; Rev_12:9;

mouth of the [sea] beast . . = Rome

mouth of the false prophet [land beast] . . Identified by Rev_19:20 with the second beast of Rev_13:11. False pagan religious foes, (Rome's supporting religious forces).

This is the first time that the second beast (cf. Rev_13:11) is called "the false prophet," but from now on he will be referred to by this name every time (cf. Rev_16:13; Rev_19:20; Rev_21:10). - Utley

These three are referred as "the unholy trinity" and their defeat is in two stages; the sea beast and the false prophet in the valley of Megiddo (cf. Rev_16:12-16); and Satan at the end with the second coming of Christ, cf. Rev_20:7-10.

False prophet specifies the identity and activity of the "second beast" of Rev_13:11-17. God's people are repeatedly warned of prophets who are not authorized by God yet promote false teaching and deceptive prophecies among the covenant community (Deu_13:1-2; Jer_14:14; Lam_2:14; Mat_7:15; 2Pe_2:1; 1Jn_4:1-3). Jesus rebukes the churches in Pergamum and Thyatira for tolerating false teachers and prophets (Rev_2:14-15, Rev_2:20). - NIVZSB

[See H.B. Swete at this point for Ramsay's (*Letters to the Seven Churche*s, pp. 97, 101, ff) view on the identity of these the "land beast" and "false prophet. H.B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John*]

÷Rev_16:14
Rev_16:14

the spirits of demons . . The frogs, Rev_16:13, from the mouths of the "unholy trinity."

performing signs . . Signs are for the purpose of providing credentials (authentication) that gain the approval or acceptance of the sign-worker. cf. Mar_16:20; Heb_2:4; cf. Mark 13.22.

kings of the earth and . . whole world . . The army that Rome put together to come against Judah and Jerusalem was made up of units from all over the world. [cf. Josephus, *Wars* 5:1:6 and 5:2:1]

gather them to battle . . Titus overthrew Jerusalem with armies from all nations under Rome's control.

that great day of God Almighty . . See Joe_2:11 (Joe_3:2, Joe_3:4) where it was a notable day of God's judgment upon the nation of Israel and Jerusalem for their idolatry and other crimes (where God's agent was rendering justice was the Babylonians).

On this occasion in Revelation, specifically for their rejection of Christ and shedding the blood

of the saints and prophets whom God had sent Mat_23:24-38; Luk_11:50-51 Rev_16:6; Rev_18:24 (where God's agent was an army made up of the vassals of Rome.)

÷Rev_16:15
Rev_16:15

Behold I come . . St John apparently hears, and writes down as he hears, the words of Christ spoken in the midst of his vision. - CBSC

coming like a thief . . cf. Rev_3:3; A picture of being watchful and prepared used by the Lord and other writers of the scriptures. See Mat_24:43-44, where the Lord uses it specifically in the context of Jerusalem's fall and the time of the temple's destruction

See also Paul and Peter's use of the metaphor 1Th_5:2; 1Th_5:4; 2Pe_3:10;

blessed . . The third beatitude in Revelation. (cf. 1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7, 14).

he who watches . . The imagery pictures a soldier ready for battle, or a homeowner watchful for the arrival of a thief. - MSB

[This] Recalls Jesus' rebukes of Sardis (Rev_3:2-3) and Laodicea (Rev_3:17-18) for their spiritual complacency and danger. - NICZSB

keeps his garments . . A metaphor for maintaining a holy life and a right relationship with God.

... his soldiers must stay **awake** and dressed lest they be caught **naked**, to their shame (cf. Rev_3:18). - ESVSB

and keepeth his garments . . The forewarned householder sits up with his clothes on, and the thief will decamp as soon as he sees him. If he were *not* forewarned, he might hear the thief at work, and start naked out of bed, but would be too late for anything but a fruitless chase in unseemly and ridiculous guise. - CBSC

walk naked .. see his shame . . In the ancient Near East, conquering armies often paraded prisoners of war naked to expose them to as much shame as possible (compare Eze_23:24-29). - FSB

Titus actually did parade his prisoners from Jerusalem in a procession in Rome celebrating his victory. Whether they were actually naked or not I do not know. - WG

÷Rev_16:16
Rev_16:16

And he gathered them . . More probably, **and they** [the unclean spirits] **gathered them**. The sentence goes on from the end of *v.* 14, *v.* 15 being strictly parenthetical. - CBSC

they gathered them . . Apparently in the sense that they gathered themselves together, or assembled at this location.

called in Hebrew . . But the insertion of "in the Hebrew tongue" perhaps indicates, that the meaning of the name Megiddo (which is apparently "cleaving") is more important than the geographical note. - CBSC

Armageddon . . Harmagedon .. Har-Magedon .. This word is spelled differently in several Greek manuscripts. There have been several theories to describe this name (which appears nowhere else in Hebrew or Greek literature): - Utley

"***Ar***" = the city of, (KJV); or "***Har"*** = Mountain of, (RSV).
Only time ***Armageddon*** is mentioned in all the Bible is here. Mt or hill of Megeddo. The most prominent place of battle in the O.T. times.
Jdg_5:19 * Deborah
Jdg_6:33; Jdg_7:1 * Gideon
1Sa_31:8 * Saul killed
2Ki_9:27 * Jehu slew Ahaziah there
2Ki_23:28-29 * Josiah killed by Pharaoh Neco
Megeddo = symbolized where righteousness and unrighteousness fought. To say "***Armageddon***" was like us speaking of "*The Alamo*", "*Waterloo"* and "Pear Harbor", "Remember the Main!" *Normandy"*

Armageddon . . The spelling which has the best authority is "Harmagedon." The meaning, according as we read *Ar* or *Har*, is "the City" or "the Mountain of Megiddo."

But the insertion of "in the Hebrew tongue" *perhaps* indicates, that the *meaning* of the name Megiddo (which is apparently "cleaving") is more important than the geographical note.

There is some truth (though some exaggeration) in the description of the plain of Esdraelon as "the battle-field of Palestine:" but the only occasions when *Megiddo* is mentioned in connexion with a battle are Jdg_5:19, 2Ki_23:29 (cf. Zec_12:11). Of course Megiddo or its neighbourhood ("the Mountain of Megiddo" might be Tabor or that conventionally called Little Hermon) - CBSC

Armageddon . . "Mount Megiddo" in Hebrew.
Megiddo, also called the Plain of Megiddo (2Ch_35:22; Zec_12:11), was an ancient city that Solomon fortified (1Ki_9:15). Megiddo was strategically located along the main highway from Egypt to Syria in the Jezreel Valley and was the site of key battles (Jdg_5:19-21; 2Ki_23:29) - NIVZSB

Armageddon . . The Greek word used here, *harmageddōn*, could be a reference to Megiddo in the Esdraelon plain, but this is not definitive since Megiddo is a plain, not a mountain (the first part of the Greek word, *har*, is Hebrew for "mountain"). In the ot, Megiddo was the site of significant conflicts (e.g., Jdg_5:19; 2Ki_9:27; 2Ch_35:22).

John may be drawing on a well-known battle site to indicate symbolically the final conflict between God and the dragon, as he has elsewhere drawn on the symbolism associated with Babylon (see Rev 14:8 and note) and Mount Zion (see Rev_14:1 and note) - FSB

Armageddon . . The Heb. name for Mt. Megiddo, 60 mi. N of Jerusalem. The battle will rage on the nearby plains, site of Barak's victory over the Canaanites (Judg. 4), and Gideon's victory over the Midianites (Judg. 7). Napoleon called this valley the greatest battlefield he had ever seen. - MSB

The name ***Armageddon*** (or *Harmagedon*) is probably derived from *har* ("mountain," "hill") plus *Megiddo,* which was one of the three cities fortified by Solomon along with Gezer in the south and Hazor in the north (1Ki_9:15). The fortress of Megiddo stood on a hill in the largest pass through the Carmel range, strategically guarding the Jezreel Valley. The city was situated on the Via Maris, the main highway between Egypt and Mesopotamia. Many armies used this route, and the site became known as a bloody battlefield. It was here, for instance, that Pharaoh Neco, on his way to fight the Assyrians, killed Josiah (2Ki_23:29). - NLTSB

Armaeddon . . This becomes a symbolic term to indicate a great battle. Not to be understand as a battle at this

literal site, but used as a metaphor or an idom for a great warring contest.

Rev_16:17

Rev_16:17

Verse 17 is parallel to Rev_10:7 and the 7th trumpet. and the *It is Finished.*

the seventh . . Pours out his bowl of God's wrath.

into the air . . Lit. **upon the air**, according to the best reading. Nothing further is said about the air.

As defined before, the symbol of the air represented the sphere of life and influence of the wicked nations. In **Eph_2:1** Satan was named the ***prince of the power of the air--*** not the actual exercise of power, but of influence***--the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. -*** **Wallace**

loud voice out of the temple . . God's voice, the one in Rev_16:1.

It is done . . "It is done!" is best translated, "It has been and will remain done" (cf. Joh_19:30). - MSB [repeated in Rev_21:6]

More literally, **it is come to pass**: but the same word is used in St Luk_14:22 - CBSC

With the outpouring of the final bowl God announced that His series of judgments for this period in history was complete. This statement is proleptic since it anticipates the completion of the seventh bowl judgment, which John had yet to reveal (cf. Rev_21:6). - Constable

'**it is done**,' 'it has come to pass'; ...here the singular refers to the whole series of plagues now completed, or to the decree which set it in motion; ... The Voice is specially appropriate in this connexion, since these plagues are "the last" (Rev_15:1); there remain no further manifestations of this kind. - CBSC

"**It is done*!***" . . The battle is over, *It is finished*, see. Rev_10:7

The great voice from the temple-throne that ordered the plagues, understood to be that of God Himself, now declared the end in vs. 17 ***--it is done--*** that is, the plagues had been accomplished, the mission of the seven angels had been fulfilled. - Walace

"It is finished!" . . Jesus uttered these same words from the cross when he had finished his work (Joh_19:30). No one can ultimately fight God. Therefore, this scene pictures an end to rebellion against God. What remains are various descriptions of the end. - NLTSB

What is done, finished? -- Luk_21:20. John views this from the end, as something that is to *shortly come to pass*, Rev_1:1-2. It is the completion of God's wrath against "the great city" v.19, also known as the "great Babylon" Rev_16:19. (Jerusalem, Rev_11:8)

When the great Dragon, Satan, is also judged and men stand before God's throne for judgment, and the righteous receive heaven, this statement "***It is done!***" is repeated, Rev_21:6.

Rev_16:18

Rev_16:18

God speaks -- not a time like this before!

Rev_10:7 **//** Luk_21:11 **//** Mat_24:21 parallel

noises and thunderings and lightnings . . Rev_8:5, Rev_11:19. Here the best reading is **lightnings and voices and thunders**. - CBSC

Among the strongest of indications that God is speaking. Joh_12:29; Such as at Mt Sinai, and other intense moments when God express His will.

great earthquake . . . Rev_6:12, Rev_11:13; but this earthquake seems distinguished from those as surpassing

them greatly in degree: - CBSC

These eschatological signs symbolize the destruction of the anti-God forces throughout the world (cf. Heb_12:27). So great is the earthquake of God's judgment that it reaches the strongholds of organized evil represented by the cities of the pagans. Even the great city Babylon, which seduced all the earth's kings and inhabitants (Rev_17:2), now comes under final sentence - EBCNT

earthquake ... not since men were on the earth . . A hyperbolic way of saying "the most violent earthquake of all time." - FSB

Since we are told these are "*signs*" or "*symbols*", **Rev_1:1**, we are not to take the description here as literal but are to understand this as an event that greatly shakes the politico-historical situation in the world such as never before. The destruction of the Jewish economy had it's effect upon the entire world since scatter Jews occupied positions of wealth, political power, trade and merchandising, was catastrophic.

such as was not ... cf. Dan_12:1; Mat_24:21;

16:18–20 The catastrophic events of this judgment scene recapitulate the scenes portraying the destruction of the world (Rev_6:12-14; Rev_11:13). They also foreshadow the final judgment (Rev_20:11-15) when the earth will be dismantled to make way for the new creation (Rev_21:1; cp. Isa_45:2; Rom_8:19-22). - NLTSB

16:18 Lightning, thunder, and the greatest earthquake this planet has ever experienced will accompany, and to some extent produce, the desolation that follows. The storm theophany again appears at the end of another series of judgments (cf. Rev_8:5; Rev_11:19). These are signs of divine judgment, but this earthquake is much larger than any previous one (cfRev_6:12; Rev_8:5; Rev_11:13, Rev_11:19; Hag_2:6; Heb_12:26-27). - Constable

÷Rev_16:19

Rev_16:19

great city divided . . The great earthquake, a symbol political upheaval, left Jerusalem was divided into three opposing and warring factions. (Rev_11:8)

In the US we are use to political symbols on the editorial page of newspapers. For example, if the morning after an election we see the cartoon of gleeing elephant swinging a donkey around over head and then jumping up and down on it, what come to you mind? There seems to have always been such symbols. cf. Gen_49:6-22 the symbols and banners of each of the 12 tribes of Israel, etc. And Daniel's symbols for the great empires of the world.- WG

Josephus 5:1:1 (read)

"... it so happened that the sedition at Jerusalem was revived, and parted into three factions, and that one faction fought against the other; which partition in such evil cases may be said to be a good thing, and the effect of Divine justice. Now as to the attack the zealots made upon the people, and which I esteem the beginning of the city's destruction, it hath been already explained after an accurate manner ..."

the great city . . Probably *Jerusalem*, as in Rev_11:8. It seems pointless to suppose *Babylon* to be mentioned twice over: while on the other view there is a climax. - CBSC

three parts . . It is just possible that there may be a reference to the three parties of John, Eleazar, and Simon, into which Jerusalem was divided at the time of its siege by Titus. - CBSC

cities of the nations fell . . Not only Jerusalem but "cities" are to feel the effect of God's wrath upon "great Babylon". See Eze_5:5

Babylon ... Rev_17:5 The city is referred to also as a woman, a harlot. She is to receive a special outpouring of God's wrath as prophesied in Isa_13:6-13. Chapters 27-18 give details of its destruction and effect.

Cup of wine of God's wrath .. Note that the *Battle Hymn of the Republic* alludes to this concept also. Rev_14:10

the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath . . Drunkenness was an OT metaphor for God's judgment (cf. Psa_60:3; Psa_75:8; Isa_51:17, Isa_51:22; Jer_25:15-16, Jer_25:27-28). - Utley

÷Rev_16:20
Rev_16:20

Symbolic of great distress, (earthquakes and volcanos). (Rev_6:14)

Many commentary writers forget Revelation's introduction in Rev_1:1 that the revelation is in "*signs*" and tend to make Rev_16:18-21 literal. But it is "*signs*" or "*symbols*" of God's judgment upon a city that was to "*shortly come to pass"* for "*the time is at hand*" (Rev_1:3) to those to whom the letter is addressed.

And lest the readers have forgotten the imminence of the fulfillment of this prophecy, the writer again reminds us as he closes his writing, Rev_22:6; Rev_22:10.

While chapters 17 and 18 can be used by many to say the city prophesied is about Rome, the fall of Rome was too far into the future of the readers in those seven church to whom this was sent. The fall of Rome was not *"to shortly come to pass*" nor was "*the time at hand*" when this was written.

All the internal evidence of the book and it's correlation with Christ's own prophecy points to Jerusalem as the "Babylon" and the "harlot" in the book. It's government was supported and endorsed by Rome until when it turned and devoured the city and nation.

every island fled away . . As sinking into the sea.

every island fled . . Because of the quake in v. 18, the earth appeared to be running away. This type of language is used to describe divine punishment in the ot (e.g., Nah_1:3-5).- FSB [cf. Psa_97:5; Mic_1:4]

mountains were not found .. There is no hiding place from God's wrath.

÷Rev_16:21
Rev_16:21

cf. Isa_28:2

great hail from heaven . .

huge hailstones . . Hailstones have always been the sign of God's judgment (cf. Jos_10:11; Isa_28:2). This is another possible allusion to the Egyptian plagues (cf. Exo_9:24). - Utley

weight of a talent . . The weight of the hailstones is intended for us to see that there is no escape the *certain* wrath of God.

While some notice that the stones thrown by the engines at the siege of Jerusalem are said to have been of a talent weight, this is again the temptation to slip into a literal understanding of something that is symbolic of awesomeness of God's wrath.

about one hundred pounds each . . This is literally "a talent weight." The weight of "talents" in the Ancient Near East has varied from 45 to 138 pounds. Their exact weight is unknown, but these are obviously exaggerated weights to show the damage and death they will cause. - Utley

men blasphemed God . . Judgment, wrath and adversity don't always turn people back to God.
Example: a speaker in B'ham who had been present at the Canary Island runway collision of two planes which was the worse plane disaster of all time,(fireball, etc. see Readers Digest article about it), said that the cockpit recording revealed the pilots last words as he realized the disastrous collision was imminent was a curse using God's name. Instead of a prayer, a curse!

blasphemed God . . Despite the severity of these plagues, the people of the world again ***cursed God*** rather than recognizing his reason for the judgments (see Rev_9:20; Rev_16:9, Rev_16:11). - NLTSB

plague was exceedingly great . . It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of an angry God. (Jonathan Edwards) see Heb_10:27; Heb_10:31.

By such language John describes the rising pitch of God's wrath on the rebellious powers of the earth. - ECBNT

Rev_17:1
Rev_17:1

Chapter 17 - **The Harlot: Babylon The Great**
Babylon's Characteristics, vv. 1-6
Babylon's Relationship To The Sea Beast, vv. 7-14
Babylon's Unmistakable Identity, vv. Rev_17:15-18

We begin to see the God's judgment against the four pictured enemies in reverse order in which the enemy were introduced.

Ch. 17 = The Fall of Babylon (v.1 "***the great whore***") This chapter describes the judgment of Babylon referred to in Rev_14:8 and Rev_16:19. The city is identified in Rev_11:8 "***where our Lord was crucified***."

one of the seven angels . . Introduce in Rev_15:1, and Rev_16:1. Another angel is described the same way in Rev_21:9.

Come and I will show you . . Which had been exhibited, and described in general terms, in Rev_16:19; but the seer is now to have a nearer view of it, and describe it in detail. - CBSC

judgment of the great harlot . . The prophets often depict cities using female imagery such as a bride, wife, or prostitute (e.g., Isa_1:21; Isa_23:17; Eze_23:2-4). - FSB

great whore . . The fornication is figurative of religious unfaithfulness. The symbolism for unfaithfulness to God is pictured as a "harlot", whore, or prostitute. Isa_1:21 Jer_2:20; Jer_3:9; Jer_4:30; Jer_51:4, (Jer_51:7 * said of literal Babylon)

Prostitution frequently symbolizes idolatry or religious apostasy (cf. Jer_3:6-9; Eze_16:30 ff.; eze 20:30; Hos_4:15; Hos_5:3; Hos_6:10; Hos_9:1). Nineveh (Nah_3:1, Nah_3:4), Tyre (Isa_23:17), and even Jerusalem (Isa_1:21) are also depicted as harlot cities. - MSB

sits on many waters . . Is explained in vs Rev_17:15 as "peoples, multitudes, and nations..."

Many writers believe chapter 17 and 18 points to Rome as the fulfillment of "Babylon" and the "Harlot." And while it seems to fit with many of the allusions, one must not forget the power of the Jewish heirarch over the world through its Jewish citizens who were scatter throughout the Roman Empire.

One of the principle reasons Rome was unhappy with Judah was how Jerusalem controlled so much of the wealth in the Empire. With Jews often holding Roman citizenship they were involved in the banking and trade throughout the empire with tithes being sent annually to Jerusalem. The Roman world thought all that wealth to be banked in the Jerusalem temple. Herod the Great had started the magnificent building and his building projects prove he was one of the best at this in the world during his time.

And lest the readers have forgotten the imminence of the fulfillment of this prophecy, the writer again reminds us as he closes his writing, **Rev_22:6; Rev_22:10.**

While chapters 17 and 18 can be used by many to say the city prophesied is about Rome, the fall of Rome was too far into the future of the readers in those seven church to whom this was sent. The fall of Rome was not "***to shortly come to pass***" nor was ***"the time at hand***" when this was written.

The strong internal evidence of the book and it's correlation with Christ's own prophecy points to Jerusalem as the "***Babylon***" and the "***harlot***" in the book. It's government was supported and endorsed by Rome until when Rome itself turned and devoured the city and nation.

:Rev_17:2
Rev_17:2

kings of the earth . . The harlot allied herself with the world's political leaders. Fornication here does not refer to sexual sins, but to spiritual unfaithfulness.

fornication . . Symbolized for spiritual infidelity. Isa_1:21, Jer_2:20
The symbol is taken from Jerusalem pictured as a harlot and a murderer of God's faithful saints.

"Religious compromise necessitated in this kind of association is totally incompatible with the worship of the one true God, and so amounts to spiritual prostitution." Thomas, *Revelation 8–22*, p. 284.

inhabitants of the earth . . See note on Rev_12:12.

wine of her fornication . . The imagery does not describe actual and sexual sin but the intoxication of her selfish greed and spiritual unfaithfulness to God.

This prostitution has two primary aspects: (1) commercial alliances (cf. Tyre, Isa_23:13-18; and Nineveh, Nah_3:4); and (2) political alliances which involved the contractual worship of the gods of the nations in the ratification ceremonies (cf. Jerusalem also called a harlot in Isa_1:21 and Jer. 3). Frequently this involved ritual prostitution. - Utley

÷Rev_17:3
Rev_17:3

So he carried me away in the spirit . . In a vision John seemed to himself to be carried away, and the scene which he is about to describe was made to pass before him as if he were present.

> This verb, ἀπήνεγκέν, *carried away* is used of angels at death of Lazarus in Luk_16:22; and in the ecstasy of Rev_21:10, and here.
>
> The angel-guide not only invites (δεῦρο), but carries the Seer away, transporting him to the scene of the vision. The verb is used of the ministry of angels at the moment of death (Luk_16:22 ,,, or during an ecstasy (as here and in Rev_21:10): - CBSC

in the spirit . . A phrase used to introduce John's visions Rev_1:10; Rev_4:2; Rev_17:3; Rev_21:10. It may be used by John as a transition of structure, or it may be used to continue to emphasize he is under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and thus this is inspired revelation.

> John was transported by the Holy Spirit in a prophetic vision, as was Ezekiel (Eze_3:12; Eze_11:24; cf. 2Pe_1:21; Rev_19:10). - ESVSB
>
> The movement took place ἐν πνεύματι, i.e. in the sphere of the Seer's spirit, impelled by the Spirit of God; cf. 1:10, 4:2, - Swete

into the wilderness . . The Holy Spirit transports John into the wilderness (a deserted, lonely, desolate wasteland), perhaps to give him a better understanding of the vision. - MSB

> This may be (1) a metaphor of a place of safety (cf. Rev_12:6, Rev_12:14); (2) the idea of one coming out of the world system in order to view it objectively, or (3) an allusion to the ancient city of Babylon found in Isa_21:1-10, where it is a metaphor of judgment. - Utley

a woman sitting on a scarlet beast . . ***Scarlet*** - color of prostitution and wealth. The ***woman*** is riding the ***beast,*** the same beast as in Rev_13:1. The beast carried her along but in the end he is the agent who brings God's judgment upon her Rev_17:16-17.

> The high priesthood, the ruling counsil, and even the kings of Judah and Galilee servied at the pleasure of the Roman government.
>
> The harlot (Babylon=Jerusalem) is pictured at the time when she was supported and carried along by Rome

beast ... seven heads and ten horns . . Since this beast is a seven-headed monster, there is no cogent reason against identifying it with the first beast in ch. 13, which is also inseparable from the seven-headed dragon of ch. 12. - EBCNT

÷Rev_17:4

Rev_17:4

the woman . . The woman is described by her dress. cf. Jer_51:7 it is the dress of a harlot. The cup is full of her sins for which she will have to drink of God's wrath.

The woman is portrayed as a prostitute who has plied her trade successfully and become extremely wealthy. - MSB

... Jerusalem, **"the faithful city become an harlot."** It was a lurid picture of the spiritual condition of Jerusalem and all Judea. - Wallace

purple and scarlet . . Denotes royalty. nobility, wealth and luxury, cf Rev_18:16-17.

Scarlet refers to immorality, or simply a metaphor for luxury, wealth, and opulence, cf. **Rev_18:12; Rev_18:16.** - Utley

precious stones and pearls . . Lavish ornamentation used for beautification (cf. Rev_18:16). = FSB

precious stone . . Lit. **stone**, used, of course, collectively.- CBSC

adorned with god and precious stones and pearls .. Prostitutes often dress in fine clothes and precious jewels to allure their victims (cf. Pro_7:10). The religious harlot Babylon is no different, adorning herself to lure the nations into her grasp. **- MSB**

Both prostitute and bride are adorned in **gold**, **jewels**, **pearls**, and fine linen (cf. Rev_18:16; Rev_19:8; Rev_21:18-21). Babylon's apparel is opulent **purple and scarlet**, while the bride's is bright, pure white. As the beast portrays the state's power to coerce religious conformity through violence, so the prostitute symbolizes the seductive appeal of a worldly economic system driven by the quest of affluence and pleasure (Rev_18:11-19). The disgusting brew that brims from her **golden cup** drives her lovers insane (cf. Jer_51:7). - ESVSB

Dressed in queenly attire (Eze_16:13; cf. Rev_18:7), the woman rides the beast, swinging in her hand a golden cup full of her idolatrous abominations and wickedness. Note the contrast—beauty and gross wickedness. Her costly and attractive attire suggests the prostitute's outward beauty and attraction (Jer_4:30). - EBCNT

a golden cup . .[goblet] See Jer_51:7 already quoted. We can hardly say that the cup serves her to drink the blood of saints and martyrs (*v.* 6), but it is meant to suggest that she is drunken and invites to drunkenness, as well as to uncleanness. - CBSC

The golden cup filled with wine alludes to Jeremiah's description of Babylon's world-wide influence in idolatry (Jer_51:7). Her cup is filled with "abominable things" —things most frequently associated with idolatry, which was abhorrent to Jews and Christians alike (Rev_21:27). - EBCNT

full of abominations and filthiness . . Still another evidence of the harlot's great wealth (cf. Jer_51:7); but the pure gold is defiled by the filthiness of her immorality. Just as a prostitute might first get her victim drunk, so the harlot system deceives the nations into committing spiritual fornication with her. - MSB

abominations . . Jesus used this word to refer to Daniel's "*abomination that causes desolation*" standing in the temple (Mar_13:14 cf. Dan_9:27; Dan_11:31; Dan_12:11).

÷Rev_17:5

Rev_17:5

on her forehead . . It was common for prostitutes to wear wore headbands bearing their name, cf. Jer_3:3.

Probably not branded on the flesh, but tied on as a label, as Roman harlots actually did wear their names. - CBSC

Seneca's *Controversies* 1:2 and Juvenal's *Satires* 6:122–123 record that Roman whores wore a band with either their own name or the name of their owner on their foreheads. - Utley

a name was written . . This harlot's forehead bore a 3-fold name that was descriptive of her. 1) Babylon; 2) mother of harlots; 3) abomination.

a mystery . . Indicates a mysterious name -- one with a hidden meaning that require interpretation. - FSB

"Mystery". . is not part of the name, and should not be capitalized as in the KJV, but see the NASV, here. The name is a mystery name (i.e. hidden, or symbolic).

The mysterious name "***Babylon***..." secret, symbolic for JERUSALEM. (see Rev_11:8)

Babylon the great . . The woman on the beast, all decked out as a harlot, wears a mysterious name, "***Babylon***", a name to hid or conceal what it symbolizes, but one of the several clues is Rev_11:8.

mother of harlots . . Rather "**of the harlots**" and a source of the abominations. She is the chief of these.

the abominations of the earth . . see Rev_17:4 for ***abominations***.

:Rev_17:6
Rev_17:6

the woman drunk . . "Babylon" had martyed prophets and apostles, Rev_16:6; Rev_11:18; as Jesus had charged, Mat_23:35; Luk_11:47-51; Luk_21:20-22.

with the blood of the saints . . Whereas the prophets and saints are previously mentioned together (see Rev_11:18; Rev_16:6), they are separated here by the double occurrence of the Greek preposition *ek* ("with"). This may indicate that two different groups are in view: - FSB

drunken with the blood of the saints . . See PERSECUTION, TOPIC #3 Mat_23:35; Luk_11:47-51; Luk_21:20-22

Act_8:1 *Paul one of many persecutors. cf. Act_9:1-2; Act_9:29; Act_12:1-3; Act_22:4, Act_22:20; Act_26:10-11; 1Th_2:15
cf. Stephen, James (brother of John), Peter, Paul (Acts 22)

The woman was envisioned as ***drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus,*** in verse six. This not only referred to the fact that Jerusalem had slain the prophets as in **Mat_23:29-39**; and been **"betrayers and murderers,"** as charged by Stephen in **Act_7:52**; and was the city **"where also our Lord was crucified,"** as in **Rev_11:8**; but it was her apostasies that had caused the persecutions which had overwhelmed the land, and Jerusalem was therefore responsible for the blood of the saints and the martyrs symbolized throughout the apocalypse. - Wallace

blood of the witnesses of Jesus . . The word μαρτύρων (μάρτυς = *martys*) "witnesses" or "martyrs".

John's point is that the harlot is a murderer. False religion has killed millions of believers over the centuries - MSB

marveled with great amazement . . It was something awesome to see.

When John saw this adorned harlot sitting on the beast, he ***wondered with great admiration.*** The word wonder here means that the meaning had not yet been revealed, as it was done in the visions that followed. - Wallace

great admiration . . = great wonder, amazement, not approving what was done!

admiration . . Better, **wonder**, the substantive used being cognate to the verb. Of course "admiration" is not meant in the modern sense of the word. - CBSC

÷Rev_17:7

Rev_17:7

The MYSTERY to be explained to John.

the angel . . Angels often interpret key events in apocalyptic literature (e.g., Dan_7:16; Dan_8:15-16). - FSB cf. Zec_1:8-9 ff; Rev_7:14

Wherefore didst thou marvel? . . Again the word should be **wonder**. For the angel's surprise at the seer not comprehending at once, - CBSC cf. Rev_7:14.

I will tell you the mystery . . The angel will explain the symbolic meaning of the harlot riding on the beast.

I will tell thee .. The "I" is emphatic: "*I* will tell thee, since *thou* findest it so strange." - CBSC

In response to John's amazement, ***the angel*** prepares him to understand the ***mystery*** (Rev_17:8-14). - NLTSB

First the beast is described and identified (Rev_17:7-8), then the seven heads (Rev_17:9-11), the ten horns (Rev_17:12-14), the waters (Rev_17:15), and finally the woman (Rev_17:18). John's astonishment over the arresting figure of the woman on the beast is quickly subdued by the interpreting angel's announcement that John will be shown the explanation of the divine mystery of the symbolic imagery of woman and beast. - EBCNT

the woman . . The woman (Jerusalem) and the sea-beast (Nero of the Roman empire). The beast is explained first Rev_17:8-14; the woman is not defined til Rev_17:18.

seven heads and ten horns . . The beast supplied the woman's power and purpose. He had seven heads and 10 horns, which the angel explained later (vv. 9–10). - Constable

÷Rev_17:8

Rev_17:8

the beast . . Both a king and kingdom are referred to in this term. - MSB

In Rev_13:18 he is described as a man, 666, Nero, as he represents the Roman empire, Rev_15:2. - WG

was, and is not . . The beast that the woman was riding on, ie Rome, and as personified by Nero. He was, and is not .By the time of this judgment, Nero will have killed himself (in June A.D. 68) and plunged Rome into a

struggle by men wanting to take his place.

Rome looked like she would die from her civil wars but did not. In Rev_13:3 one of the heads (in the first context possibly Julius Caesar when he was assassinated) but here Nero, as he stands for Rome in general.

will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go into perdition . . The judgment on the beast is that he is kept in sheol/hades until the final judgment and then go into eternal perdition.

perdition . . Eternal destruction (cf. Rev_17:11; Mat_7:13; Joh_17:12; Php_1:28; Php_3:19; 2Th_2:3; Heb_10:39; 2Pe_2:3; 2Pe_3:7, 2Pe_3:16). This is the lake of fire - MSB

those who dwell on the earth . . Those who are not in the Book of Life (probably referring to the vassal rulers and kingdoms) as they see the Roman empire survive the leadership struggle and emerge with Vespasian as the new Caesar.

will marvel .. (wonder, be astonished, be amazed) .. The world and it's rulers wonder if somehow the Roman empire will survive this struggle for power after Nero's death.

The wording "was, now is not, and will come" may imply to some that this letter may have been written just after Nero's death, June AD 68, and just before a successor to him is evident to the world.

However it may also be prophetic in that John is carried into the future and sees this as it is happening in the future.

the Book of Life . . Rev_3:5 The record of those who will inherit eternal life (Rev_20:12; Exo_32:32-34; Dan_12:1). Eternal life is given to believers in Jesus (Joh_3:16-17). - FSB

from the foundation of the world . . cf. Tit_1:2; ("before time began"). A frequent phrase (Mat_13:35; Mat_25:34; Luk_11:50; Joh_17:24; Eph_1:4; Heb_4:3; Heb_9:26; 1Pe_1:20) used to refer to God's plan before the beginning to redeem those in Christ (Eph_1:4-7).

was, and is not, and yet is . . For a while, about a year, the vassal rulers didn't know who to support or what the outcome of the civil war would be for Rome.

Four of Nero's generals, Galba, Otho, Vitella, and Vespasian (who won out) fought to take the leadership of Rome after his death. It took Vespasian nearly a year to consolidate his position.

Rev_17:9
Rev_17:9

who has wisdom . . Some in the church who had the spiritual gift of "wisdom" would be able to tell the congregation (Rev_1:4) definitively who was the beast of whom John spoke. (cf. Rev_13:18, and 1Co_12:8)

The seven heads are seven hills . . The woman is sitting on a beast with seven heads. These "hills" or "mountains" are described in the next verse as "kings". In prophetic language kings and kingdoms are called mountains. cf. **Dan_2:44-45.**

seven heads . . The seven heads of the beast also represent seven kings. - FSB

Since we are told in the next verse these "hills" are **kings**, why insist on taking to be literal and trying to find a city on seven hills to represent the beast? - WG

John's use of numbers elsewhere in the book likewise argues against the Roman Empire identification. He

has already shown a disposition for their symbolic significance—e.g., seven churches, seals, trumpets, bowls, and thunders; twenty-four elders; 144,000 sealed, etc. By his use of seven, he indicates completeness or wholeness. The seven heads of the beast symbolize fullness of blasphemy and evil. - EBCNT

seven mountains . . The reference to the seven ***mountains*** was not subject to a literal application any more than the literalizing of the woman. Mountains were ordinarily the symbols of the seats and positions of political and governmental authority, where power was concentrated.

And while that was true of Rome, surrounded literally by seven hills; it was true also that Jerusalem was the city where apostasy in the realm of religious power was concentrated; and Jerusalem was also surrounded by seven literal mountains: Zion, Acra, Moriah, Bezetha, Millo, Ophel and Antonio; all of which are mentioned in the history of Josephus in connection with the war against Jerusalem (Book 5, Section 5, 8). - Wallace

÷Rev_17:10

Rev_17:10

This verse is one of key verses to dating the composition of the book.

Dating Revelation:

KEY VERSE: **Rev_17:10**

1. Julius Caesar 48 BC - 31 BC
2. Augustus 31 BC - AD 14
3. Tiberius AD 14 - AD 37
4. Caliguia AD 37 - AD 41
5. Claudius AD 41 - AD 54 **"Five are fallen"**

*** 6. Nero AD 54 - AD 68 "one is"**

7. Vespasian AD 69 - AD 79 "**not yet come"**
8. Titus AD 79 - AD 81 **"the eight is of the seventh"**

Vespasian was the general Nero sent to squelch the Jewish Rebellion. After Nero's suicide, he returned to Rome and became Emperor and left his son Titus as commander to continue the conquest of the Jews and Jerusalem.

The "non-emperors" who strove to be Caesar after the death of Nero were the generals: Galba, (7 mo 7 da); Otho (2 mo 2 days) Vitella (8 mo 5 days) but Vespasian won out. It took him nearly a year.

Domitian AD 81 - 96

Trojan AD 98 - 117

seven kings . . The seven "hills" or "mountains" described in v.9 were seven kings.

And there are seven kings . . Rather, **and they** [the seven heads] **are seven kings**: - CBSC

five have fallen . . 1. Julius Caesar, 2. Augustus, 3. Tiberius, 4. Caliguia, 5. Claudius

one is . . Nero

the other has not yet come . . Vespasian

he must remain a while . . Vespasian ruled as Caesar for ten years.

v. 11 **the eighth is of the seven . .** Vespasian was succeeded by his son Titus, and Titus was followed

by his brother Domitian who was also Vespasian's son.

Note #1: Though Julius Caesar was the head of the Roman Republic, it merged into the empire; and the Roman emperors derived the official title ***Caesar*** from Julius.

There can be no reason in fact or history to justify omitting Julius from the count of the Caesars of Rome, and only the demands of a theory to provide a later date for Revelation has caused it to be done. - Wallace

Note #2: Some commentaries who try to make Revelation a prophecy about the fall or Rome say that Domitian who reigned AD 81-96 is the "**seventh**" Caesar. But the text specifically stated that the seventh had not yet come. It is difficult to account for a theory that fixes the chronology of Revelation in the latter part of the Domitian reign when he, **the seventh**, had not come.

÷Rev_17:11
Rev_17:11

the beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth . . Nero, who persecuted the Christians, and t*hat was and is not,* was followed one that was of the seventh (Vespasian) who was very much like Nero himself in persecuting Christians and being ruthless.

and is of the seven . . Two of the following Caesars were "of the seventh" since two of Vespasion's sons followed, Titus and hiis brother Domitian (who many think murdered his brother Titus and because a wicked and ruthless ruler.

and is going to perdition . . Since Domitian was so sever in his punishment of Christians (so much like Nero) it may have been pointed out as the one who was really going into perdition for his crimes. (Though all would be!)

Vespasian reigned well and peaceably, and was succeeded by his elder son Titus, in June 79: who "continued a short space," till Sept. 13th, a.d. 81, when he died, aged 40;—murdered, as some said, by his brother Domitian, who succeeded him, and who was regarded, by pagans and Christians alike, as a revival of Nero (Juv. iv. 38; Tert. *Apol.* c. 7). Like Nero, he persecuted the Christians: like Nero, he indulged in the most hideous vices: though unlike Nero, he had a strong sense of decorum, and was fanatically attached to the Roman religion. - CBSC

÷Rev_17:12

Rev_17:12

the ten horns . . Described as the ten kings or divisions (or provinces, diocese) of the Roman Empire. This is an allusion to Dan_7:23-24.

May stand for *"all"* the kingdoms subjected to Rome.

That they ARE kingdoms, see Rev_17:17.

As though God made all these Gentile nations subject to Rome so they would be strong enough to fulfill this judgment against Jerusalem and be a *"worldly"* (all nations) judgment against the Jews.

ten horns … ten kings. Interprets "the mystery" of the beast's horns in v. 7; alludes to Dan_7:24. May designate the ten provincial governors of Rome, Rome's client kings from conquered territories, or the symbolic power of "the kings of the earth" (v. Rev_17:18; cf. Rev_16:14). **- NIVZSB**

The ten horns are usually understood as either native rulers of Roman provinces or to governors of Palestine. - EBCNT

have received no kingdom as yet . . Kings without a real kingdom, because they only served at Rome's pleasure. They are Roman tributaries who did not have independent rule but were contemporary subordinate rulers in the Roman Empire. (Among such were even Herod the Great, and all the Herods that followed, and of all the divisions of the Roman empire. etc.)

receive authority for one hour . . Their rule is short-lived.

÷Rev_17:13
Rev_17:13

of one mind . . They are united in their support of the Beast (the Roman ruler). Their single aim and common purpose here was the destruction of the harlot, Babylon (Jerusalem).

give their power and authority to the beast . . These worldly kings use their power and strength to the the purpose of the beast. That purpose is revealed in the next verse.

Josephus catalogs how many divisions of the empire came together in making the great army that invaded Galilee and then on to Judea and Jerusalem.

But unknown to them God is using them to fulfill His purpose, Rev_17:17.

÷Rev_17:14
Rev_17:14

make war with the Lamb . . Their persecution of God's saints is spoken of as a ***"war with the Lamb."***

the Lamb will overcome . . Eventually the Lamb will win!

> Whatever power they amass, the beast and ten kings (Rev_17:11-12) have no hope of winning because Jesus is ***Lord of all lords*** (see Rev_19:11-16). - NLTSB

Lord of lords and King of kings . . Almighty God is over all!

Lord of lords and King of kings . . A title for God (Rev_19:16; 1Ti_6:15; cf. Deu_10:17; Psa_136:3) that emphasizes His sovereignty over all other rulers to whom He has delegated authority. - MSB

> **King of kings . .** A title sometimes used for earthly sovereigns (Ezr_7:12; Dan_2:37); applied ultimately to God and Jesus (cf. Rev_19:16; Dan_2:47; Dan_4:37; 1Ti_6:15). - EBCNT

those with Him are called, chosen, and faithful . . Refers to the whole people of God (Rev_14:1-5).

called, and chosen, and faithful . . All common titles of *Christians* applied even to the imperfect Churches on earth. -CBSC

÷Rev_17:15
Rev_17:15

waters … peoples . . Interprets the symbol in Rev_17:1 (cf. Jer_51:13). Some compare Isa_8:7 for the use of *waters* as an emblem of *multitudes*.

The harlot and the beast she sat on were controlling the multitudes, nations, and tongues. Because of the *dispersion* Jews were scattered among the nations and often held the economic power of the nation.

waters . . In prophetic terms it speaks of people, multitudes, nations and tongues.
In the ancient Near East, water was a symbol of chaos and represented severe difficulty. - FSB

÷Rev_17:16

Rev_17:16

ten horns . . - the other nations who joined in with Rome against Jerusalem.

The gentiles nations in the Roman Empire hated Jerusalem and the Jews and joined with Rome in her destruction.

It is declared in verse sixteen that the kings of the empire, represented by the ten horns, hated the Harlot. This is solid proof that the harlot city was not Rome--assuredly the Roman kings did not hate the capital city of the Roman Empire. But they did hate Jerusalem and coordinated their efforts with the emperor to reduce it to the condition here described: - Wallace

desolate ... naked ... burn . . = Figuration and literal language of the destruction of Jerusalem. Mat_23:37-38; Luk_21:22; Luk_23:28-31

Babylon's (Jerusalem, the harlot) former allies will turn against her. In doing so they are carring out God's will.

This is an allusion to Eze_16:39-40; Eze_23:25-27; Eze_28:18. - Utley

÷Rev_17:17

Rev_17:17

fulfill His purpose . . God uses even wicked nations to do his will.

Josephus also makes the point that he consider what happened to Jerusalem to be God's punishment upon it for its wickedness (not necessarily what it had done to Christians, but its wickedness in general) and that God used the nations of the world (Rome's army and mercenaries) to do this. Josephus, *Wars*,

John provides another reminder that God is in control; God puts ***a plan*** into the ***minds*** of the enemy that will fulfill the Lord's divine ***purposes*** (e.g., Exo_7:3; Exo_35:31-35; Ezr_7:27; Rom_9:18, Rom_9:21). - NLTSB

God sovereignly uses even his enemies **to carry out his purpose** and fulfill his words, both for the salvation of his own people (Act_2:23; Act_4:24-28) and for the destruction of the enemies themselves. - ESVSB

In the declaration "***God has put it into their hearts to accomplish his purpose,***" there is another indication of God's use of the forces of evil as instruments of his own purposes of judgment (Jer_25:9-14; cf. Luk_20:18). Nothing will distract them from their united effort to destroy the prostitute until God's purposes given through the prophets are fulfilled (cf. Rev_10:7; Rev_11:18). - EBCNT

ten horns . . We see here each was a kingdom that supported Rome (the Caesar).

words be fulfilled . . The words prophesied about this. Jesus spoke at length giving warning in many parables and sermons., cf especially Matthew 24, Mark 13; Luke 21 & 22

÷Rev_17:18

Rev_17:18

the woman . . Is here identified as that great city (Babylon), Rev_11:8; Rev_14:8 ; Rev_16:19 ,Rev_17:18 ;

Rev_18:10 = Jerusalem.

great city . . Rev_11:8; Rev_14:8; Rev_16:19; Rev_17:18; Rev_18:10 was Jerusalem.

The woman represents "the great city." In the context this undoubtedly refers to Babylon. It is the only city referred to specifically in this chapter (Rev_17:5; cf. Rev_11:8; Rev_14:8).

In **Rev_11:8** Jerusalem is called ***the great city*** under the symbols of Sodom and Egypt, hence the term **"great city"** has been a mystic designation for Jerusalem. In the history of Josephus, Volume 7 of *Wars,* Section 8, 7, the historical term **"that great city"** was applied to Jerusalem. This was both the historical and symbolic designation for Jerusalem. - Wallace

reigns over the kings of the earth . . The next chapter which goes into detail explains how she (Jerusalem) had power of the nations of the earth through her power in trade and banking, etc.

÷Rev_18:1

Rev_18:1

Chapter 18 - God's Judgment Against Babylon

Reasons for Babylon's Fall, Rev_18:1-3
A call to the Saints to Leave Babylon, Rev_18:4-5
The Call for Double Punishment, Rev_18:6-8
Lamentations Over Babylon's Destruction, Rev_18:9-19
The Heavens, Apostles, and Prophets Rejoiced, Rev_18:20
The Desolation of Babylon, Rev_21:1-24

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The approaching fall of Jerusalem, under the symbol of Babylon was envisioned in this chapter. It pictured the overthrow of Judaism and the Jewish state as having been actually accomplished when in fact it was an apocalyptic forecast of an event still future, described in the details of past occurrence. - Wallace

After these things I saw . . cf. Rev_4:1

another angel ... from heaven . . Apparently not the same as in Rev_17:1; Rev_17:7, Rev_17:15, but one of the same kind as in Rev_17:1.

having great authority . . Apparently for destruction - CBSC

authority . . This was a tremendously powerful angel. The term "authority" (*exousia*) is not used for any other angel in the book. In Joh_5:27, it is used of God's authority given to Jesus. - Utley

This angel possessed great authority and glory, probably indicative of the importance of the judgment he announced. - Constable

the earth was illuminated by his splendor . . Recalls the judgment motif of Eze_43:2-3. The light emanating from the angel lit up the whole world and identified him as God's messenger. - FSB

earth was illuminated with his glory . . The fifth bowl (Rev_16:10) will have plunged the world into darkness. Against that backdrop, the sudden, blazing appearance of another angel (not the same as in Rev_17:1, Rev_17:7, Rev_17:15) will certainly rivet the world's attention on him and his message of judgment on Babylon (cf. Rev_14:8). - MSB

His great glory, with which he illuminated the earth, probably suggests that he had just come from God's presence (cf. Exo_34:29-35; Eze_43:2). - Constable

This ***angel*** derived his splendor ***from heaven***. The word ***splendor*** is normally used for the divine presence. - NLTSB

The Angel ... comes down from heaven expressly charged with this mission (cf. Rev_10:1, Rev_20:1); he possesses great authority (Rev_13:2), to enable him to enforce his sentence; so recently has he come from the Presence that in passing he flings a broad belt of light across the dark Earth—a phrase used of the Vision of God in Eze_43:2 f. - Swete

Rev_18:2
Rev_18:2

See Isa_13:19-22 for literal Babylon's fall; and see Jeremiah 50-51 for a terrible description of the fall of Babylon and her utter desolation forever.
Figurative language pictures the judgment of the Harlot in the likeness of Babylon's fall.

cried mightily with a loud voice . . We should read "*with a mighty voice"* - CBSC

"Babylon the great is fallen" . . See note at Rev_14:8; For picture of OT Babylon's fall, Isa_21:9; Jer_51:8; In Revelation the identity of the "great city" symbol is given in Rev_11:8.

The Gr. text views the results of this as if it had already taken place (*see note on 14:8*). - MSB

fallen, is fallen . . The repetition of the word "Fallen" (cf. Rev_14:8; Isa_21:9; Jer_51:8) probably indicates that God guaranteed this judgment and that it will happen quickly (Gen_41:32; cf. 2Pe_3:8). This is another proleptic announcement in which the angel described a future action as already having happened. Constable
(The prophetic aorist tense of the Greek verb makes this clear.)

In words similar to those of the prophets who encouraged the people of God as they faced ancient Babylon, the angel announces that Babylon the Great, Mother of all the earthly prostitute cities, has fallen (cf. Isa_21:9; Isa_23:17; Jer_51:8 with Rev_14:8; rev 18:2), using words reminiscent of the judgment announced against ancient Babylon (Isa_13:19-22; isa 34:11; Jer_50:39). - EBCNT

a dwelling place of demons . . People no longer inhabit the city as a result of the destruction and judgment.

Similar vengeance is denounced on the literal Babylon, Isa_13:21-22, and on Edom, id. Isa_34:13-15. It is not quite certain which of the words used in those passages are names of demons or goblins, and which of terrestrial birds and beasts: but there is little doubt that Isaiah, like St John, means to describe *both* as occupying the desolated city. - CBSC

a prison for every foul spirit . . (the hold) . . Probably **a prison**, not a fortress. It is the same word that is translated "**cage**" in the next clause, and "prison" in 1Pe_3:19. - CBSC

foul . . Literally *unclean*.

a cage for every unclean and hated bird . .John probably envisions carrion fowl—birds that eat flesh (see 8:13 and note; 19:17–18). The Greek word for "bird" here and in ch. 19 differs from the word used in ch. 8; it is normally used to refer to birds that are unclean for religious reasons (Deut 14:12–18). However, the two

categories are not necessarily mutually exclusive—several flesh-eating fowl appear on Moses' list. - FSB

> This is an allusion to the ruins of ancient cities: (1) Babylon (cf. Isa_13:21-22; Isa_14:23; Jer_50:39; Jer_51:37); (2) Edom (cf. Isa_34:10-15); and (3) Nineveh (cf. Zep_2:14). In the OT animals are often said to roam about in ruined cities. This is a symbol of both destruction and the presence of evil spirits (cf. NEB). Many of these birds represented demons.
> John's writing is very fluid. This verse describes the city as desolate and indwelt with the demonic, while Rev_19:3 describes it as burnt and smoldering. - Utley

÷Rev_18:3
Rev_18:3

Drunk of the wine . . the Jews scattered in every nation had become unfaithful and their influence was the same.

kings of the earth have committed fornication . . Rev_17:2***;***

> The political, economic, commercial system that originated in Babylon and that leaves God out seems to be in view here. Her philosophy has influenced all the nations that have acted immorally as a result and grown rich at the expense of and in defiance of others. Babylon's influence has been worldwide. Political self-interest and materialism are its chief sins (cf. Rev_18:23). **-** Constable

> The repetition in *verse three* of the harlot's winecup, representing her multiplied forms of seduction. The reference to ***the kings of the earth*** was used in the sense of the rulers and authorities of Judea and Palestine; and the reference to ***the nations*** was a designation for the heathen. - Wallace

Merchants . . One of her powers was her Jewish traders.

> There are three groups of humans who mourn the fall of the great whore: businessmen (cf. vv. 11–16), kings of the earth (cf. vv. 9–10) and merchant sailors (cf. vv. 17–19). These three represent human economic systems. - Utley

Waxed rich . . *P*robably figurative but also true literal. The wealth of other nations had been siphoned off to Jerusalem by their allegeance to the Jewish heirachy and sending tribute to the temple.

Merchants ... have become rich . . Jewish trade controlled the wealth of the world practically speaking. Jewish bankers, etc controlled the economy (cf. Act_8:27 illustrates this also, very much like today, the textile industry, the diamond market, the film industry, and many other industries).

> Jerusalem was rich because many of these Jews thus sent their tithes (1/10) back to the High Priest at the Jerusalem Temple.

the abundance of her luxury . . Two classes in Babylon (Judah and Jerusalem) would be especially: 1) the ruling class "had committed formication" and 2) the mercantile class would suffer as their fate was tied to commerce and trade.

> The writer has in view the graphic description of the collapse of the trade of Tyre given by Ezekiel (26–28.); cf. also Isaiah's reference to Babylon (Isa_47:15). Allusions to trade in the N.T. are fairly frequent (cf. Mat_13:45, Mat_22:5, Mat_25:14, Jas_4:13) - Swere

÷Rev_18:4

Rev_18:4

a voice from heaven . . An authorative voice, evidently an angel who speaks for God from heaven gives a directive to God's people. It is an aorist, active, imperative, which speaks of the urgency of God's people not getting caught in the city.

Come out . . This echos the Lord's directive to his people when he gave the warning in person to them to flee Jerusalem when the signs of its doom came near Mat_24:16; Luk_21:20-21;

Josephus says that many eminent people left Jerusalem after the first withdrawal of the Roman troops, AD 67. Josephus II, 19 (page 497) Eusebius, Bk3 ch 5, p. 86.

This directive is similar to Isa_48:20; and Jer_51:6 Isa_52:11; Jer_50:8, Jer_51:9 Jer_51:45, all referring to the flight of Israel from the literal Babylon.

God directs his people today to come out from the world and live differently, 2Co_6:17, 1Jn_2:15.

my people . . An appeal and warning to the saints still in Babylon (Jerusalem).

lest you share in her sins . . That is, those saints staying in the city would share (not in the guilt) in the destruction that would be coming upon the city.

lest you receive of her plagues . . Judgment against Babylon (Jerusalem) had not yet occurred as it fully would be when John wrote Revelation. This then is another indicator the book was written before A.D. 70.

God will not forget her crimes, which are multiplied to the height of heaven (v.5; cf. Gen_18:20-21; Jer_51:9). Her punishment will fit her crimes (v.6; cf. Psa_137:8; Jer_50:15, 29; Mat_7:2). This OT principle of lex talionis is never enjoined on God's people in the NT but, as here, is reserved for God alone (Mat_5:38-42; Rom_12:17-21). "Mix her a double portion from her own cup" (cf. Exo_22:4, 7, 9; Isa_40:2) reflects both the ideas of the severity of God's judgment on those who refuse to repent and the truth that God's wrath is related to the outworking of sin (cf. Rom_1:24-32). - CBSC

÷Rev_18:5

Rev_18:5

sins have reached up to heaven . . The Greek verb *kollaō* means "to cling or attach to" (see Luk_10:11). The imagery describes sins that stick to each other, pile up before God, and eventually reach heaven. - FSB

for her sins are piled up as high as heaven . ." This is an allusion to Jer_51:9. God's patience was used as an excuse to sin more, instead of repenting (cf. Rev_2:21; Rom_2:4). - Utley

God has remembered . . cf. Rev_16:19; God does not remember the iniquities of His people (Jer_31:34), but does remember to protect them (Mal_3:16 –4:2). For unrepentant Babylon, there will be no such forgiveness, only judgment. - MSB

God remembered Jerusalem for shedding the blood of all the prophets he had sent to them, and would not require justice from them, Mat_23:30-38; Luk_11:47-51; Mat_23:35; Luk_21:20-22; Rev_18:20-24

÷Rev_18:6

Rev_18:6

Reward her . .[pay her back; give her back] as to what Jerusalem did unto the apostles and prophets (see Rev_18:20 and the linking passages there.)

Pay her back even as she has paid . . This is an allusion to the truth that we reap what we sow (cf. Gal. 6:7). This truth is presented in many different forms in the Bible (cf. Psa_137:8; Jer_50:15, Jer_50:29; Mat_7:2; Rev_13:10). - Utley

repay . . The angel calls for God to recompense wrath to Babylon in her own cup to repay her according to her deeds. This is an echo of the OT law of retaliation (Exo_21:24) which will be implemented by God (Rom_12:17-21). - MSB

Render to her as she herself rendered . . The thought is founded on Psa_137:8; Jer_50:15, Jer_50:29, and the expression on the former passage. - CBSC

repay her double . . Echoes the prophetic censures in the ot (compare Jer_16:18; Jer_17:18). - FSB

give back to her double according to her deeds . . This is an allusion to Jer_16:18 and Jer_17:18, but the truth is expressed in many contexts (cf. Exo_22:4-9; Psa_75:7-8; Isa_40:2). This phrase speaks of complete and full judgment. This verse would have been very encouraging to persecuted Christians. - Utley

mix double for her . . Refers to the drink's potency, not a double amount of liquid. A restatement of "repay her double" in the preceding clause. - FSB

the cup which she has mixed, mix twice for her . . "Cup" is an OT metaphor for the judgment of God (cf. Psa_11:6; Psa_60:3; Psa_75:8; Isa_51:17, Isa_51:22; Jer_25:15-16, Jer_25:27-28). - Utley

double unto her . . See Jer_16:18; where however the vengeance is on *jerusalem*. - CBSC

> "This is not a prayer for personal vengeance by the persecuted saints, but a heavenly interpretation of the divine response to cruelty committed by wicked persons who have passed the point of no return in their moral choices. The last hour has now struck, and it is too late for repentance. This is a judicial pronouncement against a sinful civilization that has reached the ultimate limit of evil." [quoted by Constable; Thomas, *Revelation 8–22*, pp. 322–23. Cf. Kiddle, pp. 366–67; Hughes, p. 190.]

÷Rev_18:7
Rev_18:7

> Babylon: Proud and arrogant.

glorified herself and lived luxuriously . . Luxurious living provides another reason for Babylon's judgment. Her claims of superiority and self-sufficiency echo those of ancient Babylon (cf. Isa_47:7-9; Eze_27:3; Eze_28:2; Zep_2:15). They also recall the words of the Laodicean church (Rev_3:17). - Constable

I sit as queen . . Echoes the boastful claims of OT Babylon (Isa_47:7-9) - FSB

am no widow . . - Lamentations, and Hosea pictured Jerusalem as a widow. (As Amos gave a lamentation over Samaria.)

am no widow . . A proud, but empty, boast of self-sufficiency, also made by historical Babylon (Isa_47:8). Cf. 1Co_10:12. - MSB

will not see sorrow . .

÷Rev_18:8
Rev_18:8

her plagues will come in one day . . Describes a very short time (compare Isa_47:9). - FSB

> This is a specific allusion to Isa_47:9. The concept of grief overtaking her in a single day is repeated in Rev_18:17-19, where the Johannine term "hour" is used. - Utley

death and mourning and famine . . This accurately describe a city under siege and it's final destruction by fire.

utterly burned with fire . . If to be taken literally, it would describe Titus' treatment of Jerusalem, AD 70.

> The words "consumed by fire" (cf. Rev_17:16) may refer to the destruction of a city (cf. Rev_18:9, Rev_18:18) - EBCNT

the Lord God who judges her . . It was God Himself who passed judgment on this Babylon (Jerusalem). This is parallel also to what Josephus said of Jerusalem's fall. *The Jewish War*, VI 2.1-2.

> The ***plagues*** (18:2–3) are a reminder that destruction was not merely a human action; it is the ***Lord God who judges her***. He ***is mighty***, able to accomplish what he promises. - NLTSB

÷Rev_18:9
Rev_18:9

> **9–19** Even quick reading of Ezekiel 27 shows that John has in mind Ezekiel's lamentation over the fall of ancient Tyre. Those who entered into fornication with the great mother prostitute wail over her destruction. John describes the end of the great symbol of evil, Babylon the Great. - EBCNT

the kings of the earth . . Political leaders who had ties to "Babylon" politically and economically.
Perhaps some of these themselves had taken part in her destruction as a part of Rome's scripted army. They were apparently merchant naions who benefited from commercial trade and banking with "Babylon".

lived luxuriously . . Their alliance with "Babylon" had sustained them and enabled them to live luxuriously.

Deliciously . . = sensuously, luxuriously

will weep and lament . . "Weep" means "to sob openly." "Lament" translates the same Gr. word used to express the despair of the unbelieving world at the return of Christ (Rev_1:7). - FSB

the smoke of her burning . . cf. Gen_19:28.

÷Rev_18:10
Rev_18:10

Standing afar off . . The kings of the earth stand afar off so as not to be included in such punishment by Rome as well. Not daring to approach, to attempt to rescue and save her.

These verses form the threnody of kings, merchants and seamen--their song of lamentation, as a dirge over Jerusalem, the fallen city. They were represented *in verses nine and ten* as having thrived on her harlotries, but cut off from the lucrative revenues of her commerce they were envisioned as ***standing afar off,*** offering no help but bewailing the plight of besieged Jerusalem: ***Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.*** **- Wallace**

Alas, alas . . Woe, woe.

÷Rev_18:11
Rev_18:11

Merchants of the earth . . This was almost a synonymous term for Jews (even today). The merchants lament because of trade connections.

With Jerusalem's fall Jews everywhere suffered a setback and discrimination. They affected the economy of the world in that the leaders in world trade were Jewish.

This coming referred to the destruction of Jerusalem, as in **Zec_14:1-21**; and the declaration that ***every eye shall see him*** referred to the universal knowledge of what was happening to Jerusalem; and ***all the kindreds (tribes) of the earth shall wail*** denoted the mourning of all Jewish families in all parts of the world over the destruction that had befallen their beloved city. - Wallace

÷Rev_18:12
Rev_18:12

merchandise of gold and silver . . . Zec_14:14 Jerusalem held a lot of the world's riches. Her scattered citizens send their tithes and visited often. They prospered in the world where ever they went. They controlled banks, and shipping companies, and businesses, and in all this forgot God and rejected the Messiah. - DJ

The rulers, merchants and mariners of Palestine bewailed the calamity ***for no man buyeth their merchandise any more.*** The valuables of the merchandise in which this trade consisted were listed in *verses twelve to fourteen.* The description of ***gold, purple and spice*** were symbols of the flow of commerce which characterized Jerusalem's prosperity. But with the severance of all trade, deprived of all commerce, the authorities of Judea, the merchants and the shippers, once associated with Jerusalem in all of her luxury and wantonness, then stood aloof as witnesses of the destruction, deploring the devastation; but only to bewail her plight. - Wallace

÷Rev_18:13
Rev_18:13

See RWP for information in each individual word.

cinnamon and incense . . the trade list continues.

fragrant oil . . A very costly perfume (cf. Mat_26:7, Mat_26:12; Joh_12:3). - MSB

frankincense . . A fragrant gum or resin imported from Arabia and used in incense and perfume (Son_3:6; Mat_2:11). - MSB

slaves, even souls of men . . This addition is an explanation of the use of *sōmata* for slaves, "human live stock" (Swete), but slaves all the same. Perhaps *kai* here should be rendered "even," not "and": "bodies even souls of men." The slave merchant was called *sōmatemporos* (body merchant). - RWP

slaves and human lives . . The Greek phrase used here also appears in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the ot) to represent prisoners of war and slaves (Num_31:32-35; 1Ch_5:21; Eze_27:13). Approximately one-third to one-half of the Roman Empire's population consisted of slaves. - FSB

> While chapter 18 may sound favorable to interpreting "Babylon" as Rome, we must remember that the description also fits Jerusalem as well and all the other factors as well.

÷Rev_18:14
Rev_18:14

the fruit . . (Gr. *opora*, lit. ripe autumn fruit) these merchants so desire is no longer available (cf. Jer_40:10, Jer_40:12; Jud_1:12). - Constable

the luxury and the splendor . . The Greek phrase used here, *ta lipara kai ta lampra*, translates literally as "the fatty things and the shiny things." *Ta lipara* likely refers to delicacies and foods associated with a lavish lifestyle (see Rev_18:13). *Ta lampra* describes objects of gold, silver, jewels, and pearls (see Rev_18:12) - FSB

luxurious and splendid . . This is a word play on the Greek terms *lipara* (luxury) and *lampra* (splendid). - Utley

never to be recovered . . The Greek construction of the last clause indicates that these things will never ever return. - (Robertson, 6:442. There are two double negatives.)

> The Seer sees them all gone, and gone for ever; another summer, another ingathering, is not to be hoped for; never again will be found (οὐ μὴ … εὑρήσουσιν, - Swete

÷Rev_18:15
Rev_18:15

> **18:15** Again the merchants bewail their fate. Selfishness and greed characterize these individuals. They too, like the kings, stand at a distance viewing the destruction of the city (cf. Rev_18:10, Rev_18:17). - Constable

the merchants . . The **merchants**, **who gained wealth from** the great prostitute (Rev_18:15) issue a lengthy lament, since the great prostitute especially represents the lust for materialistic acquisition and luxury. - ESVSB

> The extensive traffic in thirty articles specified by John represented the affiliations of the Jewish capital with all the heathen world. Included in this commercial revenue was the traffic in ***slaves, and souls of men--*** meaning the lives of men. There was no source of revenue from the heathen world not included in the coalition between Jerusalem and the merchants of the earth, as described in *verses fifteen and sixteen.* - Wallace

÷Rev_18:16
Rev_18:16

Alas, alas . . Rev_18:10 "Woe, woe" ["Terrible!" NCV; Doom, doom" MSB]

The refrain (v.16) also shows the blending of the prostitute image of ch. 17 ("dressed in fine linen," etc.; cf. Rev_17:4) and the city image of ch. 18 ("O great city"). - EBCNT

clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet . . The same description as the prostitute ("Babylon") in Rev_17:4 - FSB

adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls . . The merchants still think only of its money they will miss and deplore, not of the city and its people.

stones … pearls . . Both these words should be collective singulars. - CBSC

÷Rev_18:17
Rev_18:17

In one hour . . = a short time.

come to nothing . . [laid waste; made desolate; come to naught; wiped out; been destroyed; brought to ruin; came to nothing]

shipmaster . . Singular used for the collective body of shipmasters. They like the kings and merchants are concerned only for the wealth they will miss in their trade, but they show no concern for the people.

sailors . . cf. Eze_27:29; This picture by John come from OT prophets, particular Ezekiel's picture of the fall of Tyre.

The sense is more general than the A. V.: it will include all three classes, shipmasters, sailing merchants, and sailors. - CBSC

This is an allusion to **Ezek. 26–28** (city of Tyre), where those employed in the transportation of these luxuries mourned because their own livelihoods had been affected. - Utley

Babylon . . The cryptic name for the prostitute, for Jerusalem, who has persecuted the apostles and prophets. Rev_11:8

÷Rev_18:18
Rev_18:18

While the Jewish world lamented over the destruction of their holy city Jerusalem and its spectacular temple (undoubtedly one of the building wonders of the world at the time), political leaders and the merchants lamented over their loss for purposes of gaining wealth.

the smoke of her burning . . Rev_14:11; (of Edom, Isa_34:10;) Rev_18:9; Rev_19:3

What is like this great city? . . cf. Eze_27:32. This expresses what an important role politically but especially economically Jerusalem was in that first century AD.

Their cry, **"What city was like the great city?"** no longer ascribes incomparable excellence (Rev_13:4) but mourns incomparable destruction (Eze_27:32). - ESVSB

÷Rev_18:19
Rev_18:19

And they cast dust on their heads . . A common sign of mourning and grief among the Orientals. See the notes on Job_2:12. (cf. Jos_7:6; 1Sa_4:12; 2Sa_1:2; 2sa 15:32; Job_2:12; Lam_2:10; Eze_27:30).

People earlier behaved similarly over Tyre's demise (Eze_27:30).

Alas, alas . . These sea people also echo the laments and repeat the behavior of the kings (Rev_18:10) and the merchants (Rev_18:15, Rev_18:16-17). - Constable

became rich by her wealth . . 'by reason of her valuableness,' i.e. her great wealth, - Swete

one hour . . One brief period of swif judgment.

desolate . . - left, forsaken by God - Mat_23:38.

÷Rev_18:20
Rev_18:20

A VERY IMPORTANT KEY VERSE

Rev_18:20 is the parallel of **Luk_21:20-22**. Christ himself had prophesied it and it is fitting that John shows us that the fulfillment of the Lord's prophesy "at hand" and is to "shortly" come to pass in the last book of the holy scriptures, **Rev_1:1**; ***Rev_1:3***; **Rev_22:6**; **Rev_22:10**.

Rejoice . . Note the CONTRAST of others surveying her judgment
*** Rev_6:10; Rev_18:24
**** // Luk_21:20-22
Luk_18:7
Mat_23:34-36
Luk_11:47-51
Rev_6:9-10

Rejoice over her . . In contrast to the mourning of the world's political and economic systems, those who have been oppressed by the great city rejoice over its demise (compare Jer_51:48). - FSB [Some think it also may a reference to Deu_32:43, WG]

Rejoice over her . . Rev_12:12. There may be a reminiscence of Jer_51:48. We cannot tell if the words are those of the angel of Rev_18:1, of the voice of Rev_18:4, or of the seer himself: perhaps the second is most likely. - CBSC

you holy apostles and prophets . . Should probably read, ***the saints and the apostles and the prophets***.

God has avenged you on her . . The saints under the altar of sacrifice in Rev_6:10 had cried for vengeance. Jesus says in Luk_21:20-22 that they days of vengeance would come with the destruction of Jerusalem.

God would avenge His own who cry out to him Luk_18:7.

Jesus said the city of Jerusalem would be held accountable for the righteous blood of the prophets, and that such accountable would come upon that generation to whom to spoke, Mat_23:34-36. Luk_11:47-51; Rev_6:9-10

Throughout the book, God's judgments are connected with the prayers of His children (cf. Rev_6:10). - Utley

÷Rev_18:21
Rev_18:21

a mighty angel . . Lit. **one strong angel**. - CBSC
The strong angel (cf. Rev_5:2; Rev_10:1) also explained his symbolic action. Babylon's destruction will be sudden, violent, and permanent. - Constable

a stone like a great millstone . . Millstones were large, heavy stones used to grind grain. This metaphor portrays the violence of Babylon's overthrow. Cf. Jer_51:61-64; MSB
In Mat_18:6 a stone used for grinding grain. Lit. *"the millstone of an ass"*—a stone so large it took a donkey to turn it. Gentiles used this form of execution, and therefore it was particularly repulsive to the Jews. - MSB

threw it into the sea . . Another allusion to the destruction of literal Babylon by the prophet Jeremiah who cast a stone and scroll into the Euphrates to show that Babylon would "sink, to rise no more", Jer_51:63-64. Symbolizing total destruction Jer_51:63-64; Luk_17:2. (cf. ESVSB)

The final lament over the fall of Babylon, spoken by an angel, is poignant and beautiful. A mighty angel picks up a huge stone like a giant millstone (four to five feet in diameter, one foot thick, and weighing thousands of pounds) and flings it into the sea. One quick gesture becomes a parable of the whole judgment on Babylon the Great! Suddenly she is gone forever (cf. Jer_51:64; Eze_26:21), leaving only melancholy behind. - EBCNT

with violence . . [with a mighty fall, with a violent force] Lit., **with a rush** or **dash**. R. V. "with a mighty fall." - CBSC

'As this stone is flung into the deep, so shall Babylon vanish.' Ὁρμήματι, *impetu*, 'with a rush,' like a stone whizzing through the air; cf. Deu_28:49 - Swete

Great city Babylon . . Jerusalem's political and religious power was lost.

(This designation for Jerusalem as ***Babylon*** makes at least suspect the appearance of the word in the 1Pe_5:13 .)

thrown down, ... not be found anymore . . This is an allusion to Jer_51:63-64. It is a strong passage showing that Babylon will never, never rise again. As a matter of fact, in Rev_18:21-23, there are six DOUBLE NEGATIVES, "certainly not," "not under any circumstances," and "never, no, never." - Utley

÷Rev_18:22
Rev_18:22

The destruction was complete, Jerusalem was not inhabited for a time.

harpists, musician, flutist, and trumpeters . . The joyous sounds of feasts, festival, celebrations, and even of commerce in economically good times will disappear - FSB

the voice of harpers &c . . Isa_14:11, of Babylon, Eze_26:13, of Tyre, are certainly parallels: compare also Isa_24:8, which is as similar as the passages of Jeremiah referred to on the following passage, and apparently, like them, spoken of the unfaithful Jerusalem. - CBSC

anymore . . A hyperboly to express and stress the thought of the utter destruction.

no craftsman . . The first to inhabit the area of Jerusalem were nomadic bedouin shepherds.

> No more music, no industry, no preparing of food ("millstone"), no more power for light, and no more weddings because God will destroy the deceivers and deceived. - MSB

the sound of a millstone . . Jer_25:10 or literal Babylon.

> These were the sounds of everyday life in the ancient near east. God's judgment brings an end to this godless society (cf. **Isa. 24; Jer. 25:10; Ezek. 26**). - Utley

:Rev_18:23
Rev_18:23

light of a lamp . . There will be darkness in all the city, no one there !

the voice of bridegroom and bride . . Recalls the language used to describe the loss of joy in Jer_7:34; Jer_16:9; and Jer_25:10. - FSB

For your merchants were the great men . . [the most important people] . . Jewish merchants not only carried goods, but their religious practices as well all over the known world. As a result they became rich, and Jerusalem became well known. cf. Isa_23:8 (of Tyre); Nah_3:4 (of Nineveh).

all the nations were deceived by your sorcery . . This is an allusion to Nah_3:4. Notice that in Rev_18:23-24 there are listed three reasons for the fall of the great city: (1) pride and wealth (cf. Isa_23:8); (2) idolatry and sorcery (cf. Lev_19:26, Lev_19:31; Deu_18:9-12); and (3) persecution of the people of God (cf. Rev_16:6, Rev_17:6). - Utley

> The angel gave three reasons for this devastation, two in Rev_18:23 and one in Rev_18:24. **First**, men whom the world regards as great have enriched themselves and lifted themselves up in pride because of Babylon's influence (cf. Isa_23:8). **Second**, as a result of the first reason Babylon has seduced all nations. She deceived all the nations into thinking that joy, security, honor, and meaning in life come through the accumulation of material wealth. She used sorcery (cf. Rev_9:21) to seduce the nations into following her (cf. 2Ki_9:22; Isa_47:9, Isa_47:12; Nah_3:4). The **third** reason for Babylon's judgment is that she slew the saints (cf. Jer. 51:35, 36, 49). The angel stated this reason as a fact rather than as an accusation. - Constable

sorcery . . Babylon's **sorcery** (Rev_21:8) has **deceived … all nations**, as the false prophet's signs tricked earth dwellers, small and great, into worshiping the beast (Rev_13:13-16; Rev_17:8). - ESVSB

[Remember that the Sadducees were favored by Rome and the high priest during the 1st century served at the pleasure of Rome. They were the party of the wealth and political elite and at times gave their loyalty and support to Roman rule.]

÷Rev_18:24

Rev_18:24

A KEY VERSE ***

Apostles and prophets to rejoice

in her was found the blood of the prophets and saints . . Luk_11:47-51 ; Luk_18:7 ; Luk_21:20-22 ; Mat_23:34-36 ; Rev_6:9-10 ; Rev_16:6

Rev_17:6 The woman "***Babylon***" drunk with the blood of the martyrs.

The judgment described in Revelation is God's vengeance on Jerusalem for rejecting His Son, and for their persecution of his saints, in both the OT and NT times.

[God being just, takes vengeance upon nations now in this life time -- and on individuals at the Great Day of Judgement. Cf. Rom_12:19 ; Luk_18:7 ; Luk_18:8 ; 1Th_4:16 ; Rev_6:10 ; Luk_21:22 ; (Act_28:4) Rom_3:5 ; Rom_13:4 ; 2Co_10:6 ; 1Th_4:6 ; 2Th_1:8 ; Heb_10:30]

God will avenge that slaughter of His people (Rev_19:2). - MSB

blood of prophets and saints . . The religious and commercial/political systems embodied in Babylon [Jerusalem] will commit unspeakable atrocities against God's people (cf. Rev_6:10; Rev_11:7; Rev_13:7, Rev_13:15; Rev_17:6; Rev_19:2). God will avenge that slaughter of His people (Rev_19:2). - MSB

blood . . Introduces the reason God's judgments are just (vv. 5, 7) and recalls the martyrs' appeals for God to judge persecutors and avenge their blood (Rev_6:10; cf. Rev_18:20; Rev_19:2; Deu_32:43; 2Ki_9:7; Psa_79:10, Psa_79:12; Isa_49:26). - NIVZSB [note at Rev_16:6]

Babylon persecutes those who oppose her idolatry, immorality, and luxury (cf. Rev_6:9; Rev_16:6; Rev_18:24; Rev_19:2) NIVZSB [note at Rev_17:6]

God's "judgments" on Babylon demonstrate his truth and justice and motivate worship (cf. Rev_15:4; Rev_16:7; Rev_18:20; Deu_32:4). ... God answers the martyrs' prayers for vindication (Rev_6:10). - NIVZSB [note at Rev_19:2]

and of all who were slain on the earth . . "Blood violently shed cries out for vengeance until it is rewarded by the punishment of the murderers [cf. Gen_4:10]. The destruction of Babylon answers to that punishment." - Thomas, *Revelation 8–22*, p. 347. [quoted by Constable]

÷Rev_19:1

Rev_19:1

Chapter 19 - Hallelujah Chorus: Judgment Against Two Beasts

Victory Celebration Over Babylon's Fall, Rev_19:1-6
Continued Celebration Over the Lamb's Marriage, Rev_19:7-10
The King of Kings and His Armies, Rev_19:11-16
The Defeat of the Sea and Earth Beasts, Rev_19:17-21

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Joy Over God's Judgment Against the Harlot

A Victory Scene 1-17; - And Punishment 17-21

These heavenly songs are modeled after O.T. counterparts.
"Hallelujah" = 2 Heb words = Praise Yahweh.
Rev_5:2 Psa_70:4 Psa_135:1

There is a striking analogy between these scenes of the church emerging in victory from the period of persecution, described by John in this *nineteenth* chapter, and the deliverance of Israel from Babylonian exile, described by Ezekiel in the closing section of his prophecy from the *thirty-sixth* to the *thirty-ninth* chapters.

The nation of Israel was comforted, and their release was described in terms of a figurative resurrection; and the return to their homeland was pictured as a **"new heaven and a new earth."** (**Isa_66:22**) The closing chapters of Revelation from chapter *nineteen* to *twenty-two* follow the course of Ezekiel's apocalypse of Israel returning from the seventy years of exile, but here the church was seen emerging from the period of persecution. The symbols are similar, and the parallel is evident. - Wallace

After these things . . After the destruction of "Babylon" (the Harlot, Jerusalem).

a great voice . . Read, ***as it were a great voice***. - CBSC
This first song praises God for judging the harlot. After John received the revelation about the destruction of commercial Babylon, he evidently heard another angelic chorus singing loudly in heaven. - Constable

The great castrophe of Revelation, the fall of symbolic Babylon, Jerusalem, also called Sodom and Egypt, bringing an end to Judaism, was envisioned as having occurred. The harps and harpers ceased, giving place to ***a great voice of much people*** rejoicing over the vindication of divine justice, in answer to the cry of the ***souls of the slain*** under the altar, who as a martyred host responded in the ***alleluia*** (hallelujah) of the heavenly chorus. - Wallace

loud voice of a great multitude in heaven . . Probably angels, since the saints join in later (cf. Rev_4:11; Rev_19:5 ff.; cf. Rev_5:11-13; Rev_7:11-12).

a great multitude in heaven . . This is an allusion to Jer_51:48. Chapters 17–18 draw heavily from Jer. 50–51 (the destruction of Babylon) for their imagery. - Utley

saying, "Alleluia! . . *Hallelujah* is the transliteration of a Hebrew term that means “Praise the Lord.” - NLTSB

Hallelujah . . This is a Hebrew command meaning “Praise Yah.” “Yah” is a shortened version of Yahweh.
Verses 1–3 are akin to the *Hallel* psalms (Pss 104–106; 111–118; 120–136; 146–150; from the Hebrew word *halel*, “to praise”). The *Hallel* psalms commemorate God’s deliverance via the exodus event, a theme echoed many times in Revelation. - FSB

Hallelujah . . This Hebrew term means “praise YHWH.” This is the only occurrence of this term in the NT. It appears in this context four times: vv. Rev_19:1, Rev_19:3, Rev_19:4 and Rev_19:6. The OT background to this is found in the praise Psalms used in the liturgy of both the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles (cf. Psa_104:35; Psa_105:45; Psa_106:48; Psa_111:1; Psa_112:1; Psa_113:1; Psa_116:19; Psa_117:2; Psa_125:1, Psa_146:1, Psa_146:10; Psa_147:1; Psa_148:1, Psa_148:14; Psa_149:1, Psa_149:9; Psa_150:1, Psa_150:6). - Utley [translated: "Praise the Lord"]

salvation . . This characterizes God’s desire for all mankind (cf. Eze_18:23, Eze_18:30-32; Joh_3:16; 1Ti_2:4; 2Pe_3:9).

Salvation and glory and power . . This grouping of three is meant to contrast with the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet—who are undeserving and powerless before God. - FSB

belong to the Lord our God . . God is worthy of praise because He has all ***salvation*** (cf. Rev_7:10; Rev_12:10), ***glory*** (cf. Rev_15:8), and ***power*** (cf. Rev_4:11; Rev_7:12; Rev_12:10; 1Ch_29:11).

÷Rev_19:2
Rev_19:2

V.2 begins with the words of the Song of Moses - Deu_32:1 ff. Mat_24:9-10 Mar_13:9 f Rev_18:20;

Vs. 2 continues the contents of their song (Rev_19:1).This group praises God because of His true (fair) and righteous (just) judgments (cf. Rev_15:3; Rev_16:7), especially of the harlot Babylon.

*** **NOTE** The great enemies are introduced and then judgment on them is rendered in reverse order.

Enemy:	Introduced:	Judged:
(1) Dragon,	ch. 12; ch. 20	
(2) Beast	ch. 13; ch. 19	
(3) False prophet	ch. 13; ch. 19	
(4) Harlot	ch. 14; ch. 17-18	

because His judgments are true and righteous . . This may be an allusion to Psa_19:9; Psa_119:138 and Psa_142. This would have been very encouraging to a group of Christians undergoing persecution (cf. v. Rev_19:11; Rev_15:3-4; Rev_16:7). - Utley

true and righteous are His judgments . . cf. see note at Rev_16:7.
(Rev_15:3; Rev_16:7): In his righteous justice, God kept his promise of judging ***the great prostitute,*** - NLTSB

judgments . . Saints long for the day of judgment (cf. Rev_6:10; Rev_16:7; Isa_9:7; Jer_23:5). Godly people love righteousness and hate sin, for righteousness honors God and sin mocks Him. Believers long for a world of justice and it will come (Rev_19:15; Rev_2:27; Rev_12:5). - MSB

For the joy of the Saints in sympathy with God's judgement, see on Rev_14:10. There is a passage somewhat like this in Enoch xlvii. 4: "Then were the hearts of the saints full of joy, because the number of righteousness was arrived, the supplication of the saints heard, and the blood of the righteous appreciated by the Lord of Spirits." - CBSC

because He has judged the great harlot . . The great harlot which goes by several names has fallen: (1) the great city; (2) Babylon; and (3) the prostitute (cf. Rev_14:8; Rev_16:19-21; rev 17:1–18:24).
Verses **1–5** continue the context from **chapters 17 and 18.**

avenged . . God answers the martyrs' prayers for vindication (Rev_6:10). - NIVZSB

He has avenged on her the blood of Her servants shed by her . . This is in fulfillment of Jesus' own prophecy **.** Luk_11:47-51 ; Luk_18:7; Luk_21:20-22 ; Mat_23:34-36 ; Rev_6:9-10 ; Rev_16:6

Some of Jerusalem' persecutions are recorded in Act_4:1-3; Act_5:17-18 Act_5:40 Act_7:58-59 Act_8:3 Act_9:1-2 Act_12:2-3 Act_21:30-31 Act_22:5 Act_23:12, cf. Heb_10:30-34;

:Rev_19:3
Rev_19:3

Again they say . . The song continues.

Alleluia . . Praise YHWH See note on Rev_19:1 on ***Alleluia.***

And her smoke &c. . .[KJV] Perhaps best taken as a part of the anthem. For the word "rose up" should be "riseth." [or "rises"] - CBSC & WG

her smoke rises up forever . . The smoke Babylon's destruction, cf. Rev_18:9

A perpetual testimony of her destruction and God's power (compare Rev_14:11 (Unlike the torture of Rev_9:5, which lasts five months, this final torture is permanent and will not be relieved) and Isa_34:10). - FSB

smoke rises . . This is because of the fire (cf. Rev_17:16, Rev_17:18; Rev_18:8-9, Rev_18:18; Rev_14:8-11). - MSB

It will stop rising when the fire dies out, but the destruction that it symbolizes will be permanent. The punishment of God's enemies will be everlasting (cf. vv. Rev_19:20-21; Rev_14:11; Dan_12:2; Mat_25:46). - Constable

smoke … goes up forever and ever . . symbolizing irreversible judgment (like the millstone in the sea, Rev_18:21). - ESVSB

:Rev_19:4
Rev_19:4

twenty-four elders . . Wore the symbols of priests of God, (OT had 24 courses), in NT represent all Christians.

four beasts . . Four heavenly creatures around God's throne.

A special order of angelic beings (*see note on* Rev_4:6) These compose the same group as in Rev_7:11 and are associated with worship frequently (Rev_4:8, Rev_4:11; Rev_5:9-12, Rev_5:14; Rev_11:16-18). - MSB

fell down . . [They] prostrate themselves before the enthroned God (see rev 4:10; rev 5:8, rev 5.14; rev 7:11). - NLTSB

worshipped God . . In contrast to the earthly inhabitants of Rev_9:20; Rev_13:4, Rev_13:8, Rev_13:12; Rev_14:11. - FSB

Now that the worship of Heaven is again visible to the Seer, they are discovered in the act of adoration as

before (Rev_4:9 ff., Rev_5:8, Rev_5:14). - Swete

Amen . . This term is used in Rev_5:14 and Rev_7:12. It is a form of the OT Hebrew word for "faith" (*emeth*, cf. Hab_2:4). Its original etymology was "to be firm" or "to be sure." It came to be applied in the OT to the trustworthiness of God. However, in the NT, its use is primarily liturgical in the sense of "I agree" or "I affirm." - Utley

Amen . . (the English transliteration of the Gk. word *amēn*, which was itself taken from a word with the same sound in Hebrew, *'amen*) expresses confident certainty (Joh_10:7) or strong agreement (1Co_14:16). - ESVSB

saying, Amen; Alleluia . ." Amen" voices their approval of the two previous expressions of praise (vv. Rev_19:1-3), and "Hallelujah" expresses their own praise (cf. Rev_7:12). - Constable

:Rev_19:5
Rev_19:5

a voice . . Not the Lord's, see Rev_19:10.

Because of the phrase "our God," this must be an angel, not Deity. - Utley

Some think it may be the voice of one of the four living creatures closer to the throne (Rev_4:6-8).

A voice **from the throne** transposes the Hebrew expression "Hallelujah" (see note on vv. 1–2) into the Greek language of John's hearers, with the command, "**Praise our God**." - ESVSB

from . . [Out Of] . . forth from = *direction* rather than source.

Praise our God . . [the Lord] . . Present, Imperative, *all* are commanded. This is the Greek way of saying the Hebrew expression "Hallelujah". This reflects Psa_115:13. * See Rev_19:1 note on "Hallelujah".

It is theologically unusual that an angel would use the words, "Our God," but Rev_19:10 shows that angels identify themselves not only with the saints in service, but also with the saints in their testimony concerning Jesus. - Utley

His servants . . This is an allusion to Psa_115:13 (Rev_11:18).

The reference to "His servants" may have been directed to John and those like him.

and those who fear Him . . Perhaps the distinction here is that "His servants" are evangelists, elders, and those like John, etc. and "those who fear him" are all those who regard Him with reverential awe, respect and obedience.

both small and great . . Psa_115:13. "both" should perhaps be omitted. - CBSC [cf. Psa_135:1, Psa_135:20].

All distinctions and ranks are to be transcended - MSB

All socio-economic distinctions are transcended in the united worship of the church (cf. Rev_11:18; Rev_13:16; Rev_19:18; Rev_20:12) - EBCNT

As God's **servants** include both **small and great**, so also, sadly, does the army that follows the beast

(Rev_19:18). - ESVSB

*** Note the many allusion from the Hallel section of the Psalms in this part of Revelation.**

The Hallel is the name especially applied to **Pss 113–118** (also called "The Hallel of Egypt" because of the references in them to the Exodus). They had a special role in the Feast of Passover. Most Jewish sources associate the Hallel with the destruction of the wicked, exactly as this passage in Revelation does.

These psalms were what Jesus and the disciples sang after the Passover-Eucharist celebration, before going out to the Mount of Olives the night before his death (Mat_26:30). This close connection between the Hallel, Passover Lamb, and the death of Jesus no doubt explains why all the early church liturgies incorporated the Hallel into the Easter and Easter Week liturgies, which celebrate the gospel of redemption from sin, Satan, and death in the victorious triumph of Christ, our Passover.

Two texts in the great Hallel (Psa_113:1; Psa_115:13) are unmistakably cited in Rev_19:5. - EBCNT

The on-going theme of the Hallel is the supreme reign of the Almighty God who subdues all enemies. - WG

÷Rev_19:6
Rev_19:6

This is the response to verse 5. (Rev_14:2)
In this section: **vs. 6-10** we have: 1) God is praised; 2) the bride of the Lamb vs the Harlot who was destroyed; 3) the new Jerusalem vs the fallen Babylon, the Jerusalem that has fallen; 4) the marriage supper of the Lamb

I heard as it were , the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters . . cf. Rev_1:15; Rev_14:2
This is similar to Dan_10:6, where the angelic voice is likened to the sound of a multitude (compare Eze_1:24; Eze_43:2)

These descriptive phrases were used (1) of God in Eze_43:2; (2) of a powerful angel in Dan_10:6; (3) of Christ in Rev. 1:15; and (4) of the redeemed community in Rev_14:2. In context this seems to be an angelic choir. - Utley

and the sound of mighty thunderings . . Rev_6:1, Rev_14:2

Saying . . [One can hardly read this without hearing Handel' "Halleluiah Chorus" in our head.] - WG

They utter the final Hallel in words reminiscent of the great kingship psalms (Psa_93:1; Psa_97:1; Psa_99:1). It is also the prelude to Psa 95–99, which are messianic, and has as its theme the eternal sovereignty of God who will conquer all his enemies. - EBCNT

the Lord our God, the Almighty . . This threefold title for God from the OT (YHWH, *Elohim*, and *El Shaddai*) appears in various forms in Rev_1:8; Rev_4:8; Rev_11:7; Rev_15:3; Rev_16:7, Rev_16:14; Rev_19:15; and Rev_21:22.

The pronoun "***our***" is very unusual because it is spoken by an angel. It appears in no other occurrence with this threefold title. However, the textual evidence for its inclusion is strong: "***Lord the God of us***" - Utley

the Lord God Omnipotent . . Read, **the Lord our God**: and the last word is that usually rendered "Almighty"—rather a name "the Almighty" than an epithet—see on Rev_1:8. - CBSC

Omnipotent . . Greek, "the Omnipotent." Almighty, ruler over all.

Or "***Almighty***." Used 9 times in Revelation as a title for God (cf. v. Rev_19:15; Rev_1:8; Rev_4:8; Rev_11:17; Rev_15:3; Rev_16:7, Rev_16:14; Rev_21:22). The great praise of the multitude sounds like a massive crashing of waves. - MSB

Reigneth . . (*ebasileusen*). First aorist active

Reigneth . . [**reigns**] . . Some Greek texts have the present tense here. - WG

The greatness of the heavenly multitude joined in chorus as one voice, verse six, was not only a scene of awe and veneration, but was impressive of the magnitude of the significance attached to the end of Jerusalem and the Jewish state, and the removal of Judaism as the greatest obstacle to the expansion of Christianity from the path of the church. With the Harlot City, and the system of Judaism which she represented destroyed; there remained only the execution of judgment against political minions who had shared in her spiritual fornication s and abominations. - Wallace

:Rev_19:7
Rev_19:7

The Bride is the Christ's church. Mat_9:15 Mar_2:19 ff; Luk_5:34 ff; Joh_3:29

Let us be glad and rejoice . . God has condemned Babylon the harlot (v. 2), and now the worshipers rejoice because the multitude introduces "the wedding of the Lamb" and his chaste "bride," drawing upon **Isa 61:10–62:5.** - NIVZSB

Heaven's rejoicing has signaled the defeat of all God's enemies. - EBCNT

give Him glory . .

for the marriage of the Lamb has come . . The first suggestion of this image in the N. T. is in our Lord's parables, St Mat_22:2, Mat_25:1-10; it is more fully worked out by St Paul, Eph_5:22-32. But men's minds were prepared for it by the language of all the Prophets about the spiritual marriage of the Lord and Israel: still more, perhaps, by that of the **45th Psalm**, [Psa_45:1-17] rising so far above the royal marriage that no doubt furnished its occasion. - CBSC

The concept of a marital relationship between God and His Church is found in the OT in Isa_54:4-8; Isa_62:5; Jer_31:32; **Ezek. 16**; and Hos_2:14-19. The metaphor is seen in the NT in 2Co_11:2; Eph_5:21-31; Rev_19:9; Rev_21:2, Rev_21:9; Rev_22:17. Jesus is depicted as a bridegroom (cf. Mat_9:15; Mar_2:19-20; Luk_5:34-35; Joh_3:29). Several parables in Matthew continue this theme (cf. Mat_22:1-14; Mat_25:1-13). Marriage may be the best human example of biblical covenant. - Utley

The marriage union of Christ and the church is not a single act or thing. Every union of a believer with Christ in baptism is marriage to Christ, and is representative of the whole relation.
This marriage occurs every time one is baptized into Christ, and it is therefore always in process and is continuous. - Wallace

As the marriage itself is continuous, so must be the marriage supper, and it symbolized the continuous fellowship of all who are united to Christ; and it is as continuous as the baptism of believers and of the church itself. This part of the song of victory was based on the renewal of the interrupted fellowship of Christians by the afflictions and the tribulations of persecution. - Wallace

his bride . . Identified as the new Jerusalem in Rev_21:2, Rev_21:9. Here the bride of Christ is likely to be understood as the Church (see 2Co_11:2; Eph_5:25-27, Eph_5:32; compare Isa_54:5-7). - FSB

With the fall of Jerusalem and the end of all temple rituals it becomes evident that God has rejected Israel as His bride and taken the Christ's church as the New Jerusalem. The fall of Jerusalem and the temple was the sign par-excellence that the Messiah had come, had been rejected by Israel's religious leaders and had now returned to heaven reigning - see note on Mat_24:30 for understanding this passage and why has been mis-translated many times. - WG

His wife . . Isa_54:6 Hos_2:16 Eze_16:7
The bride of the Lamb is evidently the church (cf. Rev_19:9; Rev_3:20; Rev_21:2, Rev_21:9; Rev_22:17; Joh_3:29; 2Co_11:2; Eph_5:25-32). Even though the translators usually render the Greek word *gyne*, translated "bride," as "wife," here the context clearly shows that a wedding is in view. - Constable

God referred to Himself as Israel's husband in the Old Testament (Isa_54:6; Isa_62:5; Jer_31:32; Eze_16:7-14; Hos_2:2, Hos_2:16, Hos_2:19). However this figure almost always describes Israel as an unfaithful wife. [Jan Fekkes III, "'His Bride Has Prepared Herself': Revelation 19–21 and Isaian Nuptial Imagery," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 109:2 (Summer 1990):272-73, argued that only Isaiah used the marriage analogy in a consistently positive way. The prophet did so to show the future relationship between God and the faithful Jewish remnant.] - Constable

the wedding feast of the Lamb . . This event—the wedding of the Messiah with his bride, the church (see Isa 54:5; 61:10; Jer 31:32; Ezek 16:7–14; Hos 2:16–20; Mark 2:19–20; 2 Cor 11:2)—symbolizes complete victory and eternal fellowship. - NLTSB

The question is sometimes asked: If we are espoused to Christ in faith when does the marriage take place?

See F. Lagard Smith, *Baptism - The Believer's Wedding Ceremony*, 1993. Baptism shows the wonderful picture of it as seen in the New Testament. Smith shows how baptism is not merely a token ritual done for a past experience but he rightly shows how baptism is the moment of confession in the New Testament (Mat_28:19; Mar_16:15-16; Act_2:38, Act_2:41; Act_22:16; Rom_10:9-13; 1Pe_3:21-22). Baptism in water is not powerful without us seeing the grace of God in His Son, Jesus, and then baptism into Christ becomes a life changing experience (Rom_6:1-4).

[See all "*Eph 5 The Wedding Ceremony of Baptism*" on e-Sword topics by Windell Gann, **Sermons_Gann.topx**]

and His wife has made herself ready . . Those who have accepted the bridegroom (Christ) and trusted his message by faith and obedience have made themselves ready to reign with him as His bride (His church, the New Jerusalem). - WG

:Rev_19:8
Rev_19:8

19:8 The clothing of the bride is described and its meaning is also given. See Eph_5:26-27.

to her it was granted . . Better, **it was given to her**—the form is the same as recurs so often throughout the vision, from Rev_6:2 onwards. This being so, it is not likely that this clause still forms part of the proclamation of the voice: it is the Seer's description of the "making herself ready" which the voice proclaimed. - CBSC

clean and white . . The epithets should be transposed, and "and" omitted, **bright clean fine linen**. - CBSC

fine linen, clean and bright . . The church's garments are white linen—in marked contrast to the purple and scarlet clothing of the great mother of prostitutes (Rev_17:4; Rev_18:16).

Linen was an expensive cloth used to make the garments worn by priests and royalty. It has two qualities: brightness and cleanness (cf. Rev_16:6).

"**Bright**" λαμπρός (*lampros*), is the color of radiant whiteness that depicts glorification (cf. Mat_13:43).

"**Clean**" καθαρός (*katharos,*= physically clean)reflects purity, loyalty, and faithfulness, the character of the New Jerusalem (Rev_21:18, Rev_21:21). - EBCNT

arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright . . The dress of the bride of Christ is in sharp contrast to the dress of the harlot. Her gown of righteous deeds is to the glory of her Groom. - WG

finest … linen . . [NLT] Linen, a symbol of purity, was also worn by the priests when performing their duties (see Lev_16:4, Lev_16:23; Exo_28:39-43; see also Eze_9:2-3; Dan_12:6-7). cf. Rev_15:5-6. - NLTSB

fine linen, bright and clean . . The bride's radiant garments signify enduring moral purity (cf. Isa_61:10; Eph_5:27), while the harlot's purple and scarlet clothes represent her fleeting wealth (cf. Rev_17:4). **-** NIVZSB

the righteousness . . Rather, **the righteous acts**. Every good work done by every single saint goes to make up the perfect glory of the Church as it shall be when at last complete. - CBSC

the good deeds of God's holy people . . See Eph_2:8-10; 2Ti_3:16-17; Jas_2:18-22. - NLTSB

the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints . . The angelic chorus continued to describe the preparation of the bride for the wedding feast. God graciously enabled her to clothe herself in fine linen (cf. Rev_6:4; Rev_8:3; Rev_9:5; Rev_15:6; Rev_18:12; Rev_19:14; Gen_41:42; Dan_10:5; Dan_12:6-7).

"**Bright**" indicates divine glory, and "**clean**" reflects purity (cf. Rev_21:18, Rev_21:21). This is dress appropriate for God's presence. Fine **linen** represents righteous deeds, as this verse explains (cf. Rev_14:13). These are the works of the saints rather than their standing before God. Their good deeds that God's grace made possible constitute them dressed appropriately for their righteous Lord (cf. Mat_22:1-14). The bride's clothing contrasts with the harlot's gaudy garments (cf. Rev_17:4; Rev_18:16). - Constable

Not Christ's imputed righteousness granted to believers at salvation, but the practical results of that righteousness in believers' lives, i.e., the outward manifestation of inward virtue. - MSB

The goal of right standing is right living, Christlike living (cf. Rom_9:29; Gal_4:19; Eph_1:4). Righteous living is evidence of a relationship with God (cf. Rev_14:13), not the grounds of that relationship (cf. Gal_3:1-3) - Utley [?? WG]

the righteous deeds of the saints . . May refer to their victory and refusal to compromise their faith (compare **chs. 2–3**). Throughout Revelation, white clothing represents victory (see Rev_3:4 and note). - FSB

for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints . . An explanatory interjection, probably added by John, states that "fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints." These "righteous acts" (GK 1468) do not imply any kind of meritorious works that would bring salvation. Rather, there is a delicate balance between grace and obedient response to it. The bride is "given" the garments, but she "has made herself ready" for the wedding by faithfulness and loyalty to Christ (cf. 3:4–5, 18). - EBCNT

> That the Lamb's wife should be ***arrayed in fine linen, clean and white*** was explained to be the ***righteousness of the saints,*** the purity of the New Jerusalem church in contrast with the iniquities of the harlot Jerusalem, which had gone up in the smoke of destruction forever. This attire of *clean and white* vestures was a beautiful symbol of the character of all who are truly joined in union with Christ. - Wallace

Rev_19:9
Rev_19:9

He . . The voice of Rev_19:5; Rev_19:10. - WG

> **And he saith . .** Who speaks? Plainly an angel (Rev_19:10), presumably the angel of Rev_17:1. - CBSC
>
> The angelic admonition in *verse nine* for John to ***write*** was addressed personally to him, by the voice from the throne, not by an angel, and indicated the distinguished honor of being' the recipient of the revelation of these things of such tremendous significance. - Wallace

Write . . Three times John is bidden to ***write***.

Blessed . . The fourth beatitude (of seven) in Revelation, (cf. Rev_1:3; Rev_14:13; Rev_16:15; Rev_19:9; Rev_20:6; Rev_22:7, Rev_22:14).

who are called . . Ακαλέω (*kaleō , to summon, call to a task, invite)*: marriage supper (festival) was intended for those invited (called) but the Lord has called (invited) everyone, **Rev_22:17.**

marriage of the Lamb . . This is not a one time event. When men repent and obey they become espoused to the Lord. Eph_5:24-27; Rom_7:4 Mat_22:1-14.

"These are the true saying of God" . . The source of this truth is God himself.

These are the true sayings of God . . More literally, **These words are** [some add "the"] **true** (words) **of God**. - CBSC

These are the true words of God . . This phrase emphasizes the trustworthiness of the angel's message (cf. Rev_21:5; Rev_22:6). - Utley

> The epilogue, ***these are the true sayings of God,*** meant that they were not mere words of John in visional narration, or of the angels; but they were the very words of God to the Seer; the directly inspired words of God. - Wallace

Rev_19:10
Rev_19:10

> John is emotionally overcome by this tremendous revelation!
> He falls at the feet of "the voice" Rev_19:5 . Rev_22:8-9.

I fell at his feet to worship . . John, who is likely overwhelmed by what he sees and hears, tries to worship the one giving him the message of joy and hope. - FSB

Overwhelmed by the grandeur of the vision, John collapsed in worship before the angel (cf. Rev_1:17; Rev_22:8). - MSB

to worship him . . Perhaps understanding from the last words that the speaker was God Himself. In the O. T. God had revealed Himself to men by means of angels, and men had, by falling at the feet of angels, rightly worshipped the God Who was present in them (see esp. Hos_12:4 compared with Gen_32:30).

But since a more perfect revelation of God has been given by the Incarnation, no such divine presence in an angel is to be looked for. (So Jer. Taylor, *Dissuasive from Popery*, Part II. 11. 8:3.)

We have therefore no need to suppose that the holy apostle was in intent guilty of idolatry; he meant the worship for God in the angel, but this being an angel and nothing more, it follows of course that he ought not to be honoured as God. See Rev_22:8. - CBSC

to worship . . John was awed by this powerful person and may have assumed that he was either a divine personification (cf. Gen_16:7-13; Gen_22:11-15; Gen_31:11, Gen_31:13; Gen_48:15-16; Exo_32:4; Exo_13:21; Exo_14:19; Jdg_2:1; Jdg_6:22-23; Jdg_13:3-22; Zec_3:1-2), Christ, or a symbol of the Spirit (cf. Rev_22:8-9). - Utley

But he said to me . .

Do not do that . . The angel rebukes John's attempt to worship him. Revelation consistently affirms that God alone is worthy of worship (Rev_11:16; Rev_14:7; compare Rev_13:4-8). - FSB

do not do that . . Cf. Rev_22:8-9. The Bible forbids the worship of angels (Col_2:18-19). - MSB

I am your fellow servant . . In a sense, the angels are even servants to the elect on earth, Heb_1:14. - CBSC

and of your brethren . . In the parallel passage, Rev_22:9, we have "thy brethren the prophets," and the sense seems to be the same here, from the last words of the verse. - CBSC

who hold the testimony of Jesus . . The angel identifies himself not only as a servant of God (cf. Deu_33:2; Psa_103:21; Dan_7:10) and redeemed mankind (cf. Heb_1:14), but also with the testimony of Jesus, which is normally said of saints rather than angels (cf. Rev_12:17). - Utley

the testimony of Jesus May refer to the testimony about or concerning Jesus or the testimony that Jesus Himself gave—the gospel (see Rev_1:2; Rev_12:17). Though both are true, the gospel that Jesus gave is likely in view here. - FSB

The Testimony of Jesus -- No way of knowing if this is an objective or subjective genitive. Rev_12:17
1) This witness was given *by* Jesus Himself
2) The witness (testimony) is *about* Christ - 1Pe_1:11

(In Rev_22:9, he adds, "***of thy brethren, the prophets.***" Here the explanation is added that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. In testifing of Jesus the angel became one of the prophets.)

the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy . . The central theme of both OT prophecy and NT preaching is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. - MSB

This phrase has been interpreted as saying: 1) Jesus is the focus of prophecy; or 2) all that to which Jesus

bore testimony is the essence of what all the prophets proclaimed; or 3) all those bearing truth to Jesus are being true to inspired Truth given by prophets. - WG

For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy . . The word ***spirit*** here does not signify the Holy Spirit, but rather the inner spirit, the vital element, the life and soul-the essence of the apocalypse was the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ to his servant John by his servants, the angels. - Wallace

the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy . . The "testimony of Jesus" is Jesus' own testimony that he bore in his life and teaching and especially in his death. - EBCNT

Rev_19:11
Rev_19:11

New Paragraph: The judgment upon the harlot has been given; now the attention turns the judgment upon the other enemies.

[If we were dividing the text into chapters and verses today I think the arrangement would be quite different. Rev_19:11 would certainly be the beginning of a new chapter.]

Now I saw heaven opened . . Eze_1:1; St Mat_3:16, and parallels, St Joh_1:51; Act_7:56, Act_10:11. Something more seems to be implied than in Rev_4:1; the "door" through which the seer was called up is not sufficient to let out this mounted army, or "the chariot of paternal Deity" which appeared to Ezekiel. - CBSC

And I saw heaven opened" This is a PERFECT PASSIVE VERBAL form and may relate to Eze_1:1. Several times in Revelation heaven has been opened to reveal truth to John in progressive stages (cf. Rev_4:1; Rev_11:19; Rev_15:5). - Utley

Now I saw heaven opened . . John saw another scene in heaven (Gr. *kai eidon*, "And I saw"). He now saw heaven standing open (cf. Eze_1:1), not just a door open (Rev_4:1) or the heavenly temple open (Rev_11:19). - Constable

behold, a white horse . . Although there is a white horse in Rev_6:2, this is obviously different. - Utley

a white horse . . In victory parades the conquorers rode white horses.

In the Roman triumphal processions, the victorious general rode his white war horse up the Via Sacra to the temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline Hill. Jesus' first coming was in humiliation on a colt (Zec_9:9). John's vision portrays Him as the conqueror on His war horse, - MSB

He who sat one him . . The bridegroom in the previous paragraph is revealed further as an all-conquering warrior. [and royalty, cf Rev_19:12] - Utley

The ***rider*** is both a judge and a ***righteous*** warrior (see Isa_11:1-5). He is ***named Faithful and True:*** He embodies God's authenticity and reliability (see Rev_19:2; Rev_21:5-6). - NLTSB

Rider of a White Horse - Like the first seal - Rev_6:2 Indicates victory! The character of the rider is signified. We have passed through the valley of darkness and now *New Victory!*

Faithful and True . . The titles idenify the rider as Jesus. cf. Rev_3:14. cf Rev_1:5; Rev_3:7.

and in righeousness He judges and makes war . . cf. Isa_11:3-5. (cf. Isa_9:7; Isa_16:5; Isa_32:1),

Who ***judges in righteousness***? cf. Act_17:30-31; Isa_63:1-3; Psa_2:1 ff

Though John uses OT language descriptive of a warrior-Messiah, he does not depict Christ as a great military warrior battling against earth's sovereigns. The close proximity in v.11 of "j***ustice***" and "***war***" shows us that the kind of warfare Christ engages in is more the execution of "***justice***" (lit., "***righteousness***"; G1343) than a military conflict. He who is the faithful and true witness will judge the rebellious nations. - EBCNT

makes war . . This startling statement, appearing only here and Rev_2:16, vividly portrays the holy wrath of God against sinners (cf. Psa_7:11). - MSB [cf. Psa_45:3-5; Eph_6:11-17;]

:Rev_19:12
Rev_19:12

His eyes . . (Rev_1:14; Rev_2:18 matches an earlier description of Christ.)
Nothing escapes His penetrating vision, so His judgments are always just and accurate (*see notes on 1:14; 2:18*) - MSB

many crowns . . Indicates a vast rule, diadems, crowns of royalty.

many crowns . . These are distinctively *kingly* crowns, see on Rev_4:4, Rev_6:2. Their *number* marks Him as ***King of king***s, Rev_19:16; perhaps also as both King and Priest, as in Zec_6:11. - CBSC

many royal headbands . . Jesus' royal authority dwarfs that of the dragon and the beast (see Rev_12:3; Rev_13:1). - FSB

His name . . A "name" stood for the person himself. Probably the idea here is that no one comprehends "***The Word of God***" knowing His essence, power, majesty, glory, but only GOD. (**Mat_11:27;** Luk_10:22; Joh_1:4-5; Eph_3:18-20) cf. - WG

"Throughout the ancient world a name revealed the nature of an individual, who he is and what he is. The unknown name of the Christ comports with the fact that his nature, his relationships to the Father, and even his relationship to humanity, transcend all human understanding." - Beasley-Murray, pp. 279–80.

His name . . ***cf.*** Rev_2:17***;*** Rev_3:12***;***
1) Name - known only by himself - Rev_3:12
2) Next vs. "The Word of God"

no man knew, but he himself . . cf. **Mat_11:27**.

that no one knew . . John could see the name, but was unable to comprehend it (cf. 2Co_12:4). There are unfathomable mysteries in the Godhead that even glorified saints will be unable to grasp. - MSB

:Rev_19:13
Rev_19:13

clothed with a robe . . *vesture*.. Or, **cloak**: it is the *outer* garment that is so described. - CBSC

robe dipped in blood . . This may refer to Christ's own atoning blood Rev_1:5; or the blood of His enemies

(compare Isa_63:1-6). - FSB

Christ's blood-spattered garments symbolize the great battles He has already fought against sin, Satan, and death and been stained with the blood of His enemies. - MSB

But is Christ's blood-dipped robe red from his enemies' blood or from his own blood? There are good reasons for accepting the latter. If the blood is his enemies', how is it that Christ comes from heaven with his robe already dipped in blood before any battle is mentioned? Moreover, the blood mentioned in connection with Christ in the Apocalypse is always his own life-blood (Rev_1:5; Rev_5:6, Rev_5:9; Rev_7:14; Rev_12:11). - EBCNT

The blood on His robe is probably the blood of his enemies in view of the context (cf. Isa_63:2-3). - Constable

This description may refer to **(1)** the blood of Christ's enemies, signifying his total victory (Isa_63:2-4); or (2) Christ's sacrificial death for humanity (Rev_1:5). - NLTSB

His name is called "The Word of God" . . This is not the name that no one else knows (in Rev_19:12). Rather, it is a name that emphasizes His status as the ultimate revelation of God's character (compare Joh_1:1-5). - FSB

Only John uses this title for the Lord. As the Word of God, Jesus is the image of the invisible God (Col_1:15); the express image of His person (Heb. 1:3); and the final, full revelation from God (Heb_1:1-2). - MSB

Name - Word of God - Joh_1:1-3; Joh_1:14.

The Word of God . . The only place in Scripture (unless Heb_4:12 be so interpreted, which is not probable) where this exact phrase is used of the *personal* Word, the Son of God. But of course the use of "the Word" in St Joh_1:1 is the same in principle and meaning. - CBSC

This is the term *logos*, which links the book of the Revelation with the Apostle John, for he is the only biblical author who uses this as a title of Jesus (cf. Joh_1:1, Joh_1:14; 1Jn_1:1). - Utley

As a title in Revelation "Word of God" emphasizes the authoritative declaration that results in the destruction of God's enemies rather than the self-revelation of God. - Mounce, p. 345. (Constable)

Jesus, "***the Word***," is God's ultimate self-disclosure in Joh_1:1; here Christ embodies God's authoritative Word by proclaiming and executing judgment on the nations (Rev_19:15). - NIVZSB

Rev_19:14
Rev_19:14

Armies in heaven . . Rev_17:14 Rev_6:10-11; God's people.

Probably the church (Rev_7:13), all OT saints (Jud_1:14; Dan_12:1-2;) and even angels (Mat_25:31). They return not to help Jesus in the battle (they are unarmed), but to reign with Him after He defeats His enemies (Rev_20:4; 1Co_6:2; 2Ti_2:12). Cf. Psa_149:5-9. - MSB

the armies *which were* **in heaven . .** According to ordinary O. T. usage (e.g. 1Ki_22:19) this would mean the holy Angels exclusively, or at least primarily. But some think that the glorified Saints are at least included: it

seems in harmony with the ideas of this Book to represent them, not indeed as executing Christ's vengeance (which the angels do, rev 14:19; St Mat_13:39-42), but as spectators of His triumph, which is all that these armies seem to be. - CBSC

> With Christ come armies mounted on horses.
> "As the Lamb, Christ is followed by the saints (17:14); as the heavenly Warrior, he is followed by the angels." Ladd, p. 255. (Constable)
>
> ... both OT and NT speak of the armies of heaven as angels (Psa_103:21; Psa_148:2; Luk_2:13; Act_7:42). Furthermore, the NT also associates the coming of Christ with angels (e.g., Mat_13:41; Mat_16:27; Mat_24:30-31). - EBCNT

the armies which are in heaven . . This has been interpreted in two ways: **(1)** because of Rev_17:14 and the description of the saints in Rev_19:8 in this immediate context, many have assumed that this refers to the saints; or **(2)** because of the OT background of Zec_14:5 and the NT passages of Mat_13:41; Mat_16:27; Mar_8:38; Luk_9:26; 1Th_3:13; 2Th_1:7, many believe that it must refer to the angels. This same ambiguity is present in many passages. - Utley

> The existence of a celestial '***army***' is implied in Rev_12:7 In the O. T. is a constant phrase for (1) the ordered ranks of the heavenly bodies (cf. e.g. 2 Esdr. 9:6), and (2) the angelic bodyguard of the Throne of God; see Driver, art. *Host of Heaven*, in Hastings, *D.B.* 2. p. 429 ff. Here the latter are clearly meant. The angelic hosts were at the service of the Incarnate Son even in the days of His Flesh (cf. Mat_26:53 Heb_1:6 ff., cf. Mat_13:41, Mat_16:27, Mat_24:31, Mat_25:31, Apoc. 5:11 f.). - Swete

clothed in fine linen, white and clean . . [This] identifies **the armies of heaven** as the bride of the Lamb (Rev_19:8; Rev_6:11; Rev_7:14). They ride **white horses**, sharing his victory (see note on Rev_2:17; also Rev_12:11; Rev_15:2). - ESVSB

fine linen, white and clean . . The dress of Angels in St Mat_28:3 and parallels, Act_1:10; but of Saints in this Book, Rev_3:4, Rev_7:9, and probably Rev_4:4: compare the almost exactly similar words of Rev_19:8. Here this costume contrasts with the blood-dyed one of their Leader. - CBSC

followed Him on white horses . . Riding white horses signifies they also are conquerors!

> "This heavenly army, unlike their leader, has no swords or spears. They take no part in the action. They wear no armor because, being immortal, they are immune to injury. They are noncombatant supporters of the Messiah as He wages the war single-handedly..." Thomas, *Revelation 8–22*, p. 387.

:Rev_19:15
Rev_19:15

From his mouth . . Matches the description of Christ in Rev_1:16 . See note at Rev_1:16 and note; Rev_2:12, Rev_2:16.

goes . . [issues, proceedeth, comes, came, goeth, comes out,] . . Present tense. In that it "continues" to come forth, indicates this is not literal, but symbolic. - Heb_4:12;

a sharp sword . . The word of God, Heb_4:12, Eph_6:17 Indicates the power of God's words, cf. Joh_1:1-5; Rev_2:16; Rev_19:15, Rev_19:21. cf. Isa_1.20; Isa_49:2; Isa_66:16; This is the weapon God uses to conquor the nations! The "word" that comes from God's mouth is to be used to conquor! (Mat_28:19-20, Mar_16:15-16;

sharp . . Some ancient authorities insert "***two-edged,***" from the parallel passage in Rev_1:16. - CBSC

a sharp sword . . This is a metaphor of the power of the gospel or of God's spoken word (cf. **Gen. 1**; Isa_55:11; Joh_1:1; 2Th_1:8) not a literal description. - Utley

smite the nations . . It is the "Word of God" that will conquor nations, not physical armies using force. Eph_6:17;

smite the nations . . God is said to smite men with plagues, e.g. Zec_14:18, but nowhere else with a sword. Are we to infer from 1Ch_21:12 what this sword will be? Certainly the ascription to the Lord of the fierce struggles of a human warrior is markedly avoided. - CBSC

rule . . [shepherd] . . An allusion to Psa_2:9 ;

shall rule them . . Lit. **shall be their shepherd**, as in Rev_2:27, Rev_12:5 Of course in all three places the reference is to Psa_2:9. - CBSC

The psalm prophecy is quoted by the apostle Peter in **Act_4:25-26** with this application of the effect of preaching Christ to the heathen world. - Wallace

he will rule them with a rod of iron . . As when they are the enemies of the Lord's flock, for his "club" that He uses to protect them is a "rod of iron", one that will not break, and will devestate the enemy attacking His flock.

At first reading, to some this sounds harsh, but it is referring to His ability to proect his sheep. The word "***rule***" is "to shepherd" them, and the rod of iron is the club the shepherd used to fend off the wolves, bears, lions, etc.

The picture is not of an **"iron rod"** he uses to "club" or beat his sheep! He uses a "staff" to gently nudge or guide his sheep. The iron rod is showing his ability to protect them.

them . . "the nations" Rev_19:15.

And He Himself treads . . Isa_63:3. The pronoun "***he***" is emphatic—He Himself, by Himself, as is there expressed. - CBSC

the winepress . . So we are obliged to translate the single word, e.g. at Rev_14:19; while here we have the fuller phrase, "*the winepress of the wine of*" - CBSC

he will tread the wine press of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty . . The wrath of God is fierce! Literally "fierceness of the wrath". - WG

and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty . . This third description of judgment is an allusion to Isa_63:2-3; Jer_51:33; Lam_1:15; Joe_3:13 (cf. Rev_14:19-20). The color of crushed grapes reminded the ancients of blood, death, and battle! - Utley

Isa_63:1-3; (Source of imagery for the Battle Hymn of the Republic.)

:Rev_19:16
Rev_19:16

vesture . . That is, this name was conspicuously written on his garment - probably his military robe.

on His robe and on His thigh . . i.e, probably, beginning on the lower part of the cloak, and continued where the thigh projected from it as He rode—whether this continuation was on the bare flesh, or (as seems likelier) on the skirt of the tunic. - CBSC

Question: Was his name written in two places? (with one name written on the robe (possibly on a banner?), and the second on the thigh). Or is this just describing one place, the part of the robe that hung down and covered the thigh? The latter thought is preferred. It probably was just a short warrior's robe that hung down to the thigh, and around the bottom of the robe was the name "King of kings, and Lord of lords". - WG

on His thigh a name written . . There has been much discussion about the term "His thigh": (1) this was the place that a sword normally hung; (2) this was the place that His garment was most clearly seen on horseback; or (3) it was the strongest muscle of his body and was symbolic of His might. - Utley

vesture and thigh . . Like the banners that adorned statues of old, and sometimes printed, stamped, or carved on the thigh, the name and character of this person, "god", etc.

on His thigh. Jesus will wear a banner across His robe and down His thigh with a title emblazoned on it that emphasizes His absolute sovereignty over all human rulers (Rev_17:14). - MSB

a name written . . A fourth name in addition to Faithful and True (Rev_19:11), the unknown name (Rev_19:12), and the Word of God (Rev_19:13). - FSB

King of Kings and Lord of Lords . . Act_10:36; Descriptive of His universal authority and control. Is this one name, or two? Was one name on his robe (vesture) and the other on his thigh (sword sheath?). - WG

King of kings and Lord of Lords . . A title for God (Rev_17:14; 1Ti_6:15; cf. Deu_10:17; Psa_136:3) that emphasizes His sovereignty over all other rulers to whom He has delegated authority. - MSB

King of Kings and Lord of Lords . . cf. Rev_17:14. Cf. Dan_2:47, Dan_7:14; also 1Ti_6:15, where a title substantially (not verbally) the same as this is given to God the Father. - CBSC

KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS . . Does this refer to one name or two? Rev_17:14 shows that it refers to one name (cf. 1Ti_6:15). It has two possible OT backgrounds: (1) a description of YHWH (cf. Deu_10:17 and Enoch 9:4) or (2) a Persian title of deity transferred to YHWH (cf. Dan_2:37). It is interesting to note that this phrase in Aramaic adds up to 777, in contradistinction to the number of the beast, which is 666.Ultimate perfection versus ultimate imperfection. - Utley

In *verse sixteen* a fourth name was inscribed on the Rider**--*King of Kings and Lord of Lords.*** This was the highest title to be conferred. It symbolized the position and power over all kings and rulers of all rank in the heathen world, all of whom must yield to the invincible *Word of God.* This stage of the vision was in repetition of **Rev_11:15 : *The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ.***

It was the sublime apocalypse of the conquering Lord, and his victorious church. The conquest of **"the kingdoms of this world"** was spiritual, not literal; and it was to be accomplished by the spread of the gospel and expansion of Christianity over the heathen world, as stated in **Mat_24:31** and as prophesied in the second Psalm. - Wallace

:Rev_19:17
Rev_19:17

Judgment Of The Beasts

Vs 17-21 We see Christianity conquering the Beasts (Rome and poly-theism)

an angel standing in the sun . . Apparently with the sun at his back.

in the sun . . The Greek preposition *en* (meaning "in, with, by, to, on") is best rendered "on." The angel was probably standing on the sun, not in it. Perhaps John saw him above the sun. - FSB

Probably he is stationed there only as a position commanding the "mid-heaven" [on this word "mid-heaven" see note on Rev_8:13]. - CBSC

John saw next an angel standing in the sun, a conspicuous position in which all the birds could see him. He cried loudly for all the birds flying in midheaven to assemble (cf. Eze_39:4, Eze_39:17). - Constable

cried with a loud voice . .

all the birds that fly . . An allusion to **Eze_39:17**;

fowls . . = scavengers looking for food.

to all the birds . . This gruesome paragraph is an allusion to two OT passages which deal with battle scenes. This context is the same battle discussed in Rev_16:12-16, called Armageddon. The predatory birds are described as drawn to battlefields as in 1Sa_17:46 (cf. Mat_24:28; Luk_17:37) and Eze_39:17-20. - Utley

in the midst of heaven . .[directly overhead] . . See note at Rev_8:13; Rev_14:6.

Come and gather together . . The angel invites the birds of prey to come feast on the dead bodies of the enemies. cf. Jer_12:9; Eze_39:17. This is another symbol of God's wrath on these enemies, and His victory over them. cf. Rev_19:21

The angel's invitation for **birds** to pick corpses clean at **the great supper of God** reflects an OT covenant curse (Deu_28:26) - ESVSB

the supper of the great God . . In contrasts with the marriage supper of the Lamb of Rev_19:9. White the victors celebrate a marriage feast, the enemies themselves are the feast of the vultures!

This "feast of the vultures" is "***the great supper of God***". The feast of the winners is "***the marriage supper of the Lamb***" Rev_19:9.

the supper of the great God . . Read, **the great supper of God**. In Ezek. l.c. [Eze_39:17; Eze_39:19; Eze_40:42; Eze_44:11; Eze_46:24;] it is called a *sacrifice*, sacrifices being the only ordinary occasion for a feast of flesh: cf. Isa_34:6, which was probably in Ezekiel's mind. - CBSC

great banquet of God . . In contrast to the marriage supper of the Lamb (see Rev_19:7-9). Here, the carrion fowl feast upon the flesh of God's enemies (compare Eze_39:17-20). - FSB

The OT frequently pictures the indignity of carrion birds feasting on human dead (Deu_28:26; Psa_79:2; Isa_18:6; Jer_7:33; Jer_16:4; Jer_19:7; Jer_34:20; Eze_29:5). - MSB

Two feasts—the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev_19:7-8) and the "great supper" of God's judgment (Rev_19:17-18, Rev_19:21)—provide two perspectives on the end of time. They illustrate the two sides of the Good News: grace and judgment, reward and punishment (cp. John 3:16–18). - NLTSB

In **Mat_24:28**, Jesus said: **"For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together."** This forecast was the Lord's illustration of the siege of Jerusalem, which was the carcass; and the Romans were the eagles, whose armies swooped on Jerusalem to destroy and devour it. But in this vision the metaphor was reversed. The rulers of the persecuting powers, with all the forces opposing Christ and his church, were the victims of this ***supper of the Great God.-*** Wallace

÷Rev_19:18
Rev_19:18

Is this literal? No! Hyperbole. It is a statement that God will win.
Remember, Revelation is given in "signs", symbolic language, and we make a mistake to takes the visions literally instead of figuratively.

flesh of kings . . etc. Eze_39:17-20

captains . . Lit. **captains of a thousand**; - CBSC

both free and bond, small and great . . All classes of men had fallen. (Birds knew of no distinction.)

The horror of being unburied was especially shocking to the people of the ancient Near East. - Utley

The beast's army, to be consumed as carrion, includes not only kings (Rev_16:14) and warriors, but also **all** who serve the beast, **both free and slave, both small and great** (Rev_13:16). - ESVSB

First, there is the summons to the vultures to come to God's great supper and gorge themselves on the slain corpses of the battlefield—a horrible picture of human carnage. The language is borrowed from Eze_39:17 ff., which describes the eschatological overthrow of Gog. It may be unnecessary to press the literalness of the description. This battlefield language is designed to indicate that a great victory is about to occur. - EBCNT

÷Rev_19:19
Rev_19:19

the beast . . The first beast, sea beast. - Rev_13:1-8.

The fact that these visions anticipated events before, during and after the destruction of Jerusalem, should be observed and retained in the mind, as the considerations advance from one stage and scene to another.

The scene of verses nineteen to twenty-one reverted to the spiritual battle between the heavenly armies of the Rider, and the armies of the Roman beast--the heathen persecutor. It was after the destruction of Jerusalem; and after the evil forces of heathenism were diverted from the scene of Jerusalem and Judaism to converge on the church. - Wallace

the beasts and the kings . . Their confederacy under his leadership has been already intimated, Rev_16:14, Rev_16:16, Rev_17:12-14. The so-called battle of Armageddon, there foretold, is here described. - CBSC

kings of the earth . . cf. Rev_17:12-17. Psa 2.2;

their armies . . cf. Rev_16:13-14

to make war . . Literally, to make "the battle" (Gk. *ton polemon*) - ESVSB

make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army . . This is an allusion to Psa_2:1 ff (see esp. Psa_2:1-4).

> This beast was the original first sea-beast of chapter 13--personified in the emperor, the source of authority for all the persecutions. The false prophet was identical with the second land-beast, of Judea and Palestine, described in chapter 13, as the subordinate of the imperia1 beast who seduced the inhabitants of Judea to worship the emperor. As previously postulated, the mark of the beast was submission to the decree for emperor worship and acceptance of the image of the emperor as deity and the worship of the Roman image in acts of idolatry for the emperor. - Wallace

:Rev_19:20
Rev_19:20

the beast was taken . . "*was seized" or "overpowered."* He is overcome, captured! This is the first beast (sea-beast, Rev_13:1-10).

false prophet . . The false beast (2nd beast, the earth-beast) parallel in description - Rev_13:11-14; Rev_16:13;

miracles . . Should be "**signs**" those described in Rev_13:13 sqq. - CBSC

These two . .

cast down alive into the lake of fire . . God's enemies receive their just recompense of Reward -- Rom_12:19 Dan_7:11;

> Here, the beast and false prophet are thrown into the lake of fire, while their followers are killed with the sword from Christ's mouth. See Rev_14:10 and note; Rev_20:14-15; Rev_21:8. - FSB

lake of fire . . The final hell, the place of eternal punishment for all unrepentant rebels, angelic or human (cf. Rev_20:10, Rev_20:15). The NT says much of eternal punishment (cf. Rev_14:10-11; Mat_13:40-42; Mat_25:41; Mar_9:43-48; Luk_3:17; Luk_12:47-48). - MSB

lake of fire burning with brimstone . .

> ***Brimstone*** is a yellowish, sulfuric rock that often attends fire and smoke in Revelation (rev 14:10; rev 19:20; rev 20:10). Common in the Dead Sea region, when ignited such deposits melt and produce burning streams and suffocating gas. ...These two are frequently associated with divine judgment (Rev_14:10; Rev_20:10; Rev_21:8; Gen_19:24; Psa_11:6; Isa_30:33; Eze_38:22; Luk_17:29). - MSB

> The ***fiery lake of burning sulfur*** provides a picture of eternal punishment (see Rev_20:10, Rev_14:1-15; Rev_21:8; see also Isa_66:24; Mat_13:41, Mat_13:49-50; Mar_9:43, Mar_9:48). - NLTSB

a lake of fire . . God's enemies are ***thrown*** into the *fiery lake*. The two beasts (Rome, and pagan Rome) in Rev_19:20, will be later followed by the dragon (Satan himself) at the final judgment Rev_20:10, and death

Rev_20:14, and all whose names are not in the book of life Rev_20:15.

The beast symbolized the persecuting power of the Roman emperor; and casting him into ***a lake of fire*** signified the complete defeat of the heathen powers he represented in the war against the church; and it was accomplished by the sword that ***proceeded out of the mouth*** of Jesus Christ, the Rider of the white horse. The sword was not a literal steel blade; it was the Word of God, the weapon by which the church won the victories over heathenism and idolatry; and which is even yet the only righteous weapon in the warfare of the truth against error. - Wallace

÷Rev_19:21
Rev_19:21

Christianity Conquers the Beast (Rome)

the remnant . . The rest, followers of the Beast and False Prophet.

Both the beast and the false prophet (Rev_13:1 ff.) are seized and thrown into the lake of fire. Their followers fall before the sword (i.e., the word) of Christ. - EBCNT

This remnant symbolized the enemies of Christ other than the persecuting beasts. It represented all forms of error and evil and doctrines of antichrist that stood in the way of the church. They were slain with ***the sword of him that sat upon the horse;*** and the text identified the sword by the modifying phrase: ***which sword proceeded out of his mouth*** **--**the Word of God. - Wallace

the sword . . - a spiritual weapon - 2Co_10:4

sword which proceeded out of his mouth . . The victory is so plainly designated as one to be gained by purely spiritual means, that it is by no means certain that the armies to be overthrown are to be understood of an actual military confederacy. - CBSC

1) Destroyed according to prophecy, OR
2) Converted - (the false prophet and his worshipers) the Caesars after 325 were Christians (in name). Christianity captured the Roman government.

and the fowls were filled with their flesh . . (birds gorged themselves) . .

Both the beast and the false prophet (Rev_13:1 ff.) are seized and thrown into the lake of fire. Their followers fall before the sword (i.e., the word) of Christ. No battle is fought; only the arrangement of the foes and the defeat of the beast is described. John may be indicating that the battle has already been fought and won. In ch. 5 the Lamb had won the victory by his death (**Rev_5:5**, **Rev_5:9**). Further, in the battle in heaven, Satan was cast out and defeated by the blood of the Lamb and the word of his followers' testimony (**Rev_12:7-9**, **Rev_12:11**).

There thus seems to be only one actual battle described in Revelation (**ch. 12**), and these further scenes may be understood as more judicial in character than as literal battles. Because of John's christological reinterpretation, no great final military battle will actually be fought, for the decisive battle has already been won at the Cross. These armies and the beast, who destroy the earth (Rev_11:18) are the satanic principalities of the world and have been positionally defeated at the Cross (**Joh_12:31**; **Joh_16:11**; **Col_2:15**). - EBCNT

÷Rev_20:1

Rev_20:1

Chapter 20 - **Judgment Against the Dragon**

The Binding of Satan, Rev_20:1-3
The Reign of Saints, vv. Rev_20:4-6
The Loosing of Satan, vv. Rev_20:7-10
The Final Judgment, vv. Rev_20:11-15
[See the "Topic Notes" on Revelation 20]

The pronounced judgment on the four enemies are in the reserve order of their introduction in the Book.

And . . (then) . . The "and" supports the idea of chronological sequence. "Babylon" (Jerusalem) has fallen and now the Book centers on Satan himself.

It is logical that having judged the beast and the false prophet (Rev_19:20) Jesus Christ should next deal with Satan. God assigned an angel to bind Satan. - Constable

angel coming down from heaven . . He has God's authority, symbolized by the ***key*** that controls ***the bottomless pit*** (or *the abyss,* or *the underworld;* also in 20:3) and the power to put ***chains*** on God's great enemy (cp. 12:7–9) for ***a thousand years. -*** FSB

He may be the "star" of Rev_9:1, and we have seen earlier Rev_1:18 that it is now Christ who has the keys to Death and Hades.

Angels as falling stars are often found in the intertestamental Jewish apocalyptic literature (Utley). Because of the contest this could be just another servant angel involved in a task God has assigned him. (Utley)

the key . . A key is a symbol for authority, Rev_9:1; 2Pe_2:4; Here it shows God's authority over the "underworld" of Satan and all those sided with him.
This is the fourth mention of a key in the book (see Rev_1:18; Rev_3:7; Rev_9:1).

The angel is pictured as "holding" or "having" this key.

key to the abyss . . Represents complete authority over the realm of the dead, which belongs to the risen Christ (Rev_1:18; Rev_3:7; Rev_9:1). - NIVZSB

key of the bottomless pit . . The abyss, where demons and fallen angels are restrained under chains. 2Pe_2:4. One having the key to this places shows he holds authority to perform his actions.

of the bottomless pit . . Lit. **of the pit** (or **well**) **of the abyss**: the depth of Hell, the home or penal prison of the demons (see Luk_8:31, where the word translated "the deep" is the same), is conceived as a pit in the earth's surface, no doubt literally bottomless, but of finite area, so that it can be fitted with a cover which can be fastened down with a padlock or seal. Cf. Rev_11:7, Rev_17:8, for the notion of evil beings issuing from the pit; Rev_20:1, Rev_20:3, for their being confined there.
But notice (i) that this pit is nowhere identified with the "lake of fire," the *final* destination of the Devil and his angels: (ii) that we are not told that the Devil himself is cast into it yet; rather the contrary is implied. - CBSC

It seems to be synonymous with the term "*tartarus*" (cf. 2Pe_2:4 and I Enoch 21:7), a place where evil angels are held in prison (cf. Luk_8:31; Jud_1:6; Rev_11:7; Rev_17:8; Rev_20:1-3; and I Enoch 10:4; 86:1; 88:1; Jubilees 5:6–11). Paul used this term in Rom_10:7 for the place of the dead (cf. Isa_24:21-22). Later the rabbis said it was the name of the unrighteous part of *Sheol/Hades*. - Utley

great chain in his hand . . A chain is something that restrains and limits one's activities. cf. Mat_12:29; the chain of the gospel; Luk_11:21-22; Heb_2:14 ; Luk_10:17-18.

A chained dog is restrained. He has as move movement (liberty) as the chain allows. Satan today only has so much power, 1Co_10:13.

The binding of Satan is real, though the chain must be figurative since it is impossible to bind spirit beings with physical chains (cf. Rev_9:14). - Constable

÷Rev_20:2

Rev_20:2

the dragon . . No doubt about the identity of the **Dragon** (The **old Serpent** - Gen_3:1 ; Gen_3:15 ff), he is the Devil, or Satan.

serpent of old . . A reference to Satan's first appearance in the Garden of Eden (Gen_3:1 ff.), where he deceived Eve (cf. 2Co_11:3; 1Ti_2:14). - MSB

seized … bound . . Typical language for arrest and imprisonment (cf. Mat_14:3); alludes to Isa_24:21-22; Isa_27:1. - NIVZSB

bound . . by the chain of the gospel. (Under some restraint. Even a dog on a chain is dangerous if you get within the range of his chain!)

Mat_12:28-29; Luk_11:22; Heb_2:14; Jud_1:6 2Pe_2:4
#Col_2:14-15; Joh_12:31-32; Luk_10:18;

The dragon's being **bound** with a **great chain** and thrown into the **bottomless pit**, which is **shut** and **sealed**, symbolizes God's restriction of Satan's ability to inflict harm for a long but limited era. God's purpose is that Satan **might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. - EBCNT**

Amillennialists note that the NT affirms that Jesus' first coming has bound Satan (Mat_12:29) and brought God's light to the nations (Mat_4:14-16; Luk_2:32; Act_14:15-17; Act_17:30-31). This binding of Satan for "a thousand years" refers to the gospel's spread among all nations during the present age, and to the present restraint of the church's persecutors until an outbreak of rebellion before Christ's return (see 2Th_2:3-8). (cf. ESVSB)

one thousand years . . 1,000 used symbolically of a totality. The 1000 is not quantity but quality - Deu_7:9; Psa_50:10_ [Does this mean the cattle on the 1001st hill doesn't belong to God?]

What restraint is Satan under? He will not work miraculous signs til he is released, nor would there be demon possession today like in the time when God empowered miracle working men to excel them. In what ways God has limited the power of the gospel today, he has limited Satan, and allows him no power but

what we have been supplied to deal with 1Co_10:13. - WG

There are twenty figures of speech in the *nineteenth* and *twentieth* chapters alone. In a series of symbols such as these, it is not reasonable to make a literal application of the thousand years and a figurative application of all the rest of the symbols, without a contexual or historical reason for doing so. - Wallace

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1) Premillennialism sees this as a literal 1,000 year period during which Jesus Christ reigns on the earth from literal Jerusalem.
2) Amillennialism understands the 1,000 years to be symbolic of a long period of time
3) Postmillennialism understands the reference to a 1,000 year period as symbolic of a golden age of righteousness and spiritual prosperity before Christ's second coming.

1. *Premillennialism:* Christ will return before the millennium to inaugurate a literal 1,000-year rule on earth with his holy people before the final judgment.
2. *Amillennialism:* 1,000 years is a metaphor representing the current age between Christ's first and second comings. Christ reigns spiritually with his people. At the end of this age, Christ will return, execute the final judgment, and inaugurate his eternal Kingdom.
3. *Postmillennialism:* The Good News will triumph on earth, and Christ will establish through the church an age of peace on earth. Then Christ will return and inaugurate his eternal Kingdom. - NLTSB

÷Rev_20:3

Rev_20:3

bottomless pit . . The Abyss, where Satan is confined for 1000 years. - Gen_3:15; Rom_16:20

set a seal . . The angel also ***set a seal upon him,*** as an authoritative act; such as the seal of state stamped on the documents signed by officials of government. - Wallace

deceive the nations . . Satan in Revelation had deceived nations into persecuting the church. There has been no world-wide universal persecution of Christianity since the time the Woman-Babylon was destroyed and the Beasts (ch. 19) were slain with the gospel.

The purpose of Satan's binding, allowing the gospel's spread among the nations during the present church age - cf NIVZSB

a little season . . Just as the souls under the altar were to wait "a little season", Rev_6:11 , after the "1,000" years he will be loosed and go out to deceive the nations again and gather them against the camp of the saints. (Rev_20:7-8). 2Th_2:9-10

released . . (set free for a short time) . . Satan's final rebellion, Rev_20:7-9.

÷Rev_20:4

Rev_20:4

thrones . . Who are the "***they***" that sat on them? As John looks to see who they are he "then" sees they are the

souls who had been beheaded that are now on the thrones and have "judgment" committed to them.

judgment . . was given to them, the souls who had been beheaded. For what did these souls cry? Rev_6:9-10 Rev_3:21; "Vengeance!"

Then I saw . . [and, *kai* **]** Then John realizes who it is that is sitting on these judgment thrones. cf. Rev_3:21.

souls ... who had been beheaded . . These souls had been previously seen under the altar in Rev_6:9. The souls are now pictured victorious and as ***reigning*** with Christ. Nothing said about "us" reigning (though we are in a prefigure sense Rev_1:6 etc 1Co_4:8 ; Rom_5:17.Rom_11:15

those who had been beheaded . . Beheading was a common method of capital punishment exacted on citizens and prisoners of the Roman Empire. This group may represent martyrs only, or it may include all who remained faithful in the face of pressure to worship the beast. - FSB

The Greek word translated "beheaded" became a general term for execution, not necessarily a particular method. - MSB

who had not worshiped the beast . . They were the faithful who "overcame" Rev_2:11; Rev_2:17; Rev_2:26; Rev_3:5; Rev_3:12; Rev_3:21; Rev_17:14; Rev_21:7;

they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years . . (1Co_6:2; 2Ti_2:12) In what sense do they "judge" and "reign" with Christ?

They are vindicated for the cause for which they died. Their influence and achievement lasts a 1000 yrs. [I wonder if John might have recognized the soul of his brother James? Act_12:1-2]

The "beheaded" saints are **VINDICATED.**
In this "1000 year" reign John did **NOT** see:
1. A bodily resurrection of bodies and spirits
2. A reign on earth from literal Jerusalem;
3. A literal throne of David;
4. "Us" (but it is rather the martyred "souls");
5. Christ on earth;
6. Doesn't mention Jerusalem or Palestine;
7. No mention of the Second Coming

IT IS:
1. "They" and not "us";
2. Past Tense... not "we will reign";
3. Reign of souls is "with" Christ, not a 1000 year reign "of" Christ;
4. No mention of an earthly reign

÷Rev_20:5

Rev_20:5

rest of the dead . . The "***rest"*** are the wicked, those persecutors, who, when they die are forgotten. - Isa_26:13-14;

the rest of the dead . . If those who came to life in the previous verse are only the martyrs, then these are Christians who were not martyred. Alternatively, this may refer to the wicked only, who will be raised for judgment. Either way all the dead are ultimately described as being judged (Rev_20:12-15; compare Dan_12:1-4). - FSB

the rest of the dead . . The bodies of unbelievers of all ages will not be resurrected until the Great White

Throne judgment (Rev_20:12-13). - MSB

did not live again until . . Note the word for "***live again***" (ἔζησαν G326) is used figuratively in Luke, Luk_15:24, Luk_15:32. That is, they are forgotten, they did not succeed in their plans to eradicate Christ's disciples.

first resurrection . . The "***First Resurrection"*** seems to be the resurrection of the souls from beneath the altar (Rev_6:9) to thrones with the Lord. This resurrection is a figurative or symbolic one like that in **Ezekiel 37** in the Valley of Dry Bones Vision (Eze_37:4-6; Eze_37:11-12) . Rev_3:21; Rom_11:15; Foy Wallace says their cause was resurrected.

With the destruction of the Harlot Babylon, the saints are vindicated. All that they had prophesied about (**Matt 24, Luke 18-21; Mark 13**) had come true and they were VINDICATED.

[The *First Resurrection* also in one sense is as our own resurrection from the grave of baptism with Jesus. Rom_6:3-4]

The **resurrection** in Rev_20:12-15 (Dan_12:1-4) refers to the time when all the dead will be raised for the day of judgment. Joh_5:28-29; 1Th_4:16-17; 2Co_5:10;

(cf. Joh_5:28-29; Luk_14:14; Act_24:15; 1Co_15:52; Php_3:10; 1Th_4:16; 2Th_1:7-10).

÷Rev_20:6
Rev_20:6

Blessed and holy . . The fifth of seven beatitudes in Revelation.

first resurrection . . The "***First Resurrection"*** seems to be the resurrection of the souls from beneath the altar (Rev_6:9) to thrones with the Lord. This resurrection is a figurative or symbolic one like that in **Ezekiel 37** in the Valley of Dry Bones Vision (Eze_37:4-6; Eze_37:11-12) . Rev_3:21; Rom_11:15; Foy Wallace says their cause was resurrected.

Those leading the way would probably include James Act_12:2 ; Stephen Act_7:59-60; Antipas Rev_2:13; Peter and Paul (martyred c. AD. 64) (cf. Rev_2:10 ; Mat_5:10 1Co_4:9-13 1Pe_4:12-16; Rev_2:10

With the destruction of the Harlot Babylon, the saints are vindicated. All that they had prophesied about (**Matt 24, Luke 18-21; Mark 13**) had come true and they were VINDICATED

First resurrection = figurative of first Christians, those could be living as well as those martyred. *Resurrection* to take souls from under altar to thrones.

The *First Resurrection* could also be one's resurrection from the grave of baptism with Jesus. Rom_6:3-4. -

The **resurrection** in Rev_20:12-15 (Dan_12:1-4) refers to the time when all the dead will be raised for the day of judgment. Joh_5:28-29; 1Th_4:16-17; 2Co_5:10; (cf. Joh_5:28-29; Luk_14:14; Act_24:15; 1Co_15:52; Php_3:10; 1Th_4:16; 2Th_1:7-10).

Some think there are two kinds of resurrections: the "resurrection of life" (also called the "resurrection of the just" Luk_14:14;) and "the resurrection of condemnation" (Joh_5:29; Dan_12:2; Act_24:15). This looks at the resurrection as to two different outcomes.

first resurrection ... second death . . cf. Rev_2:11; Rev_2:14; cf. Rom_6:9-10. Death is a separation. The first death is the separation of the spirit from the body (Jas_2:26, Gen_35:18) and the ***Second Death*** is eternal

separation of the spirit from God (2Th_1:9; Mat_10:28; Jud_1:6).

The "second death" is spiritual death beyond physical death (cf. Rev_20:14; Rev_2:11; Rev_21:8). It involves death of the soul (whole person) as well as the body (Mat_10:28). - Constable

Specifically the *first resurrection* involves deliverance from the lake of fire. Those who participate in the first resurrection are also blessed because they will be priests of God and Christ, ... - Constable

priests and kings . . -- Rev_1:6 ; Rev_3:21; Rev_5:10; This is an allusion to Exo_19:5-6 where it refers to Israel as God's instrument to bring light and revelation to the Gentile world. In the NT is includes all saints as priests to do the same thing for the entire world today cf. 1Pe_2:5; 1Pe_2:9; Rev_1:6.

Priests have unlimited access to and intimate fellowship with God. - Constable

of God and of Christ . . (Php_2:5-8);
The strongest proof, perhaps, in the book of the doctrine of Christ's coequal Deity. If we read these words in the light of St John's Gospel, or of the Nicene Creed, they suggest no difficulty, but without the doctrine there taught, they make salvation to consist in the deadly sin which the Moslems call "association"—the worshipping the creature by the side of the Creator. Notice, however, that the *word* "God" in this book always means the Father; and so throughout the N. T., with few exceptions. - CBSC

shall reign with Him a thousand years . . The ones who have a part in the first resurrection are the subjects. The thousands years is a symbol for a long period of time, versus "ten days" Rev_2:10 and the "three and half" years, etc. (Rev_12:14; Rev_11:2-3) and other short periods.

It is the time they are with Christ in heaven awaiting the time of Christ's second coming and the resurrection of their bodies (1Th_4:13-18, 2Co_5:6; see the NOTE at 2Co_5:8) "Where are the dead?"

John is about to speak now of the *resurrection* at the last day.
Joh_5:29 1Th_4:13 ff; 1 Cor. 15 ; Joh_5:24 ; Joh_11:24-25 Joh_12:48 ;

÷Rev_20:7
Rev_20:7

Rev_20:2
Verse 7 separates the BEFORE the "1000 yrs" from that AFTER

thousand years have expired . . That is, after a very long time! Not to be taken as a literal 1000 years.

Satan loosed . . And what he will do for "a little season" before the final resurrection. The restrictions (see Rev_20:1-2) on Satan's ability to deceive the world's nations is loosed. He again deceives nations into persecuting the saints and, like a dragaon, is ready to pounce on them.

÷Rev_20:8
Rev_20:8

go out to deceived the nations . . Satan's greatest weapon is ***deception***. He makes people think/reason incorrectly. Rev_20:3; 2Co_11:14; 2Co_11:3; Col_2:4; 2Jn_1:7; Rev_13:14; Rev_19:20; Rev_20:10.

A thousand years have wrought no change in Satan's methods; no sooner has he been set free than he is at his old work of deceiving the world (Rev_20:3, note), and turning it against the Church; his limitations removed - Swete

four corners . . The N-E-S-W directions of the compass, in every direction, of the world. (Rev_7:1)
It was a mis-interpretation to think this is proof of a flat rectangle shape earth.

Gog and Magog . . An allusion to Eze_39:1 ff. and Eze_38:2 ff. who became a symbol of all heathen nations. (Gen_10:2; 1Ch_1:5; Eze_38:2-3; Eze_38:14; Eze_38:16; Eze_39:6; Eze_39:11; Eze_39:15)

An allusion to **Ezek 38–39**. Here, Gog and Magog probably represent the resurgence of evil nations, perhaps having been deceived by Satan to rebel against the Lamb's rule (see Rev_20:10) - FSB

Magog was the grandson of Noah (Gen_10:2) and founder of a kingdom located N of the Black and Caspian Seas. Gog is apparently the leader of a rebel army known collectively as Magog. - MSB

Magog is given in Gen_10:2 as the name of a son of Japhet, the eponymus, there is no doubt, of one of the nations lying near the Black Sea, and called by Europeans Scythian in the wide sense. Gog appears in Eze_39:1 .c. to be not a national name, but the name, whether personal or dynastic, of the king of Magog and the neighbouring or kindred tribes of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. The resemblance of two of these names to the modern *Russia* and *Muscovy* is merely accidental: - CBSC

The phrase "Gog and Magog" (v. 8) evidently refers to the world's rulers and nations in rebellion against God. Gog, the ruler, and Magog, his land, probably have symbolical significance as well as literal meaning much as Babylon does, and they signify Messiah's enemies. People will come from all over the world to rebel against Christ (Eze_38:3-6). - Constable

Gog refers to the prince of a host of pagan invaders from the North, especially the Scythian hordes from the distant land of Magog. Here in Rev 20, however, the names are symbolic of the final enemies of Christ duped by Satan into attacking the community of the saints. - EBCNT

to battle . . To wage war against God's people, to refute them and their cause, to persecute, and kill them.

number is as the sand of the sea . . The opposition to the saints becomes so very numerous .Innumerable (see Gen_32:12; Gen_41:49; Isa_10:22; Jer_33:22; etc.).

÷Rev_20:9
Rev_20:9

They went ... the breadth of the earth . . Perhaps rather, **of the land**; (CBSC); Enemy from many nations (Rev_20:8) join in attacking (persecuting?) the saints.

surrounded the camp . . The enemy is ready to ambush the saints. Is this a literal physical attack upon the saints, or again is it symbolic of persecution? It sounds like an attempt to eradicate God's people and The Truth.

the camp of the saints . . The "camp" and the "beloved city" would be the spiritual Jerusalem, the Lord's church. There is no indication on the part of the saints' camp that they are aware of the imminent danger about to attack them.

Not earthly Jerusalem - but the church - 2Co_6:14-18 tells of their dangers to church - Rev_21:10 -

Abraham looked for the city - Heb_11:10.

The 'Camp of the Saints' and the 'Beloved City' are two aspects of one body, the Universal Church, which is threatened by Gog and Magog. - Swete

The gathered army, which is extensive and world-wide, advances and in siege fashion encircles the "camp of God's people, the city he loves." Most commentators take the expressions "camp" and "city" as different metaphors for God's people. "Camp" (GK 4213) in the NT refers to either a military camp or the camp of Israel (Act_21:34, Act_21:37; Act_22:24; Heb_11:34; Heb_13:11, Heb_13:13). It reminds us of the pilgrim character of the people of God - EBCNT

camp . . παρεμβολή (*parembolē*), ῆς (*ēs*), ἡ (*hē*): n.fem.; ≡ DBLHebr 4722; Str 3925—**1.** LN 1.94 **camp** (Heb_11:34; Heb_13:11, Heb_13:13; Rev_20:9 +; Heb_13:12 v.r. NA26); **2.** LN 7.22 **barracks** (Act_21:34, Act_21:37; Act_22:24; Act_23:10, Act_23:16, Act_23:32+; Act_28:16 v.r. NA26) - DBL Greek [**G3925**]

and the beloved city . . The New Jerusalem as we shall see. Rev_3:12; Rev_21:2. Paul uses "Jerusalem" and "the Jerusalem above" as symbols for the the Old Covenant people and the New Covenant people (the Christ's church) Gal_4:24-31.

Many less literal interpreters understand this verse as a description of the church's final victory over her enemies. They equate this city with the New Jerusalem. - Swete, pp. 268–69.

More likely, the beloved city is equivalent to "the camp" of God's people (Exo_16:13; Exo_33:7) and describes the oppressed, pilgrim community of believers who will inherit the new Jerusalem (Rev_3:12) - NIVZSB

fire came down . . This is an allusion to Eze_38:22 and Eze_39:6. The victory is God's! He delivers His saints from the ambush.

from God . . God intervenes and saves his saints.

devoured them . . God will destroy the rebels with fire from heaven (cf. Gen_19:24; Lev_10:2; 2Ki_1:10, 2Ki_1:12; Eze_38:22; Eze_39:6; Luk_9:54). John described the destiny of these mortal rebels in verses Rev_20:12-15.- Constable

Rev_20:10
Rev_20:10

devil . . That is, Satan, the old Serpent, etc. His final judgment now comes to him.
Babylon, the Harlot (Jerusalem) and the two beasts (Rome and paganism) had been judged already and conquered. Now at the end-time judgment Satan himself is dealt with and cast into the lake of fire. (Mat_25:41; Mat_25:46)

everlasting: Mat_25:46, Mat_3:12, Mat_13:40, Mat_13:42, Mat_13:50; Mar_9:43-48; 2Th_1:9; Rev_14:10-11, Rev_20:10-15

prepared: Joh_8:44; Rom_9:22-23; 2Pe_2:4; 1Jo_3:10; Jud_1:6; Rev_12:7-9

Lake of fire . . Rev_20:14.

The final hell, the place of eternal punishment for all unrepentant rebels, angelic or human (cf. Rev_20:10, Rev_20:15). The NT says much of eternal punishment (cf. Rev_14:10-11; Mat_13:40-42; Mat_25:41; Mar_9:43-48; Luk_3:17; Luk_12:47-48). **- MSB**

brimstone . . Brimstone is a yellowish, sulfuric rock that often attends fire and smoke in Revelation (Rev_14:10; Rev_19:20; Rev_20:10). Common in the Dead Sea region, when ignited such deposits melt and produce burning streams and suffocating gas. - MSB

where . . Read **where also**. - CBSC [πυρὸς καὶ]

the beast and the false prophet . . Their judgment had been rendered earlier, Rev_19:20. Nations are judged in this life time, but individuals will be judged at the last day.

tormented ... forever . . Hell and "torment" will be just as eternal and everlasting as heaven will be for the righteous.

These verses describe the final judgment of all the unbelievers of all ages (Mat_10:15; Mat_11:22, Mat_11:24; Mat_12:36, Mat_12:41-42; Luk_10:14; Joh_12:48; Act_17:31; Act_24:25; Rom_2:5, Rom_2:16; Heb_9:27; 2Pe_2:9; 2Pe_3:7; Jud_1:6) - MSB

for ever and ever . . Lit. **to the ages of the ages**, as strong an expression for absolute endlessness as Biblical language affords. - CBSC

This is very similar to Rev_14:10-11 and Rev_19:3. The concept of a permanent separation is alluded to in Mat_25:46 where the same term (*aiōnios*), used for heaven, is used for hell. - Utley

It is hard for humans to conceive of how literal fire can bring torture to nonphysical beings, but the reality of unbearable pain inflicted on Satan is unquestionable. However the Bible may speak of that future punishment—whether as the lake of fire, outer darkness (Mat_8:12; Mat_22:13; Mat_25:30), wailing and gnashing of teeth (Mat_8:12; Mat_13:42, Mat_13:50; Mat_22:13; Mat_24:51; Mat_25:30; Luk_13:28), a never-dying worm and unquenchable fire (Mar_9:48), or fire and brimstone—it presents a picture of mental agony and corporeal suffering combined in proportion to the guilt of those who have sinned (Luk_12:47-48) . . ." - Thomas, *Revelation 8–22*, p. 426.

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Full sermon

A DAY OF SURPRISES

("Ten Surprised Men"

2Co_5:10; Rev_20:10-15

1. What a day of **surprise** the judgment day will be!
   a. On that day we might be surprised some were saved who we didn't think would be saved, and we might be surprised some were not saved who we thought would be.
   b. The judgment day will be a day in which the hearts of men will be laid bare and things will be seen as they really are.

      "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with eery secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." - Ecc_12:14.

2. It will be a day of surprises for men but not for God. God is never surprised, for ***"no thought can be withholden from him"*** - Job_42:2.

"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." - Heb_4:13.

3. Not how Jesus depicts the surprise of some in Mat_7:22, "***Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23. And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."***
   a. How surprised so many will be! Why?
   b. Not because God kept them in the dark, but because they didn't examine the scriptures to see for sure whether or not they were pleasing unto Him.

4. Will you be surprised on that day? If there is something lacking on your part, or if you are in error, it would be better that someone shocked you now by pointing out your failure than wait and be shocked and surprised at the judgment day!

IT WILL BE A DAY OF SURPRISES FOR .. .
1. <u>THOSE WHO DIDN'T BELIEVE IN GOD</u>.

1. How surprised the atheist and infidels will be! How surprised will be those who all along have ridiculed the idea of God! "***The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."*** - Psa_14:1.
   a. How foolish for a man so to believe, when there is such irrefutable evidence to the contrary.

2. Before the Almighty all men must come at the judgment day - 2Co_5:10. Then all will know there is a God! No one that day will go away still believing there is no God, for all will see Him and stand face to face before Him. "***It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."*** – Heb_10:31.

IT WILL BE A DAY OF SURPRISES FOR .. .
2. <u>THOSE WHO DIDN'T BELIEVE IN CHRIST</u>

1. Here is what the great Apostle had to say long this line: ***"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow... and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the God the Father."*** **–** Php_2:10-11.

2. Now we have the privilege of voluntarily confessing Jesus to be the Christ, but at the Judgment all will have to acknowledge that He is the Christ. No one will go past the judgment without knowing for sure Jesus is everything He claimed and everything God proclaimed.

3. Those who go to the judgment not having believed in the virgin birth will go away from the judgment knowing that He was that He was born of a virgin.

4. Those who formerly contended that Jesus was nothing more than a mere man will be convinced that they were wrong, but this change of mind will then do no good as far as their salvation is concerned.

5. One had better change his mind now than to have to change his mind them. What a day of surprises that day will be!

IT WILL BE A DAY OF SURPRISES FOR .. .
3. <u>THOSE WHO DIDN'T BELIEVE IN THE JUDGMENT DAY</u>

1. Some don't believe there will be a judgment day, but the Bible says there will be. "***It is appointed unto***

man once to die, and after that the judgment." **–** Heb_9:27.
a. Act_17:30-31.

2. Everybody will have to stand before God on that day. Are you ready for that judgment day?

IT WILL BE A DAY OF SURPRISES FOR ...
4. THOSE WHO DIDN'T BELIEVE IN THE HEREAFTER

1. Some believe that death is an annihilation, and that there is nothing beyond the grave! How wrong they are! How surprised they will be later to find they were in error. ***"If a man, shall he live again?"*** **-** Job_14:14**.** What about that question? Will man live after death? Is there a hereafter?

2. Let Jesus answer that question: ***"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29. And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."*** – Joh_5:28-29.

3. Jesus' word should once and for all answer Job's question. Man will live again, either in heaven or perdition. Let angels proclaim it; let demons fear it; let men believe it! How greatly surprised thousands will be on that resurrection morning.

IT WILL BE A DAY OF SURPRISES FOR .. .
5. THOSE WHO DIDN'T BELIEVE IN THE PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED!

1. Some believe in heaven but do not believe in hell. Some can't conceive of an eternal punishment for the wicked. Didn't God say that He and man don't always think alike? ***"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD."*** **–** Isa_55:8
a. God says there will be punishment for the wicked, and men had better believe it!

2. How surprised some will be to find God was right! Here is what God says about it:
a. ***"7. And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,***
"8. In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:
"9. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." – 2Th_1:7-9.
b. Rest assured, my friends, that God will do what He says!

IT WILL BE A DAY OF SURPRISES FOR ...
6. THOSE WHO DIDN'T THINK GOD MEANT WHAT HE SAID

1. If God didn't mean what He said, what kind of God is He? How could He be trusted? God has never said anything He didn't mean! When He says that He will condemn those who do certain things, rest assured that he will do just that!

2. On the other hand, when God says He will bless whose who do certain things, rest assured He will do just that. God cannot lie, – Tit_1:2, hence, men who don't think really mans some of the things He has spoken will certainly be surprised at the judgment – Heb_6:18; Joh_6:68.

IT WILL BE A DAY OF SURPRISES FOR .. .
7. THOSE WHO THOUGHT THE WORD WAS NOT AWARE

1. My friends, don't think for one moment that anything ever escapes the attention of the Almighty. Nor is He unrighteous to forget, (Heb_6:10). David said, ***"O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee"*** – Psa_69:5.

2. The sooner people realize this, the better concept they will have of God. God is unaware of nothing. ***"Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee,"*** said the Psalmist, – Psa_139:12.

3. The Psalmist further exclaimed, ***"Thou knowest my down sitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off."*** – Psa_139:2.
   a. ***"He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see? The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity."*** **–** Psa_94:9, Psa_94:11
   b. God knows those that are His – 2Ti_2:19. No mistake will ever be made on God's part. He likewise knows them who are not His. God know everything.

4. How surprising this will be to some who have thought God might not have noticed certain things. "***Be sure your sin will find you out."*** **–** Num_32:23.
   a. Don't try to hide any sin from God for it will be brought out into the open at the judgment day.

IT WILL BE A DAY OF SURPRISES FOR .. .

8. <u>THOSE WHO THOUGHT THE LORD WOULD EXCUSE IGNORANCE</u>

1. God no longer excuses ignorance – Act_17:30. One will do it to no avail if he pleads ignorance at the judgment. We are told to examine the scriptures, and to show ourselves approved unto God – 2Ti_2:15. There is no excuse for man's not knowing what God requires of him.

2. That day will be a day of surprises for some who thought they were right. Merely thinking you are right doesn't make you right. One must be sincere, but sincerity alone is not sufficient. It is the truth that makes one free, not merely sincerity alone – Joh_8:32.

3. Saul of Tarsus thought he was right, but he wasn't. He had lived in all good conscience, but had been misguided – Act_23:1; 1Ti_1:13.
   a. Conscience is a safe guide only when the conscience is safely guided by the scriptures.
   b. Don't wait and be surprised at the judgment.

IT WILL BE A DAY OF SURPRISES FOR THOSE WHO ...

9. <u>THOUGHT ONE COULD BE SAVED OUTSIDE THE CHURCH</u>

1. The Bible says that Christ is the savior of the body – Eph_5:23, and likewise tells us that the body is His church – Col_1:18.
   a. The Bible says that the saved are added to the church – Act_2:47.
   b. According to the Bible there are no saved people outside the church.
   c. How surprised so many will be who have thought the contrary!

2. This brings up another thing. Some don't think that baptism has a place in God's plan of our salvation. In this they are mistaken.
   a. It is by baptism we come into the Lord's church – 1Co_12:13. The Holy Spirit teaches us the truth that we are baptized into the one body, the church.
   b. How then could one argue that one can be saved without baptism.

c. Furthermore, Peter plainly declares that baptism saves us – 1Pe_3:21.

3. It goes without saying that before one is "***baptized for the remission of sins,"*** as commanded in Act_2:38, he must believe in God, Christ, and all God has said, ***"for without faith it is impossible to be pleasing unto him"*** – Heb_11:6.
   a. It also goes without saying that man cannot be saved until he repents of his sins; hence, Peter said to those who had become pricked with is message from on high, "***Repent and be baptized ... for the remission of sins" –*** Act_2:38.

IT WILL BE A DAY OF SURPRISES FOR ...

10. <u>THOSE WHO DON'T MAKE ADEQUATE PREPARATION</u>

1. Man often gets to thinking that if he makes some preparation that ought to be sufficient, but in this he is greatly mistaken.
   a. In the parable of the ten virgins, mentioned in Mat_25:1-13**,** we see the necessity of making adequate preparation.
   b. Five of the virgins were foolish, though they were morally unquestioned. The other five, started out to met the bridegroom. They, along with the other five, started out to met the bridegroom.
   c. They had lamps, and even had some oil in their lamps.
   d. The whole of this parable is that they just didn't make enough preparation.
   e. They didn't take enough oil in their lamps. When the hour came for them to arise and go forth to meet the bridegroom, their lamps began to flicker and went out.
   f. How much like the five virgins are we today?

2. How much preparation have you made to go to heaven? Are you sure you have done everything the Lord requires of you?
   a. Have you believed in Christ, repented of your sins, confessed Jesus before men, and been baptized into Christ?
   b. Are you a faithful member of the Lord's spiritual body - His church?
   c. Are you worshipping Him faithfully, and serving Him devotedly?
   d. How much thought have you given to this admonition: ***"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith, prove your own selves."*** – 2Co_13:5.

   Only by studying your Bible faithfully can you do this.

Conclusion:

1. I say that the judgment day will be a day of great surprises.
   a. I wonder how many of us listening today will be among those surprised and shocked at the judgment?
   b. How many things that have been said today have surprised you?
   c. With how many things said are you prone to take issue?

2. My friends, it would be better to be surprised and shocked now to find out that you have been wrong, then to wait and be shocked and surprised at the judgment!

3. I beg of you to check the scriptures given in our lesson today, examine them closely, and see if you have been doing the things suggested in those scriptures.
   a. May the Lord so help us in our study and in our efforts to please Him that we may not be among those who will surprised in the judgment.

4. If you realize in your heart there are things you need to do to make yourself right with God, please respond to the invitation today.
   a. If you are unfaithful as a Christian, bring your life back to the Lord.
   b. If you have never confessed the Lord as the Son of God and been baptized into the spiritual kingdom, come to Him this morning, and obey the Lord in making that good confession and being baptized into the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit for the remission of sins.

-- George Bailey, Herald of Truth, sermon

÷Rev_20:11
Rev_20:11

20:11–15 John here narrates the final judgment, in which all the dead stand before God's throne and receive His justice.

[If it is a reference to God's final judgment on Jerusalem, it is a *type* of the judgment we will face. God operates in every age the same way - judgment and blessings.]

Then I saw . . This "And I saw" introduces something else John saw in this vision (cfRev_19:11, Rev_19:17, Rev_19:19; Rev_20:1, Rev_20:4, Rev_20:12; Rev_21:1-2). The continuation of chronological progression seems clear from the continued use of "***And***" to introduce new information. Note that almost every verse in this chapter begins with "***And***." [καὶ]- Constable

a great white throne . . Victory and judgment; white symbolizes pureity, justice, and righteousness.

Nearly 50 times in Revelation there is the mention of a throne. This is a judgment throne, elevated, pure, and holy. God sits on it as judge (cf. Rev_4:2, Rev_4:3, Rev_4:9; Rev_5:1, Rev_5:7, Rev_5:13; Rev_6:16; Rev_7:10, Rev_7:15) in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. See Rev_21:5-6; Joh_5:22-29; Act_17:31. - MSB

a great white throne . . Probably not absolutely the same as that of Rev_4:2 &c.: the King is to sit now not as Lawgiver or Administrator but as Judge. Possibly it is called "**great**" as compared with the thrones of Rev_20:4; "**white**," of course, as symbolical of the holiness and purity of the judgement to be administered. - CBSC

...in the final judgement there is but one throne, since there is but One judge; cf. Heb_12:23 - Swete

Him sat on it . . The one sitting on this throne is God. This is probably a general reference to the Father and Jesus Christ since both will judge finally (cf. Rev_3:21; Rev_4:2-3, Rev_4:9; Rev_5:1, Rev_5:7, Rev_5:13; Rev_6:16; Rev_7:10, Rev_7:15; Rev_19:4; Rev_21:5; Rev_22:1, Rev_22:3, Rev_22:12; Dan_7:9-10; Joh_5:22-23, Joh_5:26-27; Joh_8:16; Joh_10:30; Heb. 1:3). - Constable

In the NT God has made Christ the Judge (cf. Joh_5:22, Joh_5:27; Joh_9:39; Act_10:42; Act_17:31; 2Co_5:10; 2Ti_4:1 and 1Pe_4:5). - Utley

from whose face the earth and haven fled away . . Heaven in this context does not refer to God's throne, but to the atmosphere above the earth as in Gen_1:1.- Utley

earth and the heaven fled away . . John saw the contaminated universe go out of existence. Peter described this moment in 2Pe_3:10-13 (*see notes there*). The universe is "uncreated," going into non-existence (cf. Mat_24:35).

- MSB

fled away . . This was not flight from one locality to another--the phrase ***fled away*** indicated complete disappearance. - Wallace

This seems to indicate that we have come to the end of His dealings with this earth as we know it (cf. 2Pe_3:7, 2Pe_3:10-12). - Constable

And there was found no place for them . . The language of poetic imagery captures the fading character of everything of the world (1Jn_2:17). Now the only reality is God seated on the throne of judgment, before whom all must appear (Heb_9:27). - EBCNT

That the destruction will be by fire is not stated here, or anywhere but in 2Pe_3:10, 2Pe_3:12, and perhaps 2Th_1:7-8. In St Peter l.c. we have this destruction of the world by fire compared with the destruction by the Flood, and this parallel seems to have been recognised in popular Jewish belief. - CBSC

:Rev_20:12
Rev_20:12

The dead small and great . . Includes believers and unbelievers (see Dan 12:2; Joh_5:28-29; Act_24:15). Both will have their lives evaluated by the perfect judge. - FSB
Rev_20:6; Dan_7:9 Rev_19:18 Joh_12:48

In God's eyes there are no "big I and little you," so the phrase is used only to denote that all human beings will be brought before the judgment. -ZerrCBC

standing before God . . Standing before the throne, in the judicial sense, standing to receive justice.

books were open . . An allusion to Dan_7:10; Remember that the Holy Bible is a book of 66 books. The standard by which we will be judged are the Holy Scriptures Joh_12:48; (There is no article "the" here before *books*, or in Dan_7:10).

When ***the books were opened*** that contained the record of their works they were judged accordingly. In the same symbolism, the beasts of Daniel's vision, **Rev_7:10**, were judged by the books which were opened. These books symbolized the record of evil deeds, a book of remembrance. - Wallace

The other book that was open contains the deeds of men's lives, etc. 2Co_5:10

Another book was opened . . Our salvation is not by our own works but by our response to the grace of God. Yet reference to our works is not ignored. The “books would be as it were vouchers for the book of life.” (Alford); shewing that those written in that book had lived as became the grace given to them (CBSC).

The Book of Life . . Rev_3:5; Rev_13:8; Rev_21:27. cf. Php_4:3. It contains the names of all the redeemed, Dan_12:1.
See also a near reading in Psa_69:28; and in Exo_32:32-33. Words and meaning are exactly the same here as in Php_4:3. (CBSC)

There are two books mentioned: the book of deeds or remembrances and the book of life (cf. Rev_3:5; and Rev_13:8).
The book of life is described in Exo_32:32; Psa_69:28; Isa_4:3; Dan_12:1; Luk_10:20; Php_4:3;

Heb_12:23; Rev_3:5; Rev_13:8; Rev_17:8; Rev_20:15; Rev_21:27.

The book of deeds or remembrances is described in Psa_56:8; Psa_139:16; Isa_65:6; Mal_3:16 and Rev_20:12-13.

These are metaphors for God's memory. God will deal fairly with His creation; humans are responsible for their actions and motives and are accountable to God (cf. Gal_6:7). - Utley

But the reference to ***another book . . . which is the book of life*** symbolized the registry of the approved, ***which are written in heaven.*** - *Wallace*

dead were judged according to their works . . Their thoughts (Luk_8:17; Rom_2:16), words (Mat_12:37), and actions (Mat_16:27) will be compared to God's perfect, holy standard (Mat_5:48; 1Pe_1:15-16) and will be found wanting (Rom_3:23). This also implies that there are degrees of punishment in hell (cf. Mat_10:14-15; Mat_11:22; Mar_12:38-40; Luk_12:47-48; Heb_10:29). - MSB

"The teaching of judgment by works runs throughout both the OT and the NT [cf. Psa_62:12; Jer_17:10; Rom_2:6; 1Pe_1:17].". Mounce, p. 365. (Constable)

We see then that "the books" contained the record of "their works." Thus this passage justifies, in some measure, the modern popular myth of "the recording Angel." - CBSC

by the things which were written in the books . . Do their deeds and actions, and obedience to God's Word, conform to the Truth found in the Holy Scriptures which is the standard for judgment, Joh_12:48; Heb_5:9;

:Rev_20:13
Rev_20:13

sea gave up the dead . . Bodies lost at sea, and a metaphor for any body lost in a way not buried.

... but all, whether buried or unburied, are raised and judged. - CBSC

This does not refer to the fact that the dead are kept in three different places; the parallel metaphors assert that all of the dead stood before God (cf. Php_2:10-11). - Utley

Wallace understands the "sea" a symbolic reference to thejudgment of persecuting rulers and their subjects. "The use of the word sea applied to the heathen society, consistent with the employment of the symbol elsewhere in the apocalypse."

Death and Hell . . The bodies and spirits of all the lost, will be resurrected at Jesus' coming and stand before God. Joh_5:28-29; Act_24:15) 1Co_15:35-42;

It is the body that is in the sea, or the earth - a bodily resurrection. Joh_5:28-29. All will have new bodies - all raised to eternal life or eternal damnation.

All the places that have held the bodies of the unrighteous dead will yield up new bodies suited for hell. - MSB

The words ***death*** and ***hades*** were used as a synecdoche--a figure of speech by which a part is put for the whole; the genus for the species, the name of the substance for the thing. So ***death and hades*** were used here for the subjects of the diabolical and infernal powers. - Wallace

Death . . The location of dead spirits. [Thanatos 118x (death = 115)]
Death and *Hades* here meaning the same.

Hades . . The word hades is used 11 time. (translated *hell* (AV) 10 times; Luk_16:23; Act_2:27; Act_2:31 ; Mat_16:18 Luk_10:15 Rev_1:19 Rev_6:4 Rev_20:13; Rev_20:14 (grave =1Co_15:55)
(Tartarus = 2Pe_2:4)
(Gehenna = The place of eternal abode of the wicked.)

judged, each according to his works . . The final judgment is not by nations, races, or groups, but individually.

Another reference to judgment on the basis of deeds again stresses personal responsibility (cf. Rev_20:12; Rev_2:23; Mat_16:27; Rom_2:6; Rom_14:12; 1 Pet. 1:17). God will judge all people on the basis of their works (Rev_20:12; cf. Psa_62:12; Mat_25:41-46; Heb_4:12-13). This is also true of Christians at the judgment seat of Christ (Rom_14:10; 1Co_3:13; 2Co_5:10). - Constable

:Rev_20:14
Rev_20:14

Death and Hades . . The outcome of the judgment on all the wicked.
Rev_19:20; Hos_13:14; 1Co_15:26, 1Co_15:53

lake of fire . . Rev_21:8; A description of the final abode of all the wicked, both Satan, his angels, and all wicked men. Mat_25:41.
We learn that there is a resurrection of the wicked to an everlasting existence in terrible torment separated from God. Joh_5:29;

This is the second death . . It is called a second death because those who have already died bodily now die spiritually (Rev_20:12-13; compare Dan_12:1-4).
Physical death is the separation of the spirit from the body (Jas_2:26; Gen_35:18) and the second death is the eternal separation of the spirit from God, lost in everlasting hell (***Gehenna***).

That there will be a resurrection to death as well as to life is taught already in Dan_12:2. - Swete

This final death is permanent and inescapable (see Rev_2:11; Rev_20:6 and note; Rev_21:8). - FSB

The first death is spiritual and physical, the second is eternal in the lake of fire, the final, eternal hell (Rev_20:6; Rev_21:8) - MSB

This judgment on the evil instigators of the persecutions and martyrdom of the saints of God and Christ was specifically named ***the second death,*** which again was as visional and metaphorical as **"the first resurrection."** It denoted in symbolic language the destruction of the evil forces which had moved against the church to destroy it. - Wallace

Note corresponding points, first and second death, and first and second resurrection.

HELL
Rev_20:14-15, lake of fire**, (**Mat_18:9**)**
Mat_25:30, outer darkness (Mat_22:13)
Rev_14:11, torment, (Luk_16:23)

Mat_25:46, eternal punishment
Mar_9:47-48, Mat_10:28

Who will be there?
2Th_1:7-8, Rev_21:8, 2Pe_2:20-21, 1Pe_4:18, Rev_20:15, Mat_5:22, 2Pe_2:4

:Rev_20:15
Rev_20:15

anyone not found . . [This] assumes that there will be those who are not written in the book of life (a metaphor for those who have not trusted Christ). - Utley

This refutes both universalism (that all will be saved) and annihilation (that the lost are only unconscious and do not suffer any torment or receive any reward of blessings).

Book of life . . Rev_13:8 ; Dan_7:10 See notes on **Rev_20:12**

Lake of fire . . Rev_20:10 Rev_19:20; Rev_20:10; Rev_20:14; Rev_20:15;

The final hell, the place of eternal punishment for all unrepentant rebels, angelic or human (cf. Rev_20:10, Rev_20:15). The NT says much of eternal punishment (cf. Rev_14:10-11; Mat_13:40-42; Mat_25:41; Mar_9:43-48; Luk_3:17; Luk_12:47-48). **- MSB**

"If we once saw sin as God sees it, we would understand why a place such as hell exists." Wiersbe, 2:621.

See ZerrCBC commentary on Rev_20:15 for Wallace's statement that this vision was intended for the first readers of and not for future and general application.

HELL
Rev_20:14-15, lake of fire**, (**Mat_18:9**)**
Mat_25:30, outer darkness (Mat_22:13)
Rev_14:11, torment, (Luk_16:23)
Mat_25:46, eternal punishment
Mar_9:47-48, Mat_10:28

Who will be there?
2Th_1:7-8, Rev_21:8, 2Pe_2:20-21, 1Pe_4:18, Rev_20:15, Mat_5:22, 2Pe_2:4

:Rev_21:1
Rev_21:1

Section 4: The New Jerusalem (chapters 21-22)

Chapter 21 - The New Jerusalem Described
The New Heaven and Earth, Rev_21:1
The New Jerusalem Introduced, Rev_21:2
The Old Testament Prophets Fulfilled, Rev_21:3-5

Promised Reward and Punishments, Rev_21:6-8
The Physical Features of the New City, Rev_21:9-27

[At **Rev 21** Coffman has a great lesson/sermon on "Heaven" p. 488-497.]
- - -
And I saw . . The usual introduction to a new vision (cf. Rev_20:11, etc.). - PC

A new heaven and earth . . Prophesied by Isaiah, Isa_65:17; Isa_66:22 2Pe_3:13; 2Co_5:17;

This new heaven and earth is what Jesus means in **Mat_5:5** where He says, "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth." It is the one Peter is looking for when he says, "We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (**2Pe_3:13**). - ZerrCBC

The new heaven and new earth . . is the victorious church.
Eze_11:19-36 the Jews were united.
Eze_36:26-32 a picture of the Jews after exile

The new heavens and earth were foreseen by Isaiah (Isa_65:17) as a part of his vision of the renewed Jerusalem. - EBCNT

Most of John's imagery in this chapter reflects the New Jerusalem vision of **Isa 60** and **66** and the new temple vision of **Eze 40–48.** The multiple OT promises converging in his mind suggest that he viewed the New Jerusalem as the fulfillment of all these strands of prophecy. - EBCNT

This phrase, *new heaven and new earth,* was not new in scripture terminology. The Old Testament prophets referred to Israel's return from Babylon and their restoration to their own land of Judea as to them a "new heaven and new earth." (**Isa_65:17**; **Isa_66:22**; **Eze_11:19**; **Eze_Rev_21:2**). - Wallace

To the Corinthians the apostle Paul described the new state in Christ as *the old things having passed away*--referring to the new spiritual relation Rev_19:7 in the new covenant versus the old fleshly Israelism of the Heb_12:22 old covenant. (**2Co_5:17**) To the scattered Jerusalem church the apostle Peter adapted that phrase in Gal_4:26 to look for the heavenly reward in the eternal world. (**2Pe_3:13**) In the apocalypse the apostle John applied the same phrase to the emergence of the church from the tribulation period. - Wallace

new . . "new" (Gk. *kainos*) is best understood here in terms of something that has been qualitatively transformed in a fundamental way, rather than as an outright new creation *ex nihilo* (Latin, "out of nothing"), as in the case of God's original creation in Genesis 1. - ESVSB

first ...passed away . . Heb_10:9-10; Col_2:14; the old order of Judaism that persecuted the church is gone, and the new Israel (the church) is the real seed of Abraham; see note at Rom_9:4 and Rom_9:8 .
[Who is the **real Israel today**? Rom_2:28-29; Rom_4:12-14; Rom_9:4-8; Gal_3:27-29; Rev_2:9; Rev_3:9; 1Co_10:18 God's ***Israel*** today is not that nation in Palestine called by that name, but His people who live by faith in Him and His Son Jesus Christ.]

first heaven and first earth . . The wicked minions of the heathen world had been cast into the lake **Isa_65:17 Isa_66:22; Eze_11:19; Eze_36:26-36;** -all of this, as a prelude to the description of the new heaven and earth and the new Jerusalem. - Wallace

No sea . . Thus no sea beast Rev_13:1 - The sea in ancient time was view as creating boundaries and separating people (nations). But now there is no sea to separate God's people - 2Co_5:17 All in the church (and in heaven)

will be "one" family, a "united" kingdom.

÷Rev_21:2

Rev_21:2

the holy city . . This is not "heaven" but heaven's picture of the new messianic age. cf. Heb_12:22-23, that is, the church, the "Christian age." (In context the Hebrew is speaking of the church and calling it "the heavenly Jerusalem.")

"The holy city" is the Church of God (see on Rev_11:2) ... - PC

This holy city represents God's redeemed people (cf. Rev_21:10; Rev_21:19; Isa_52:1; Heb_12:22-24); (NIVZSB)

new Jerusalem . . Cf. Rev_21:10 , John saw a city, but it is described as a bride (Eph_5:25-32). The Jerusalem of Heb_12:22; and Heb_7:5; Heb_9:23; and the city that is above, is free and "the mother of us all" Gal_4:26. (Rev_3:12; Heb_11:10; Heb_12:22-24.)

Christianity took the place of the old system centered in the temple at Jerusalem. It was destroyed to allow the "new Jerusalem" to spread to include people everywhere (Mat_28:19-20; Mar_16:15-16) which had been God's purpose of Judaism (to be a light to the Gentiles that there is a true God in heaven to be a blessing to all, Isa_9:2, Isa_42:6-7, Isa_49:6, Isa_60:1-3, Isa_60:19; Mat_4:16; Act_13:47-48, Act_28:28; Rom_15:8-9 Luk_2:32; Act_13:47; Act_26:23; but they had failed in that mission, Heb_8:7; Heb_10:9;) - WG

The old Jerusalem with its old system **Heb_8:1-13** had been typical of the city of God; but its sanctuary was cleansed and it was to be no longer earthly, but heavenly; no longer temporal but spiritual. (**Heb_7:5**; **Heb_9:23**; **Heb_12:22**) The new Jerusalem on a spiritually or figuratively renovated earth was seen as the heavenly community of **Exo_40:34-38** for all nations of men. It was the vision of the pure **Eph_2:22** bride descending from the high realm of holiness in contrast with the fallen harlot city. - Wallace

New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven . . Thus, this is ***not*** a picture of believers going to heaven, but rather of them enjoying life in the New Jerusalem. It is the bride adorned for her husband, the church (Eph_5:25-32.)

coming down out of heaven . . The city John sees coming out of heaven from God is ***holy*** in contrast to the former Jerusalem (cf. Rev_11:8; Isa_52:1; Mat_4:5; Mat_27:53).

coming down out of heaven . . The same words occur in Rev_3:12. If the new Jerusalem is "heaven" how is it that it "came down" out of heaven? What God gave man out of heaven is the glorious kingdom on earth, his church! (Heb_12:28; Col_1:13; Rev_1:13)

All the description here of the new Jerusalem is pictured in terms like the OT prophets pictured the Messianic age, in glorious hyperbole figures. This description is most like "heaven on earth" is probably also the real picture of what heaven itself will be. So we are not wrong to picture heaven in also these terms.

bride . . An important NT metaphor for the church (cf. Mat_25:1-13; Eph_5:25-27). - MSB

a bride . . The church is 2Co_11:2 espoused to Christ Rom_7:1-6, married to Christ. Eph_5:25-27 , the church is his bride Eph_5:32. (Isa_54:1) Mat_22:1-14; Rev_21:9-10)

This picture of the **New Jerusalem** as a beautiful **bride** in contrast with the vision of Babylon (the harlot Jerusalem) as a prostitute (Rev_17:4-5; Rev_18:2-3).

John calls the city a "bride" (G3565; cf. Rev_21:9, Rev_22:17; cf. also Rev_19:7-8, where a different word was used). The purity and devotedness of the bride are reflected in her attire. The multiple imagery is needed to portray the tremendous reality of the city. A bride-city captures something of God's personal relationship to his people (the bride) as well as something of their life in communion with him and one another (a city, with its social connotations). - EBCNT

Rev_21:3

Rev_21:3

heard a great voice . . This great voice was the voice of God and Christ in unison, united with the throng of **Rev_19:1**, and coming from one throne. - Wallace

This is the fulfillment of Rev_7:14-17

Behold . . "Behold" further stressed its importance. This probably angelic voice (cf. Rev_19:5) announced that God's tabernacle, evidently the entire New Jerusalem, was now among men. Finally the relationship between God and humankind that God has always desired people to enjoy will be a reality (cf. Rev_7:15; Gen_3:8; Gen_17:7; Exo_6:7; Exo_29:45; Lev_26:11-12; Num_15:41; Deu_29:13; 2Sa_7:24; Jer_7:23; Jer_11:4; Jer_24:7; Jer_30:22; Jer_31:1, Jer_31:33; Jer_32:38; Eze_11:20; Eze_34:24; Eze_36:28; Eze_37:23, Eze_37:27; Zec_2:10; Zec_8:8; 2Co_6:16). God will dwell among his cleansed people, and they will experience intimate fellowship with Him. This is the supreme blessing of the New Jerusalem (cf. Eze_37:27; Eze_48:35). - Constable

the tabernacle of God . . The word translated "tabernacle" means place of abode. This is God's house, the place where He lives (cf. Lev_26:11-12; Deu_12:5). - MSB

tabernacle with men . . God makes his dwelling with faithful Christians, Eph_3:17.

This is an OT prophecy in which God promised to dwell in the midst of his people when the New Covenant came. Eze_37:19-28; Zec_2:11-13; Zec_13:9; cf. Isa_25:6-9; Hos_1:9-11; Hos_2:23; Joe_3:17-21; Zep_3:17.

The great voice announced that ***the tabernacle of God is with men.*** The use of the word tabernacle here was not ecclesiastical as of old. The word meant ***presence***. This tabernacle of God was in contrast with the Jewish tent in the wilderness which was "a shadow of heavenly things." (**Heb_8:1-13**) It was here used to signify God's presence with men and that he would dwell in them through his church in the world. - Wallace

He will dwell among them . . God dwells in the midst of the church now, Mat_18:20; Act_7:48; Act_17:24; 2Co_6:16; 2Co_12:9; Eph_3:17; Col_3:16; Jas_4:5;

The tent of the wilderness signified the presence of God with Israel and through it he dwelt in them. (**Exo_40:34-38**) The church is the new tabernacle for his habitation (**Eph_2:22**), and through it God dwells in men - Wallace

they shall be His people . . According to the NT these promises are all realized now in the church (cf. Rom_9:24-25; 2Co_6:15-16; 1Pe_2:10).

his people . . The word is a plural: **peoples**, though used in modern English, at least as a Gallicism, is scarcely (see however Rev_10:11; Rev_17:15) admitted in the English of the A. V - CBSC

... "they shall be His people" is covenant terminology; now all people (cf. Joh_10:16) are God's chosen people (cf. Lev_26:11-12; Eze_37:23, Eze_37:27). - Utley

The new Jerusalem is presented as a glorious temple-city, fulfilling OT prophecies and patterns of God's dwelling with his people. - NIVZSB [2Co_6:16 says that the church is God's temple today.]

Rev_21:4

Rev_21:4

Characteristics of the New Covenant Age.

Wipe away all tears . . An allusion to Isa_65:19 which was not spoken of heaven, but the new covenant age. We like to think that these glorious descriptions of God's family in the church is based on the reality of what will literally be in heaven itself with God eternally. But remember this is a book based on symbols and we are to get a message from the picture presented but not take it literal.

Remember that the prophets used hyperbole to describe the glories that would be Israel's when she returned from the Babylonian captivity, see Joe_3:18; Amo_9:13; Eze_36:33-35, etc. - WG

The significance of the statement is that the tears will be wiped away Isa_35:10; Isa_51:11; **Isa_65:19**; [by removing what] could cause tears; the next words of the verse agree with this explanation. - Wallace

no longer be death ... pain . . The prophets used these figures to show God blessings on Israel after captivity, Isa_25:8, death would be swallowed up. An allusion also to Isa_30:19, when Israel would weep no longer (because God would remove the cause for it). This is figurative language, perhaps based on the reality of heaven itself. - WG

There shall be no more death. The Saviour of men went down into the depths of death and came out again, bringing with Him the eternal victory over it, thus removing the possibility for the "grim monster" ever again to overcome those who are accounted worthy of the "better resurrection" with either physical or spiritual death. This will prevent sorrow, crying and pain, which explains how God will wipe away all tears. Former things are passed away will be true at that period beyond the resurrection of the righteous. - Wallace

There will be no more death . . Christ conquered death on the cross; the sting of death has been taken away for the Christians 1Co_15:55-56 The saints know they will live eternally with God.

sorrow, nor crying ... nor more pain . . An allusion to Isa_25:8; Isa_51:11; Isa_65:19; Speaking hyperbola of the joy in Jerusalem when Israel would return from the Babylonian captivity.

Remember that the prophets descriptive poetic language to describe the glories that would be Israel when she returned from the Babylonian captivity, see Joe_3:18; Amo_9:13; etc. - WG

Php_4:7-8, the blessings of life in the church will be a taste of the eternal life to come. Sins are forgiven, broken fellowship is restored. (Psa_118:24)

first things have passed away . . The system that came through Moses and typified in the tabernacle and temple in Jerusalem has passed away, and a new covenant is made with God's people, Heb_10:9-10;

A new age 2Co_5:17; Mat_5:4; 1Th_4:18; 1Th_4:13 ;

Rev_21:5

Rev_21:5

He who sits on the throne said . . Apparently God Himself.

God speaks several times in Revelation (cf. Rev_1:8 and probably Rev_16:1; Rev_16:17). There seems to be a purposeful ambiguity as to who sits on the throne, YHWH or Messiah (cf. Rev_22:3). See fuller note at Rev_20:11. - Utley

Behold . . "Behold" introduces a special pronouncement.

The description of the new creation in the preceding verses was proleptic. Evidently an angel then instructed John to write down what God had said because His words were faithful and true, not incredible (cf. Rev_22:6). Alford, 4:737; Swete, p. 279; Lee, 4:818. (Constable)

I make all things new . . cf. 2Co_5:17 Isa_43:9 This same expression has been used to distinguish spiritual Israel from fleshly Israel (**2Co_5:17**); and that phrase was employed here in distinction of the new heaven and new earth from the old system of Judaism.

With the fall of the old Jerusalem, the destruction of its theocracy, the termination of the Jewish state, and the removal of the last vestige of Judaism, a new order would prevail under new surroundings. - Wallace

I am making all things new . . This is the promise of **Isa. 60–66**. This refers to the new age of the Spirit, the age of the Messiah, the age of righteousness, which Jesus inaugurated at His first coming ... Utley

And He said . . Καὶ λέγει, coming between και εἶπεν (*v.* 5) and καὶ εἶπεν (*v.* 6), indicates a change of speaker. The direction to the Seer to write what he has just heard comes doubtless from an angel, as in Rev_14:13, Rev_19:9 f. - Swete

And He said to me . . Read only, **he saith**. It is doubtful whether the speaker is still "He that sat on the throne;" for a similar command to "write" has been given already,— Rev_14:13, Rev_19:9; cf. Rev_10:4 -- either by an impersonal "voice from heaven" or by the revealing angel. The question is best left open. - CBSC

Write . . The 3rd time John is given a special command to "write", Rev_14:13, Rev_19:9;

for these words are true and faithful . . Rev_19:9; "***these words***" probably refers to the truths contained in verses in Rev_21:1-4. - FSB

÷Rev_21:6
Rev_21:6

He said to me . . καὶ εἶπέν μοι,

It is done . . We should read the plural: the word therefore is not an *exact* repetition of that in Rev_16:17. If we ask, what is the subject to this verb, "*They* are come into being," perhaps the best answer is "all things." The new universe of which the creating Word has just gone forth, has now been made, "and God sees that it is good." - CBSC

It is done . . The prophecies of the book are seen as completed. - finished. The events are looked at from the end view, and the main theme, the fall of Jerusalem and deliverance from Jewish persecution is looked upon from the completed view. - WG

With the proclamation *it is done* the vision proper concerning the church in tribulation had ended, and the Revelation had ended, and the Revelation was ready to assume the new 1Jn_5:4; the church in the glory of victory rather than in the defeat of persecution. - Wallace

It is done . . The Greek term used here refers to completion—probably in reference to the words in Rev_21:5 and the overall actions of Rev_21:1-4. God has accomplished His purpose and made all things new. - FSB

It is done . . This is a PERFECT ACTIVE INDICATIVE. This could relate to the certainty of God's promises

regarding both wrath for unbelievers and deliverance for believers (cf. Rev_6:11; Rev_10:7; Rev_16:17), or the immanence of God's promises (cf. Rev_1:1-3; Rev_3:11; Rev_10:6; Rev_12:12; Rev_22:7; Rev_22:10). - Utley

I am the Alpha and Omega . . Echoes the introduction of Christ in ch. 1 (see Rev_1:8 and note; Rev_1:17). Here it is the Father here, in Rev_1:11 it is Christ.

> God and Christ are the *Alpha* and *Omega* because they are the beginning and the end in creation and in salvation, and here in the promises made to the churches, in faithfulness to finish what had begun. It meant that the vision was completed and the things envisioned would be fulfilled. - Wallace

the Beginning and the End . .

> When God said in the beginning, Let there be light--there was light; and of everything that God said in creation, *it was done.* The accomplishment of the things envisioned in the apocalypse Rev_21:7 the eternal being of God and Christ whose "word is true from the beginning and whose righteous judgments endureth forever" (**Psa_119:160**); and the voice which John heard represented it all as having been done--God's word was sure. - Wallace

I will give to him . . An OT allusion to **Isa 55.** The invitation is for everyone, and it is absolutely free (cf. Rom_3:24; Rom_6:23; Eph_2:8)! What a tremendous invitation from God Himself of the availability of forgiveness. Mankind's redemption has always been central in the heart and mind of God (cf. Rev_9:20-21; Rev_14:6-7; Rev_16:9, Rev_16:11; Rev_22:17). - Utley

fountain of the water of life . . Cf. Rev_7:17; Rev_22:1, Rev_22:17. The lasting spiritual water of which Jesus spoke (Joh_4:13-14; Joh_7:37-38; cf. Isa_55:1-2). - MSB

> In the OT springs of water are often associated with God providing for the spiritual needs of mankind (cf. Isa_12:3; Isa_44:3; Isa_49:10; Jer_2:13; Jer_17:13; Joh_4:10). - Utley

> The inducement offered to all to drink from the fountain of the water of life freely was the gospel invitation, to all the thirsty people under the blight of heathenism in the land, to come to the fountain of the living waters Christianity-- Wallace

freely . . [without cost; free of charge; without payment;] . . i.e. not "abundantly," but *gratis:* cf. Isa_55:1. - CBSC

to him who thirsts . . . Mat_11:28; Act_15:13-17; Rev_22:17;

> Heaven belongs to those who, knowing their souls are parched by sin, have earnestly sought the satisfaction of salvation and eternal life (cf. Psa_42:1-2; Isa_55:1-2; Joh_7:37-38). - MSB

> ***Re:*** women at the well - Joh_4:10-14

÷Rev_21:7
Rev_21:7

He who overcomes . . cf. Rev_3:21 etc, Refers to those who remained faithful to Christ (compare Rev_12:11; Rev_15:2). - FSB

> This phrase occurs throughout the letters to the seven churches (cf. Rev_2:7, Rev_2:11, Rev_2:17,

Rev_1:1; Rev_3:3, Rev_3:5, Rev_3:12, Rev_3:21), which link the opening chapters of the Revelation to the conclusion. - Utley

inherit all things . . Being made "sons" (2Co_6:18; Gal_4:6) we are often looked upon as receiving an "inheritance." Rom_8:17; 1Pe_1:4-5; 1Co_6:9-10; Col_1:12, Col_3:24; Heb_1:4; Heb_9:15; etc. - WG

The finally victorious share in the privileges, not only of God's people, but of the Only-begotten: see Rev_3:21. - CBSC

will inherit his blessings . . Adoption is a covenant relationship; the language of adoption certifies their privileges and responsibilities (cp. 2Sa_7:14-16; Jer_31:33; Eze_34:24). - NLTSB

all things . . Read, **these things**; viz. the new heavens and earth, and the things in them - CBSC

be his God.. my son . . Mat_5:45 2Co_6:17-18

In these passages, the paternal relationship is used describing God as Father and the king as His son (compare e.g., 2Sa_7:14; Psa_2:7). - FSB [cf. Jer_24:7]

Rev_21:8
Rev_21:8

But the fearful . . The cowards would express the sense more accurately, at least in modern English. Those condemned are those who are afraid to do their duty, not those who do it, though timidly and in spite of the fears of nature: still less those who do it "with fear and trembling" in St Paul's sense. - DBSC

fearful .. [cowards] . . The "cowardly" are those who fear persecution arising from faith in Christ. Not having steadfast endurance, - EBCNT

cowardly (etc) . . A solemn, serious warning about people with these kinds lifestyle traits who will be eternally lost. Such lists are probably given so that believers can identify such people and that such people should take warning and repent. (1Co_6:9-10; Rom_1:29-32; Gal_5:19-21; 2Ti_3:2-5; cp. Exo_20:13-17; cf. Joh_8:31) (MSB)

abominable . . Lit. **abominated**; probably alluding to crimes yet fouler than those named. - CBSC

sorcerers . . [practice magic arts; evil magic] . . Not the same word as that applied to Simon and Bar-jesus in the Acts, but cognate with that used above, Rev_9:21, and rendered "witchcrafts" in Gal_5:20.

The natural meaning of the word would rather be "poisoners;" and in fact in St John's days the two generally went together, and no line could be drawn between them. It is therefore no wonder that both the Apostles speak of it as a real crime connected with murder and other "works of the flesh," as well as with idolatry. - CBSC

lake which burns with fire and brimstone . . Synonymous with the second death, and the concept which Jesus called *Gehenna* (a Greek term which does not appear in Revelation). see notes at Rev_9:17; and Rev_14:10; and Rev_19:20; and Rev_20:10.

which is the second death . . Eternal separation from God. See note on the "second death" at **Rev_20:6;** (cf. Rev_2:11; Rev_20:6; Rev_20:14; Rev_21:8)

÷Rev_21:9

Rev_21:9

New Paragraph: The harlot Jerusalem contrasted with the spiritual New Jerusalem, the bride of Christ, His church.

The Vision of the New Jerusalem, 21:9–22:5

The Measure of the City, vv. 9–17 - CBSC

one of the seven angels . . From Rev_15:1; Rev_16:1; Rev_17:1. See also Rev_15:6-8 for his attire and other things.

One of these angels had shown John the identification of Babylon, Rev_17:1. We don't know if this is the same angel or a different one of the seven.

There is a tradition in rabbinical Judiasm that there are seven angels who serve in the very Presence of God.

come and I will show you . . One of the angels with the seven bowls of judgment served as John's guide in this part of his vision (cf. Rev_17:1). The fact that one of these particular angels helped John understand both the mystery of Babylon and that of the New Jerusalem sets these two cities in stark contrast. - Constable

the bride . . The church is described in heavenly terms. (as in Amos the church is dressed in Mosaical terms, here in heavenly terms. Amo_9:13-15) Rev_22:11 Eph_5:27 ff;

He said he would show John the ***Bride***, but John saw a ***City***, see next verse. The bride of Christ (Eph_5:23-32; Rev_22:17) is now presented under the symbol ("*sign*" Rev_1:1) of a city, which we read about in Rev_18:23; Rev_21:2; Rev_21:9; Rev_22:17;

It is quite clear that the "bride," the wife of the Lamb, is the New Jerusalem (Rev_21:10; cf. Rev_21:2) - Constable

Just as the "*harlot*" symbolized the unbelieving and persecuting "Jerusalem" while the "*bride*" (the church) is the New Jerusalem and brings God redemptive purposes to their climax.

÷Rev_21:10

Rev_21:10

he carried me away in the Spirit . . This is the fourth time John says his experience was "*in the Spiri*t." (Rev_1:10; Rev_4:2; Rev_17:3; Rev_21:10;) Does this mean John was outside his body? Or does it mean he sees this by inspiration, and in a spiritual, figurative or symbolic way?

Just as the New Jerusalem is that which is alluded in Ezekiel, so does the carrying away away by the spirit allude to Eze_3:14.

John entered a fresh state of prophetic ecstasy and saw a new vision (cf. Rev_1:10; Rev_4:1; Rev_17:3). The angel took him to a high vantage point from which he could see the New Jerusalem (lit. city of peace) descending out of heaven from God (cf. Rev_21:2; Eze_40:2). John received a fresh revelation that expanded something he had already witnessed in an earlier scene (Rev_21:2-8; cf. Rev_16:19; Rev_17:1). - Constable

9–10 Here the parallelism with Rev_17:1 is clearly deliberate. The bride, the wife of the Lamb, contrasts

with the great prostitute, the archetypal image for the great system of satanic evil. The bride is pure and faithful to God and the Lamb, whereas the prostitute is a mockery. To see the prostitute, John was taken to the desert; now he is elevated by the Spirit to the highest pinnacle of the earth to witness the exalted New Jerusalem (cf. Rev_1:10; Rev_4:2; Rev_17:3). - EBCNT

to a great and high mountain . . Eze_40:2. The preposition rendered "to" plainly implies that St John was set *on* the mountain; whether the city occupied the mountain itself, or another site within view. In **Ezekiel** l.c. the city apparently occupies the southern slope of the mountain, whence the seer views it. - CBSC

a great, high mountain . . After Gog and Magog's destruction (**Ezekiel 38–39**), Ezekiel was transported to "a very high mountain" (Eze_40:2-3) to view God's future temple. - ESVSB

As his vision will be a reinterpretation of Ezekiel's temple prophecy (**Eze 40–48**), like the former prophet, he is taken to a high mountain (**Eze_40:2**). For the moment, the author drops the bridal metaphor and in magnificent imagery describes the church in glory as a city with a lofty wall, splendid gates, and jeweled foundations. - EBCNT

the great city, the holy Jerusalem . . This "great city, the holy Jerusalem" is also the "bride", the church, which will be described in "heavenly terms."

descending out of heaven . . Verbatim as in Rev_21:2**.** The descent described here is no doubt the same as there, but St John's vision of the descent is not exactly the same. He has seen, as it were in the distance, the appearance of the city: but his attention was absorbed in listening to the sayings of Rev_21:3-8. Now, he is summoned to attend to the other, and finds it at the same stage where he noticed it in passing before. - CBSC

If the "great city, holy Jerusalem" seen here is heaven itself, how could it be "heaven" descending out of "heaven"?

It "descends" from heaven. The church was Heaven's creation and built (Mat_16:18) for man on earth to enjoy a fellowship with God and with fellow saints (Act_2:42; 1Co_1:9).

coming down out of heaven from God . . The new Jerusalem descends to earth as a dwelling place for the saints. It comes from heaven, God's dwelling place: - FSB

Rev_21:11
Rev_21:11

This church has the glory of God -
[Is Psa_45:1-17 the Revelation 21 of the O.T.?]

having the glory of God . . [Again another allusion to Ezekiel's description.] The city was illuminated or shining with the light of His glory (*doxa*); see Eze_43:5). - FSB

having the glory of God . . i.e. the visible cloud of glory (cf. Heb_9:5), the Shechinah of the divine Presence. See Rev_21:23. - CBSC

Her light . . The word for **light** is peculiar—it would properly be used of **a star, as we say** "luminary." - CBSC [Mat_5:14, Joh_8:12]

Her brilliance was like a very costly stone . . The city (cf. Rev_11:1-27) is described in very beautiful, physical, and moral terms. Like all of the Revelation, this chapter is symbolic. - Utley

like a most precious stone . . ... there is little question that John's descriptions are primarily symbolic - EBCNT

In the most suitable language available to John, much of it drawn from the OT, he wants to portray the

glory of the church with God's presence with it. (Eph_5:26-27; 2Co_3:18; 2Co_8:23; Eph_3:21).

jasper . . A transliteration, not a translation, of the Gr. word. Rather than the modern opaque jasper, the term actually refers to a completely clear diamond, a perfect gem with the brilliant light of God's glory shining out of it and streaming over the new heaven and the new earth (cf. Rev_4:3). - MSB

Jasper . . "Jasper" is mentioned three times in ch. 21 (Rev_21:11, Rev_21:18-19; cf. Rev_4:3). This is an opaque quartz mineral and occurs in various colors, commonly red, brown, green, and yellow, rarely blue and black, and seldom white. - EBCNT

like a jasper stone, clear as crystal . . Literal jewels and a fantastic ancient city may be a good metaphors, but they are not ultimate reality! - Utley

> John compared the glory of the city to that of a beautiful gem. Jasper stones were very beautiful but not always clear. As mentioned earlier (cf. Rev_4:3), this is probably a crystal clear gem with many facets of brilliance, probably what we call a diamond. This stone described God Himself earlier (Rev_4:3), so it's brilliance is a further reflection of God's presence in the city. - Constable

clear as crystal . . Expressed by one word, and that strictly a participle, **crystallizing**. Are we to understand that the comparison is not with an ordinary jasper, but with a stone combining the pure and full colours of this with the crystalline structure of other more precious jewels? - CBSC

÷Rev_21:12

Rev_21:12

> Name of a tribes at each gate.
>
> Same city seen by Ezekiel, Eze_48:30 ff.

a great high wall . . Its exact height is stated in Rev_21:17.

wall . . . No measurements are given for the length of the wall. - MSB

with twelve gates . . An allusion to Eze_48:31-34.

> The city's wall with 12 gate-towers was what caught John's attention next. The city evidently looked square (Rev_21:16). ... The 12 gate-towers (Gr. *pylon*, cf. Luke 16:20) stood three to a side (Rev_21:13). Constable

> Here, it is very important to note that the OT people of God described as gates in Rev_21:12 are united with the NT people of God as described as foundation stones in Rev_21:14. There has always been only one people of God, but this mystery was not clearly revealed until the gospel (cf. **Eph. 2:11–3:13**). - Utley

twelve angels at the gate . . As porters and sentinels. Such officers are in keeping with the image of a well-ordered city, - CBSC

The presence of angels proclaims that this is God's city - EBCNT

name of a tribes at each gate . . So Eze_48:31-34. Probably the order of the names on the gates would be the same as there; but the order can hardly be pressed as important, since it is quite different from that of the foursquare encampment in the wilderness, **Num. 2**. The 12 gates *of heaven* in Enoch xxxiii–xxxv. do not really present a very close parallel to these. - CBSC

÷Rev_21:13
Rev_21:13

on the east . . The order of east, north, south, and west reflects Eze_42:16-19. - FSB [See also Eze_48:30-34 where the order is N-E-S-W, - WG]

÷Rev_21:14

Rev_21:14

City built on the foundation of the apostles, Eph_2:20.

wall ... had twelve foundations . . All of the metaphors allude to Ezekiel's temple - **Ezekiel 40-48**.

> Probably each of the twelve sections into which the wall is divided by the gates rests on an enormous jewel, reaching from gate to gate. This symbolizes the solidity as well as the beauty of the divine structure: and was itself symbolized by the enormous size of the stones used in the foundations of the earthly temple. See St Mar_13:1 and parallels. - CBSC

foundations . . The foundations may be one on top of each other in layers, but probably each section of the wall, between the gate-towers, has its own foundation as examination of the old walls of Jerusalem reveal.

> Foundations of ancient cities usually consisted of extensions of the rows of huge stones that made up the wall, down to the bedrock. Jerusalem's first-century walls and foundation stones have recently been excavated. Huge stones, some of which are about five feet wide, four feet high, and thirty feet long, weighing eighty to one hundred tons each going deep into the ground, have been found. - EBCNT

> As there are twelve gate-towers, so there are also twelve foundation stones. The wall is broken into twelve sections by the twelve gates, and each section is seen to rest on a single θεμέλιος—a vast oblong block of worked and bevelled stone, such as the stones which may still be seen in the lower ranges of the Herodian masonry at Jerusalem. - Swete

the twelve apostles . . Here John stresses the names of the twelve apostles on the foundations (see also Rev_21:19-21). Theologically, it is significant that he brings together the twelve tribes and the twelve apostles of the Lamb and yet differentiates them. - EBCNT

> ...the Apostles are here mentioned in their collective and official, not in their individual character. - CBSC

of the Lamb . . His identity is taken for granted with the Jesus of the earthly ministry, as in Rev_14:1 with the Son of God. - CBSC

÷Rev_21:15
Rev_21:15

a golden reed . . Another allusion to Eze_40:3; Eze_40:5; Zec_2:1; The reed is about 10 feet long, which was a standard for measurement. (There are several similar symbolic actions in the OT prophets, Jer_31:38-40; Amo_7:7; Amo_7:8; Zec_4:10;)

> The fact that the angel's measuring rod was gold reflects the dignity of the task of measuring this city's gate-towers and walls (cf. Ezek. 40:3). Only the utensils used in the holy of holies were gold in the tabernacle and temple, but even this measuring rod is gold suggesting the high value of the city. - Constable

measure the city . . Recalls Rev_11:1 where John is instructed to measure the temple and its worshipers. A symbol way of saying that something must measure up to a standard. Here to measure the church, and the standard to which it must measure up is the Word of God. Joh_12:48; 2Ti_3:16-17; 2Pe_1:21, 1Co_14:37, 1Th_2:13, Gal_1:11-12, Mat_17:5.

measure the city . . Recalls rev 11:1, where John is instructed to measure the temple and its worshipers. Here an angel measures "the city, its gates and its walls"

city.. gates.. wall . . As it happens, we are not actually told of their measurement. - CBSC

÷Rev_21:16
Rev_21:16

The city four - square, approximately 1400 miles in every direction, with wall 210 feet thick, 12 gates of pearl, an angel at each gate.

city is laid out as a square . . This may be an allusion to the Holy of Holies (cf. 1Ki_6:19-20), which was also a perfect cube.
The reason that there is no temple (Rev_21:22) is because God Himself will be the temple. This may be John's way of showing that OT prophecies like **Ezek. 40–48** are symbolic - Utley

the measured the city . . It is doubtful whether this is the measurement of the *side* of the square, or of the whole circumference. The twelve-fold measure is in favour of the former view: thus from each gate to the next would be 1000 furlongs; the outmost gate on each side being 500 from the angle. - CBSC

length .. breadth . .

twelve thousand furlongs . . This would be nearly 1,400 mi. cubed or over two million square miles, offering plenty of room for all the glorified saints - MSB

twelve thousand furlongs . . The construction is peculiar, but the sense clear. The measure would be about 1378 English miles, making the City 344 miles square, according to the lower computation. - CBSC
(Notice all the multiples of 12, which indicate this is all symbolic.)

length, breadth and height are equal . . The city is depicted as a cube of gold (Rev_21:18). This is perhaps an allusion to the holy of holies (most holy place), the focus of God's holy presence throughout the ot (see 1Ki_6:20). In contrast with the holy of holies, which could only be entered by the high priest once a year, now all of God's people will dwell in His presence. - FSB

This description could allow for either a cube or a pyramid shape. (CBSC; Constable; EBCNT)

÷Rev_21:17
Rev_21:17

measured its wall . . Probably refers to the height of the wall, though it could refer to its thickness. Like the dimensions of the city itself, this is a multiple of 12 - FSB

The city wall was evidently 144 cubits (about 216 feet or 72 yards) thick (cf. Eze_40:5; Eze_42:20).

he measured the wall . . We should naturally understand, the height of it. The walls of the historical Babylon

are differently stated as having been 200, 300, or nearly 340 feet high. But we are told that they were about 80 feet in breadth (Hdt. I. 178:5: cf. Jer_51:58): so if we do admit that the City here is conceived as 340 miles high, there is a sort of proportion in making its walls not less than 73 yards thick. - CBSC

144 cubits . . (12 x 12) 72 yards or 216 feet. This is likely the width of the wall. - MSB

the measure of a man, that is, of an angel . . Angels use, he means, a cubit of the same length as men—viz. the average length of the forearm, from the elbow to the finger-tip. It is perhaps implied, that angels are not of superhuman stature. - CBSC

John explained that even though an angel was doing the measuring he was using human units of measure. - Constable

A cubit was the length of a man's forearm, with a standard length of about 18 inches.

The angel is using the standard measure of the day, not some type of other-worldly, angelic measurement. - FSB

÷Rev_21:18
Rev_21:18

In vv.**18–21**, John describes in more detail the priceless materials of the city with its foundations and gates (cf. Isa_54:11-15). The symbolism is not meant to give the impression of wealth and luxury but to point to the glory and holiness of God. - EBCNT

construction . . The walls appeared to be glistening (cf. Rev_21:11; Rev_4:3). The word "material" (Gr. *endomesis*) means "building in" and suggests that the material on the wall was jasper, not that the wall was solid jasper. Perhaps John meant that the walls were overlaid with this brilliant material, - Constable

wall ... jasper . . [see Jasper, Rev_21:11.]

city was pure gold, like clear glass . . This gold is transparent, allowing the glory of all of it to shine through. (Mat_5:16) - WG

The whole city appeared to shine as a mass of pure gold. Clear glass was the best quality glass in John's day, so when he compared the gold to clear glass he probably meant that there was no impurity in the city. - Constable (Mounce, p. 381.)

pure as glass . . The city's gold is clear to perfectly reflect God's glory (Rev_21:23; Rev_22:5). - NIVZSB

÷Rev_21:19
Rev_21:19

Notice how the foundation of the church is pictured in Eph_2:19-22

foundations of the wall . . The enumeration probably begins from one of the angles, and goes round the wall in order. It is useless to guess which Apostle's name was on which stone - CBSC

adorned . . (garnished) . . From the next sentence we are to understand that they are adorned by being *constructed* of these stones, not that stones are fastened on *merely* for ornament. - CBSC

adorned with .. precious stones . . These stones recall those that were set into the high priest's breastplate (see Exo_28:17-20). - FSB

> Because some of the names of these gems have changed through the centuries, it is difficult to identify each one with certainty. Eight of the 12 stones are found in the breastplate of the High-Priest (Exo_28:1-39), and the other 4 may also be related to the breastplate. The gems picture a brilliant, indescribable panoply of beautiful colors that send forth the light of God's glory. - MSB
>
> This series of stones maybe identified with (1) the stones on the ephod of the High Priest (cf. Exo_28:17-20); however, the order and names are different. This was not unusual because the names of ancient stones changed from country to country and century to century. (2) the jeweled city of Isa_54:11-17; (3) the splendor of the king of Tyre (or Satan) conveyed in royal (or heavenly) jewels in Eze_28:12-13; or (4) the Zodiac, but presented in reverse order (Philo and Josephus). - Utley
>
> These stones were of many different colors suggesting the extreme beauty of the city. We cannot identify all of them exactly today, but they were obviously precious gems in John's day. - Constable
>
>> According to Philo and Josephus, Israel associated these same stones with the signs of the zodiac, and their tribal standards each bore a sign of the zodiac. If we begin with Judah, the tribe of Christ (Rev_7:5), the sign is Aries, the Ram, which has the amethyst as its stone. The last sign is Pisces, the fishes, which has jasper as its stone. So the first zodiacal sign agrees with the twelfth foundation and the last zodiacal sign with the first foundation. In fact, the whole list agrees with John's, though in reverse order. - EBCNY

1st jasper . . See note on Rev_21:11.

2nd sapphire . . The Greek and Hebrew words are (as with "jasper") the same as the English. Yet it is almost certain that the stone so called in St John's day was not our sapphire, but the far less precious lapis lazuli. - CBSC

3rd chalcedony . . This name derives from Chalcedon, an ancient name for a city in modern Turkey. The gem is a sky-blue agate stone with translucent, colored stripes. - MSB

4th emerald . .

÷Rev_21:20
Rev_21:20

5th sardonyx . . A variety of chalcedony with parallel layers of red and white - MSB

6th carnelian . .[sardius] . . A common stone from the quartz family, which ranged in color from orange-red to brownish-red to blood-red (Rev_4:3) - MSB

7th chrysolite . . A gem with a transparent gold or yellowish tone. - MSB
> Chrysolite ought, according to the etymology, to be a "golden stone," while the modern chrysolite is green. Perhaps the ancient chrysolite included the modern jacinth as well as the true "Oriental topaz". - CBSC

8th beryl . . A mineral with several varieties of gems, ranging from the green emerald to the golden yellow beryl to the light blue aquamarine - MSB

9th topaz . . Ancient topaz was a softer stone with a yellow or yellow-green color. - MSB

10th chrysoprase . . The modern form of this jewel is an apple-green variety of quartz. The Greek name suggests a gold-tinted, green gemstone. - MSB

A variety of the beryl, of a more yellowish-green: probably that now called chrysolite. - CBSC

11th jacinth . . Today this stone is a transparent zircon, usually red or reddish-brown. The one John saw was blue or shining violet in color. - MSB

Probably *our* sapphire, the "sapphire" above being lapis lazuli. The modern jacinth is a crystalline stone, usually red. - CBSC

12th amethyst . . A clear quartz crystal that ranges in color from a faint purple tint to an intense purple. - MSB

This, the emerald, sardius, and beryl are undoubtedly the stones now so called. - CBSC

÷Rev_21:21
Rev_21:21

twelve gates were twelve pearls . . Each of the gates of the city is a single, 1,500-mile-high pearl. - MSB

Evidently each gate-tower that John saw (Rev_21:12-13) had been carved out of one huge pearl. - Swete

Contrast Isa_54:12, where they are carbuncles. - CBSC

each individual gage was of one pearl . . Describes 12 massive pearls—each pearl is its own gate. - FSB

street of the city . . Or "square:" see on Rev_11:8. The City has one great space in the midst of it, like an Agora or Forum: but the word Agora would have associations, commercial or political, that would be incongruous with the repose of this city. It is probably the pavement of the street which, like the walls of the houses, is of transparent gold. - CBSC

Rev 11.8 = For the sing. cf. Rev_21:21, Rev_22:2. The word in fact means a *broad* street, such as *the* principal street of a city would be. The modern Italian *piazza* is the same word; but Rev_22:2 seems to shew that it is a street rather than a square—perhaps most accurately a "boulevard" in the modern sense, only running through the city, not round it. - CBSC

street of .. pure gold . . John further described the street or pavement of the city (probably referring to all the streets since all would be connected). These were pure gold (Rev_21:18), as pure as transparent glass. Old Testament priests who ministered in Solomon's temple walked on a gold floor (1Ki_6:30). - Constable

pure gold, like transparent glass . . This is symbolic. We must realize these earthly terms are to symbolize the value and purity that are God's people, the church.

To get carry away by thinking or speaking of "heaven" (when this is describing the church) and walking the "streets of gold" (*street* here is nominative, singular, feminine) is to miss the picture of the glory and value of God's people, the church, and to make this commercial and materialistic. - WG

÷Rev_21:22
Rev_21:22

A description of the church.

The church as a temple - 1Co_3:16-17; Eph_2:22.

no temple in it . . Temples functioned as a point of contact between people and gods. By following proper ritual, Israelites could approach God and offer sacrifices to Him in Jerusalem. The temple provided them with a way to communicate with God without falling into idolatry - FSB

the Lord God the Almighty . . Here again are the three most used OT titles for God (YHWH, *Elohim* and *El Shaddai*) used in combination (cf. Rev_1:8; Rev_4:8; Rev_11:17; Rev_15:3; Rev_16:7) to show the majesty of Him who sits on the throne. Notice His close connection with the Lamb of **Rev. 5**. They reign together and there is only one throne (cf. Rev_22:1; Rev_22:3). - Utley

the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb . . See the notes at Rev_1:8; and Rev_4:8.

and the Lamb . . More accurately, **the Lord God the Almighty is the Temple of it, and the Lamb**. But the coupling of the Lamb with the Eternal is scarcely the less significant: see on Rev_20:6. - CBSC

This is another Revelation passage that affirms the deity of Jesus Christ, the **Lamb** of God, Joh_1:36.

are its temple . . God is present with the saints in the church, the temple of the Christian age 1Co_3:16-17; 2Co_6:16; Eph_2:21-22; 1Pe_2:5; 1Pe_2:9;

The temple is not a building; it is the Lord God Himself. Rev_7:15 implies this when it says, "He who sits on the throne will dwell among them." - MSB

Because the Lamb is in her midst, the church is "a dwelling place for God by the Spirit" (Eph_2:22). - ESVSB

÷Rev_21:23
Rev_21:23

The city . . The New spiritual Jerusalem, the bride of Christ, the church, as opposed to Babylon (the harlot).

no need for sun or moon . . In Revelation the sun and moon often stood for leaders, or a hierarchy. There is no such in the church, for Christ is our High Priest and all the saints are priests, and all are "brethren." Mat_23:8; 1Co_1:26; Rom_12:3; Php_2:3-4; 1Pe_2:5; 1Pe_2:9;

has no need of sun or moon . . Isa_60:19. It is impossible to say whether it is here meant that the sun and moon do not shine, or only that the city is not dependent on them. - CBSC

the glory of God illuminated it . . God's glory provides the light. Joh_1:4-5; Joh_1:9; Joh_8:12; Joh_9:5; Joh_12:46; 2Co_4:4; 2Co_4:6; Eph_5:14; 1Jn_1:5;

The glory of the Father and Son is all the illumination that is needed (cf. Psa_36:9; Isa_24:23; Isa_60:19-20; Zec_14:6-7 and also Rev_22:5). - Utley

the light thereof . . The word is that commonly rendered **candle or lamp**. This makes it unlikely that the analogy is meant to be suggested, that the Lord God is the Sun of the city, and the Lamb the Moon. - CBSC

the Lamb is its light (lamp). . (its lamp is the Lamb,) . . Joh_1:4-5; Joh_1:9; Joh_8:12; Joh_9:5; Joh_12:46;

÷Rev_21:24
Rev_21:24

By it light shall the nations walk . . The light of the Gospel will show the way for men to come to Christ, to be converted, and live a life that pleases and glorifies God. 2Co_4:4; 2Co_4:6; Eph_5:14; 1Jn_1:5;

An allusion to Psa_72:10-11; Isa_49:23; Isa_60:3, Isa_60:15-16. Another evidence that the gospel is for all, Mar_16:15-16; Col_1:23; Col_1:27;

In the church, through Christ and the gospel God's promise to Abraham is fulfilled; Gen_12:3; Isa_2:3; (NLTSB)

kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it . . The nations and foreign kings coming to (New) Jerusalem (the church, the kingdom of God) would fulfill the words of the prophets, Isa_2:1-3; Joe_2:28-32; Dan_2:44-45; Mic_2:12;

The gates of the New Jerusalem are open to all who walk by the light of the gospel and come to Christ. The invitation is to all who are thirsty, Rev_21:6; Rev_22:17.

Instead of the nations bringing their precious possessions to the harlot city, the redeemed nations will bring these offerings to the throne of God (cf. Isa_60:3 ff.). - EBCNT

÷Rev_21:25
Rev_21:25

its gates shall never be shut . . An allusion to Isa_60:11; or Zec_14:6-7. The invitation of the gospel to come to Christ continually goes out. - see Rev_21:24

no night there . . Usually in cities such gates would be open in the day and closed at night. But in God's New Jerusalem (the church) the gates see no night and are never closed

Some would see a hint that the church is world-wide and (like the old saying about the British Empire) the sun never sets on God's church.

no night there . . The concept of darkness in the Bible is often a metaphor for evil (cf. Mat_6:23; Mat_8:12; Mat_22:13; Mat_25:30). Light and dark were especially important symbolic theological contrasts for John (cf. Joh_1:4-5, Joh_1:7-9; Joh_3:19-21; Joh_8:12; Joh_11:9-10; Joh_12:35-36, 46; 1Jn_1:5-7; 1Jn_2:8-11). - Utley

÷Rev_21:26
Rev_21:26

bring .. glory .. honor of the nations . . The coming of all kinds of people, nations, classes, races, will bring honor to the church as they dissolve into one family before God.

". . . these verses reflect the ancient practice of kings and nations bringing their wealth and glory to the city of the greatest king." In the New Jerusalem, everyone will honor the 'King of kings' (see Psa_68:29; Psa_72:10-11; Isa. 60).

÷Rev_21:27
Rev_21:27

Nothing unclean shall enter it . . (defileth) . . This is an allusion to Isa_52:1; Eze_44:9; Zec_14:21 which seems to be a literary technique showing the ultimate difference between God's people and those of the evil one (cf. v. 24). The new age is characterized in the lighter, open city, a city of complete righteousness. There is no evil present! - Utley

Nothing evil (*or ceremonially unclean*) . . Spiritual impurity is a basic concern in Revelation (see Rev_21:8). Evil is generalized as ***idolatry and dishonesty*** (see Rev_14:5; Rev_21:8; Rev_22:15). - NLTSB

nor any one who practices abomination or falsehood . . cf. Gal_5:19-21; 1Co_6:9-10;

but only those written in the Lamb's book of life . . Luk_10:20**;** Php_3:20; Heb_12:23;

book of life .. See Rev_20:12; This metaphorical phrase "**the book of life**" is also found in Rev_20:12-15, where two books are mentioned: **(1)** the book of life, which is made up of the names of God's people (cf. Exo_32:32; Psa_69:28; Isa_4:3; Dan_12:1; Luk_10:20; Php_4:3; Heb_12:23; Rev_13:8; Rev_17:8; Rev_20:15; Rev_21:27); and (**2)** the book of deeds or remembrances which records both wicked and righteous deeds (cf. Psa_56:8, Psa_139:16; Isa_65:6; Mal_3:16). These are metaphorical of God's perfect memory. - Utley
÷Rev_22:1
Rev_22:1

Section 4: The New Jerusalem (chapters 21-22)
Chapter 21 - The New Jerusalem Described
The New Heaven and Earth, v. 1 Rev_22:1
The New Jerusalem Introduced, v. 2
The Old Testament Prophets Fulfilled, vv. 3-5
Promised Reward and Punishments, vv. 6-8
The Physical Features of the New City, vv. 9-27

NOW CH. 22 - - -
Rev_22:1
Book of Life,
Water of Life, Tree of Life, parallels to the Garden of Eden, paradise, (the church pictured in heavenly, paradise, terms)

a pure river of water of life . . Psa_46:4 Rev_22:17 This language recalls Eden (Gen_2:10), as well as the prophecies of Eze_47:1 and Zec_14:8 (compare Rev_7:17; Rev_22:17). - FSB [Joe_3:18]

Here is language familiar to the readers who were well versed in the Scriptures and thinking of that day. They would realize all this is symbolic and not literal, but that it stood for something real.

Joe_3:18 speaks of the same thing and applies it to the time established with the pentecost of Acts 2 (Act_2:16-17). This picture here is the blessings and life in the church.

Water of life symbolized the continual flow of that which Jesus promised Joh_4:14, eternal life. Joh_4:10-11; Joh_4:14-15; Joh_7:38; Rev_7:17; Rev_21:6; Rev_22:17

The concept of a river flowing from the presence of God is an allusion to the OT (cf. Psa_46:4; Eze_47:1-12; Joe_3:18; Zec_14:8). Water is a common metaphor referring to God abundantly supplying the spiritual needs of His people (cf. Isa_12:3; Isa_44:3; Isa_49:10; Jer_2:13; Jer_17:13; Joh_4:10-15; Rev_7:17; Rev_21:6). Only John uses the term life (*zoē*) to refer to resurrection life. - Utley

clear as cystal . . Without pollution Gal_4:26; Heb_12:2. God's word is pure and whole and must not be contaminated by man's theories and doctrines.

***clear* . . Bright** would perhaps be more accurate. - CBSC
proceeding from the throne of God . . The word that will give life that is which comes from God Himself. Joh_6:63; Joh_6:68; Act_5:20; Rev_22:19;

proceeding out of the throne &c. . . In **Ezekiel's** vision (**chap. 47**) the River proceeded out of the Temple, here out of the Temple's antitype. We are also meant to think of the River that watered the ancient paradise, Gen_2:10, and of such parallels to Ezekiel's vision as Psa_46:4, Psa_65:9; Zec_14:8.

The original type, of which these Prophecies are developments, is the fact that there was a natural spring, that of Siloam, in the precincts of the Temple at Jerusalem. - CBSC

This is anthropomorphic language from ancient eastern royal court imagery. God is an eternal spirit; He does not sit on a physical throne. - Utley

÷Rev_22:2

Rev_22:2

through the middle of the street . . The presence of the tree on both sides of the river is an allusion to Eze_47:1-12.

on either side of the river . . Clearly, another reference to Eze_47:1-12; There is some difficulty in visualizing this because "the exact construction and punctuation is not quite certain" (CBSC).

1) We may picture a boulevard (or a plaza) with a river in median, and rows of trees on the banks. (No way to imagine one tree on either side.) Apparently a total of twelve trees (or more) that yields fruit each month (is the monthly fruit different?)

2) May view two trees, one on either side of the river of life; remember Joh_19:18 (same author).

3) The description of this tree's location is debatable, but perhaps John saw the river dividing and flowing on both sides of it. A tree surrounded by water is the epitome of a fruitful tree (cf. Psa_1:3; Jer_17:8; Eze_19:10). This tree was perpetually rather than seasonally in fruit; it produced a new crop of fruit each month of the year. - Constable

the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit . . cf. Gen_2:9; The tree of life reappears now in new Jerusalem fulfilling God's promise to make new Jerusalem like Eden (cf. Isa_51:3). It produces 12 different kinds of fruit—a new one each month.

Some authors believe the tree of life here symbolizes the cross.

In Ezekiel's vision there are multiple trees on each side of the river that bear fruit monthly (Eze_47:12). Thus, the tree John speaks of may be a collective word for Ezekiel's trees. So abundant is its vitality that it bears a crop of fruit each month! Its leaves produce healing for the nations. The imagery of abundant fruit and medicinal leaves should be understood as symbolic of the far-reaching effects of the death of Christ in the redeemed community, the Holy City. - EBCNT

There are many references in Jewish apocalyptic literature to the tree of life found in Gen. 3 (cf. Enoch 25:2ff; IV Esdras 7:53; 8:52; II Enoch 8:3). - Utley

each month . . (every month) . . The real meaning is that the fruit is always in season. The gospel is always in season, 2Ti_4:2.

How could one speak of "months" if this is heaven?

the leaves .. healing . . Eze_47:12. Healing - Jer_8:22 ff ; Eze_27:17 ff

The English word "therapeutic" comes from the Greek word translated "healing." The leaves somehow enrich heavenly life, making it full and satisfying. - MSB

healing of the nations . . If this is "heaven" why would healing be necessary? But the gospel, the Word of Life, is for the healing of nations Mat_28:19-20; Mar_16:15-16. This is the great mission task of the church.

÷Rev_22:3
Rev_22:3

no more curse . . A reference to the curse in Genesis (man cut off from the tree.) In the new Jerusalem there will be **no curse** like that which came upon Eden in Genesis.

Man now has access to eternal life through Christ Joh_6:63; Joh_6:68; Act_5:20;

This is an allusion to Gen_3:17 and Zec_14:11. The new age has come and the curse of the OT (cf. Eph_2:15-16; Col_2:14) has been removed by Christ's death (cf. Rom_8:18, Rom_8:25; Gal_3:13; Eph_2:13, Eph_2:16). - Utley

There will be nothing that falls under the curse of God's judgment (see Zec_14:11). This includes the curse humanity brought upon itself because of its first sin against God (see **Gen 3**). - FSB

throne of God .. shall be in it . . In the new Jerusalem, the church, Christ is present Mat_18:20; Heb_13:5;

Notice the unusual grammatical features of this phrase. There is one throne, but two on it (i.e. God and the Lamb). However, the servants serve "Him" (singular). This involves the mystery of monotheism and incarnation. One God, but also a divine Messiah (and a personal Holy Spirit). - Utley

His servants shall serve Him . . Christians are pictured as a royal priesthood 1Pe_2:5; 1Pe_2:9 serving God now in the church, a spiritual temple 1Co_3:16-17; 2Co_6:16; Eph_2:21

will serve . . The Greek word used here can mean "to serve" or "to render religious service." Here it probably refers to offering worship as priests. - FSB

The Greek word for "serve" (*latreuo*) suggests priestly service in view of its other uses in this book (cf. Rev_1:6; Rev_5:10; Rev_20:6). "His" and "Him" present God and the Lamb as essentially one being. - Constable

÷Rev_22:4

Rev_22:4

The saints belong to God and have a friendship with him, wearing his name. Intimate "friendship" with God will belong to him.

see His face . . Mat_5:8; (Mar_9:1; Luk_9:27) Luk_21:31; Joh_3:3; To "see" God in this sense is to "know" Him, by keeping His Word.

Joh_17:3; Gal_4:8; 2Th_1:8; Tit_1:16; 1Jn_2:5; 1Jn_3:2; 1Jn_4:8

The upright will see the face of God, cf. Psa_11:7; Psa_16:11; Psa_17:15; Psa_140:13; Mat_5:8). The redeemed are in the presence of God and Christ in the church, Mat_18:20; Heb_13:5;

This previously resulted in death (e.g., Exo_33:20; compare Isa_6:5). Now, it is described as a life-giving blessing for God's people. - FSB

His name .. on their foreheads . . Act_11:26; Joh_20:31; Act_4:12; 1Pe_4:16; Act_26:28; Symbolic of belonging to God, as a servant/slave.

May allude to the plate on the high priest's forehead (Exo_28:36-38; compare Rev_3:12 and note; Rev_14:1). - FSB

÷Rev_22:5
Rev_22:5

no night there . . (cf. Rev_21:23-25; Zec_14:7).

there . . Read, **any more.** See Rev_21:25. - CBSC

need no lamp . . God has provided all the light himself in the scriptures, and there is no need for any other light. Eph_1:3; 2Ti_3:16-17; Jud_1:3;

the Lord God give them light . . Read, **shall give light upon them**. Here end the visions. - CBSC

Christ is that light, and He lights the way for men to live in the presence of God Joh_8:12; Joh_9:5; Joh_12:35; Joh_12:46; Act_26:23; 2Co_4:6; Col_1:12; 1Jn_1:7; 1Jn_2:8;

they shall reign forever and ever . . Unlike the age where the Law given by Moses reigned, the Lord's kingdom established at Pentecost will continue without being supplanted. (cf. Dan_2:44; Dan_7:14; Isa_9:7; Luk_1:33; 2Pe_1:11; Rev_11:15)

The rituals and ceremonies of the Law of Moses ended with the destruction of the temple, and the prophecy of Christ (Matt 24, Mark 13; Luke 20-21) is vindicated. The sign par excellence that the Messiah sent by God came and they rejected him, and He is now in heaven on the throne at the right hand of the Father. (Mar_16:19; 1Pe_3:22; Luk_1:32; Act_2:30; Heb_1:8; Heb_12:2;).

÷Rev_22:6
Rev_22:6

Here is reaffirmed what is said in the beginning of the book-- that these things must shortly take place. And (Rev_22:7) that He comes quickly to perform the judgment prophesied in this book.

vs. 6-21 - The Apocalyptic Epilogue **

And he said to me . . Who speaks? the angel of Rev_21:9, or "He that sitteth upon the throne," as in Rev_21:5-8, or Christ as in Rev_22:16? Probably, an angel speaks in the name of Christ: and this leads St John to fancy, as once before, that the angel is himself a divine person. - CBSC

These words faithful and true . . This phrase is used to describe (1) Jesus (cf. Rev_1:5; Rev_3:7, Rev_3:14; Rev_19:11); (2) Jesus' followers (cf. Rev_17:14); and (3) God's word (cf. Rev_19:9; Rev_21:5; Rev_22:6). Often God is described as "righteous and true" (cf. Rev_15:3; Rev_16:7; Rev_19:2). The Hebrew behind this phrase implies total trustworthiness. - Utley

the Lord God of the holy prophets . . An authentication of John's message and visions. God Himself inspires His prophets' spirits or inspires them to prophesy. - FSB

of the holy prophets . . Read, **of the spirits of the prophets**: for the phrase, cf. 1Co_14:32. - CBSC

> The original Greek texts did not have capitalization. Often the translators or interpreters must decide whether "spirit" refers to the Holy Spirit or the human spirit. This text refers to the human spirit (cf. 1Co_14:32; Heb_12:9). - Utley
>
> **The Lord God, who inspires his prophets . .** [NLT] Or *The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets.* - NLTSB

sent His angel to show His servants . . An allusion back to Rev_1:1. See there the note about this "angel."

to show His servants . . The members of the 7 churches of Asia Minor who received this letter (Rev_1:11).

> These closing verses are very similar in their motifs to chapter 1. The traditional personal letter format used in chapter 1 is used again in chapter 22. - Utley

things which must shortly take place . . The **revelation** concerns "*things which must shortly come to pass"* (Rev_1:1); and the things it talks about *"were at hand"* (Rev_1:3).

> The time element is emphasized at the beginning of the book, and lest the reader has forgotten during the course of the book, it is emphasized again at the end of the book, as well as several reminders along the way, i.e. 6:10 "a little season," or "a little while." (Rev_1:1; Rev_1:3; Rev_22:6; Rev_22:10).
>
> *Any interpretation of Revelation that ignores these vital points is a wrong interpretation.*

Things which must shortly be done . . Reaffirmation of what was said in Rev_1:1-3. See also Rev_22:10 Rev_22:12 .

:Rev_22:7

Rev_22:7

Behold . . Look, notice this! καὶ ἰδοὺ ; **And behold.** Either spoken by Christ Himself, or in the name of Christ (by the angel in Rev_22:8).

I am coming quickly . . The Lord Himself says that He is coming soon, quickly, to do the things revealed in this letter to the seven churches of Asia. See Rev_22:6 note; and Rev_1:1; Rev_1:3; note. cf. Rev_3:11; Rev_22:12; Rev_22:20;

> ***quickly*** (G5035) . . ταχύ, soon, quick, without delay,
> Jesus' coming to accomplish what is prophesied here is imminent.
> His coming in judgment upon "Babylon" (the "harlot") was to be ***soon*** when this was written. Remember that God judges nations, now in this life-time, but as individuals we will stand before Him at the final Day of Judgment.

Blessed is he who keeps the words . . A blessing specifically upon those of the seven churches of Asia who do

this, but also upon all who keep (obey, follow) the words of the Lord.

This is the sixth of seven beatitudes in the book. (cf. Rev_1:3; Rev_14:13; Rev_16:15; Rev_19:9; Rev_20:6; Rev_22:7, Rev_22:14).

words of the prophecy of this book . . This book is a prophecy and must be interpreted in the light of prophetic literature (cf. Rev_1:3; Rev_10:11; Rev_22:9-10, Rev_22:18-19;).

÷Rev_22:8

Rev_22:8

I John, saw and heard . . "When he claims that "I John am he who heard and saw these things" (v. 8), he is using a common ancient *witness formula* emphasizing the reliability of the eyes and ears in gathering direct personal knowledge." - Harper's Bible Commentary.

John resumes speaking for the first time since chap. 1 and confirms the veracity of the revelation with his own eyewitness testimony—the basis of any reliable witness. **- MSB**

I fell down to worship . . John may have thought the angel was deity. It may be that John is overwhelmed by Jesus' statement that He is coming quickly!

Some think this "falling" at the angel's feet may be be the same occasion as that related in Rev_19:10.

before the feet of the angel . . Is this the angel of Rev_1:1 "*messenger*"?

÷Rev_22:9

Rev_22:9

do not do that . . Humans are not to worship angels. Angels are fellow servants of God. cf Heb_1:14.

of your brethren the prophets . . Was this angel "messenger" heavenly? or human? It seems to be saying that the "angel" is a fellow servant of John and his brethren the prophets, and to all who keep the words of this book. Not that he (the angel) is a prophet.

He says "I am one who speaks for God - not to be worshipped. One of these angels had shown John the identification of Babylon, Rev_17:1.

thy brethren the prophets . . It has been recognised in Rev_22:6-7, that St John is a prophet, and shares in the special blessedness given to prophets. But at the same time "they which keep the words of this book," though not prophets, share that blessedness with them. St Mat_10:41 implies the same, though the form of statement is somewhat different. - CBSC

those who keep the words . . The temptation for our culture today is not physical persecution, but "dry rot," apathy, practical atheism, materialism, shallow Christianity with all benefits and no responsibility! - Utley

Worship God . . The angel instructs John (and all men) to worship God alone.

÷Rev_22:10

Rev_22:10

And he said . . Still, probably, the same angel. - CBSC

Do not seal the words . . When Daniel spoke of events some 470 years after his time, he was told to seal up his book. The events were too far into the future. John is not to seal his book "*for the time is at hand*." Dan_12:4; Dan_8:26; Rev_10:4

It rather seems that the "unsealing of the book" in Revelation is the very book that was sealed by Daniel. Rev_5:1-2; Dan_12:2 - where the "end" is the end of the Jewish dispensation, the beginning of the new, the Messianic age.

John must not imitate Daniel, whose visions concerned events in a remote future (Dan_12:4; Dan_12:9). - ESVSB [Dan_8:26]

These verses stand in contrast to the command given Daniel to seal up his book (Dan_8:26; Dan_12:4, Dan_12:9-10). John's message cannot be concealed because the contents of the vision are needed immediately by the churches. - EBC

Seal not . . Pointedly contrasted with Dan_12:4, Dan_12:9. - CBSC

Daniel was to seal his prophecy because it also spoke of the same "end" as John's Revelation did, the end of the Temple era, and the beginning of the "kingdom" (the church) that began during the time of the 4th kingdom Daniel saw (the Roman Empire.) Dan_2:44-45 . Heb_12:28; Col_1:13;

Daniel was to "seal" up his prophecy because it was about 400 years in the future (Dan_8:26); John is not to seal it, because "the time is at hand." Daniel's and John's prophecy was now to come to pass quickly.

If John's prophecy was about the fall of Rome, which was about 400 years into John's future, would it seem the Lord would have told him to "seal" it up, as He told Daniel to seal his. John's prophecy was to the people of his day, but Daniel's prophecy was not to the people of his day, so he was to seal it up.

Do not seal up . . This is exactly opposite of Isa_8:16; Dan_8:26 and Dan_12:4, Dan_12:9. The time of prophetic fulfillment has arrived. - Utley

John received instruction from the angel to leave his book open. He was not to close it because the fulfillment of the events predicted was near, and people needed to be aware of them (cf. 1:11). God had told Daniel to seal his prophecy, evidently because there was more prophecy to come (Dan. 8:26; 12:4, 9–10; cf. Rev. 10:4). As an artist covers his work when it is under construction until it is complete, so God covered His picture of the future until He finished it. - Constable

for the time is at hand . . The Lord Himself says that He is coming soon, quickly, to do the things revealed in this letter to the seven churches of Asia. See Rev_22:6 note; and Rev_1:1; Rev_1:3; note. cf. Rev_3:11; Rev_22:12; Rev_22:20;

Any interpretation of Revelation that ignores this verse is a wrong interpretation.

In fulfillment of Jesus' words of Mat_24:3, Mat_24:6, Mat_24:14 Which Paul says was done, Col_1:23-29, "and then will come the end" of the temple's destruction as Jesus prophesied.

--what has been written must be communicated so that people will understand the seriousness of the message and that ***the time is near*** (see Rev_1:1, Rev_1:3; Rev_22:6-7; cp. Dan_12:4). - NLTSB

His instruction is exactly the reverse of that which is given to Daniel (Dan_8:26) But the circumstances are different—indeed, they are reversed; as Milligan well says, "it was not a time" now "for sealing up, but for breaking seals"; the end was not, as in Daniel's case (see Driver on Dan. *l.c.*), far off, but at hand, - Swete

for the time is at hand . . What was "at hand" and what the judgment in the book of Revelation is about, was God's judgment upon Israel for their rejection of His Son. This was a national judgment that was consummated in AD 70 with the destruction of the old Jerusalem and the temple.

Therefore, this book, Revelation, was written sometime shortly before AD 70. All the internal evidence points to this. The single quote many modern scholars use to date the book into the 9th decade was either erroneously made or it has been misinterpreted. (see Wallace, who points out how it has been misinterpreted.)

÷Rev_22:11
Rev_22:11

He who is unjust . . The sense is generally understood to be, "The time is so short, that it is too late to change: for good or evil, you must go on as you are;" - CBSC

> All four parts of v. 11 indicate with a tone of irony the fixity of state in which the good and the evil find themselves at a time when no further opportunity for repentance remains. The lesson is, 'Change while there is time.' Thomas, *Revelation 8–22*, p. 502. (Constable)

he who is filthy . . The exhortations for unbelievers to continue to do wrong and to be vile may be ironic or may summon the faithful to respond positively to the prophetic word even if others do not. - NIVZSB

he who is righteous . . ***Vile*** people who refuse to accept God's forgiveness will ***continue to be vile*** (see Rev_16:9), yet John reminds the ***righteous*** to maintain their integrity. - NLTSB

he who is holy . . Far from being an encouragement to remain apathetic, it is evangelistic in spirit. It may also allude to the great ordeal John viewed as imminent. - EBC

> In the imagination of the Seer the moment has been reached when the Master of the house has arisen and shut the door, and those that are without will knock in vain (Mat_25:10, Luk_13:25) - Swete
>
> This is the Book's way of saying that God has waited and been patience a long time, but the time has come and God will not wait any longer - 2Pe_3:9.
>
> It was time for God's judgment to come on Israel, and the Lord says He will come quickly!

let him do . . Picks up on the last phrase in Rev_22:10. There is no more time to repent; the end has come. - FSB

÷Rev_22:12

Rev_22:12

> **Coming soon**!

Behold . .

I come quickly . . Of course He Who "comes" is the Lord Jesus: - CBSC

I am coming quickly . . Again, imminence is the issue - MSB.

> Jesus Christ repeated His promise to return soon (Rev_22:7, cf. Rev_1:3; Rev_22:20). - Constable
>
> (Some try to evade the plain clear message by trying to say it means his coming will be quickly when he comes.)

My reward is with Me . . Alludes to Yahweh's promise to come as Savior and King in Isa_40:10; Isa_62:11. - NIVZSB

to give every man . . Better, **to render to every man**. The source of the expression is in Job_34:11; Psa_42:11. In the N. T. this retribution is ascribed to God in Rom_2:6, to the Son in His own words in St Mat_16:27. - CBSC

to give to every one according to his work . . This is a recurring theme throughout the Bible (cf. Gal_6:7). - Utley

Only those works which survive God's testing fire have eternal value and are worthy of reward (1Co_3:10-15; 1Co_4:1-5; 2Co_5:10). - MSB

We are indeed saved by the grace and power of God in Christ. Our works do not save us, but they do indicate the seriousness of our confession and provide a just basis for our ultimate reward or punishment. - NLTSB

"***Recompense***" (Greek *misthos*, "wages, reward") indicates degrees of reward for believers and punishment for unbelievers (cf. Luk_12:47-48; and 1Co_3:14-15). - ESVSB

Rev_22:13

Rev_22:13

I am the Alpha and the Omega . . This is an allusion to the OT title for YHWH found in Rev_1:8 and Rev_21:6, but here it refers to Christ. The fluidity of these OT titles for deity was one way NT authors affirmed the deity of Christ. Verse 13 has three such titles or phrases describing the eternal God. - Utley

Alpha and the Omega . . These are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. An alphabet is an ingenious way to store and communicate knowledge. The 26 letters in the English alphabet, arranged in almost endless combinations, can hold and convey all knowledge. Christ is the supreme, sovereign alphabet; there is nothing outside His knowledge, so as there are no unknown factors that can sabotage His second coming. (cf. Col_2:3). - MSB

See note on Rev_1:8.

the beginning &c. . . The true order seems to be **the first and the last, the beginning and the end**. - CBSC

the Beginning . . Rev_1:8; Rev_21:6

the First and the Last . . Rev_1:11; Rev_1:17;

Jesus Christ offered three titles for Himself that give assurance that He can and will fulfill His former promise to reward (cf. Rev_1:4, Rev_1:8, Rev_1:17; Rev_2:8; Rev_21:6). Jesus Christ, as well as God the Father, is the **Alpha and Omega** (cf. Rev_1:8; Rev_21:6). This title stresses His eternality and sovereignty. "**The first and the last"** is also a title for Christ (Rev_1:17; Rev_2:8) and the Father (Isa_44:6; Isa_48:12). It emphasizes that God is the cause and goal of history. "**The beginning and the end"** describes God in Rev_21:6 and Christ in Heb_12:2. It means that He finishes what He starts. (Hughes, p. 238. - Constable)

Rev_22:14

Rev_22:14

Blessed . . The seventh and final beatitude (Rev_1:3; Rev_14:13; Rev_16:15; Rev_19:9; Rev_20:6; Rev_22:7, Rev_11:14), reminiscent of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:3–11).

Blessed are those who do His commandments . . A beatitude disclosing that those who keep God's commandments are the only ones who can enter the city and eat of the tree of life. (cf. beatitude in Rev_22:7)

who wash their robes . . . Most English translations read "***wash their robes,***" following a few early Greek uncial manuscripts; some English translations, such as the kjv and nkjv, read "**do his commandments,"** following the Greek majority manuscripts. The two expressions sound similar in Greek.

who wash their robes . . Symbolizing those who have been forgiven of their sins - who have been cleansed by the blood of the Lamb of God (Heb_9:14; 1Pe_1:18-19). - MSB

that they may have the right to the tree of life . . Adam and Eve failed in keeping God's commandment, if we do we regain the right to the tree of life.

and may enter through the gates . . Here are two metaphors for salvation, one goes back to **Gen 1-3**, the second to Rev_21:10-12

÷Rev_22:15
Rev_22:15

But outside . . Outside the ***"gates of the city"*** Rev_22:14 b.

But outside are dogs . . An term for male prostitutes.

> Considered despicable creatures in NT times, the term when applied to people referred to anyone of low moral character. Unfaithful leaders (Isa_56:10) and homosexual prostitutes (Deu_23:18) are among those who received such a designation. - MSB
>
> In Deu_23:18 this term refers to male prostitutes of the Canaanite fertility cult. In other parts of the Old and New Testaments it refers to wicked people (cf. Psa_22:16, Psa_22:20; Mat_7:6; and Php_3:2). - Utley
>
> See **Rom_1:27** note on **GAYS (Homosexuals, Sodomites) and Lesbians** In The Bible

dogs &c. . . The articles should be expressed, "***the*** dogs, and the sorcerers (see on Rev_9:21, Rev_21:8), and the fornicators, and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone that loveth &c."

and sorcerers . . (G5333) Those using drugs and occult practices.
φαρμακός, *pharmakós*; gen. *pharmakoú*, masc. noun. A magician, sorcerer, enchanter (Rev_21:8 [UBS]; Rev_22:15; Sept.: Exo_7:11; Exo_9:11; Deu_18:10; Dan_2:2). The same as *pharmakeús* (G5332). The noun *pharmakeía* (G5331) means the preparing and giving of medicine, and in the NT, sorcery, enchantment.

and sexually immoral . . Fornicators, (KJ whoremongers) (G4205) όρνος, pornos; **Thayer Definition:** 1) a man who prostitutes his body to another's lust for hire; 2) a male prostitute; 3) a man who indulges in unlawful sexual intercourse, a fornicator; **Part of Speech:** noun masculine - Thayer

and murderers . . (G5406) φονεύς, *phoneús*; gen. *phonéōs*, masc. noun from *phoneúō* (G5407), to kill. A murderer (Mat_22:7; Act_3:14; Act_7:52; Act_28:4; 1Pe_4:15; Rev_21:8; Rev_22:15).

and idolaters . . (G1496) "an image servant, or worsipper" literally or figuratively, an idolater.

whoever loves and practices a lie . . (*maketh, doeth, practices* same verb as in 1Jn_1:6) To ***do*** the truth is to obey it, to ***do*** falsehood is is to claim one thing but which is belied by his life. (see CBSC)

> The point is that such wicked people will not be inhabitants of the New Jerusalem.

÷Rev_22:16

Rev_22:16

I, Jesus . . Here only does our Lord reveal His Name, though from Rev_1:13, Rev_1:18 onwards, it has been obvious that He is the revealer; as was expressed in the title, Rev_1:1. Whether He is *personally* present, however, is doubtful: the words are His, but it is probably still the angel that speaks them. - CBSC

> The combination "**I Jesus"** occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. Here Jesus used it to stress His role

in producing this book and so to strengthen its authority (cf. Rev_22:7, Rev_22:12). - Constable

Sent My angel to testify to you . . . See Rev_1:1; The principle angel that Jesus sent to testify "these things" to the seven churches of Asia who were the originial recipients of the book (Rev_1:11).

Often the sender is God the Father (cf. Rev_22:6, "His angel"). Here the sender is Jesus ("My angel"). The phrase is also found in Rev_1:1, but the pronoun antecedent is ambiguous. - Utley

to you . . Notice that the term **"you**" is PLURAL and the allusion to the seven churches of chapters 2–3 is made very specific. The book begins and concludes with the genre of letter, while the visions in between are a combination of prophecy (the end viewed through the lens of the present) and apocalyptic (imaginative imagery). - Utley

these things in the churches . . . ***"These things"*** seems to refer to the main body of the book (letter) that is being sent to the seven churches. It may include the whole book, or all but the closing of the book where Jesus Himself speaks.

Root and Offspring of David . . A reference to the prophecy in Isa_11:1, Isa_11:10. See Rev_5:5. - FSB

He bears the former title in Rev_5:5, where see **note**. The latter is substantially the same as the familiar one, "the Son of David." - CBSC

There are many allusions to the Davidic line of the Messiah in the OT (cf. 2Sa_7:12-16 and Isa_11:1, Isa_11:10) and in the NT (cf. Mat_1:1; Mat_9:17; Mat_15:22; Mat_1:1; Rom_1:3; 2Ti_2:8 Rev_5:5). Jesus is the fulfillment of all OT prophecies. - Utley

Jesus validates the message (Joh_21:24) of the Revelation by swearing that he is simultaneously *the source of David* (see Rev_5:5; Isa_11:10) and David's *heir* (see Eze_37:23-24; Rom_1:3). - NLTSB

Jesus is both David's "son" and his Lord, the source of his royalty (Rev_5:5; Isa_11:1, Isa_11:10; Mar_12:35-37). **-** ESVSB

Historically, Jesus is that Christ, the offspring of David, the expected Messiah, and this event (Jerusalem's fall) is the guarantee of that truth (Mat_1:1; cf. Isa_11:11; Rev_5:5)

the Bright and Morning star . . Both "and"s should be omitted. There may be a reference to Num_24:17, or to the title of "the Day-spring," St Luk_1:78, and perhaps Zec_3:8, Zec_6:12. - CBSC

the Bright and Morning Star . . This was apparently a Messianic title from Num_24:17; See also Mat_2:2; and 2Pe_1:19. Satan may have tried to steal the title in the play on Isa_14:12, but Jesus is the true Bright Morning Star.

The question is this a refeence to "the morning star" Venus, or to the "Sun" which is truly the "Day Star" that shine most brightly on us and lights our way?

Likely dependent on a messianic interpretation of Num_24:17. - FSB

Just as John gave his signature, and guarantee in Rev_22:8; so here ***Jesus attests and guarantees the truth*** John has seen and heard. 1) Mediated by angels 2) unto the churches.

Rev_22:17
Rev_22:17

The Spirit . . The Holy **Spirit** joined with **the bride,** the church, in extending an invitation to all who heed. Those who hear are encouraged to respond and also to extend the invitation to others.

Swete believe that the "***Spirit***" here "in accordance with the general use of the Apocalypse, the *Spirit of prophecy*, the Spirit in the prophetic order; 'the Spirit and the Bride' is thus practically equivalent to 'the

Prophets and the Saints' (Rev_16:6, Rev_18:24). - Swete

and the bride . . the Lord's church, the New Jerusalem, Rev_19:6-9; Rev_21:9; Eph_5:25-32.

the bride . . The Lamb's wife (see Rev_21:9) is the church, the people of God. - NLTSB

say, "Come!" . . An invitation to all (especially in that seven churches) who need to repent to live to God's glory.

...this must be a gospel invitation to everyone who senses a need and will respond to God's offer in Christ. - Utley

Notice the three appearance of "come" in this one verse. All refer to the lost, an invitation. cf. Mat_11:28-29.

There are some who believe this is not an evangelistic appeal but the yearning of the Holy Spirit and the "bride" (the church) for Christ's return to accomplish the prophecy of the book. In Rev_22:20 John gives us the Lord Jesus' answer, "Yes, I am coming soon." (See EBCNT)

let him who hears . . "The one who hears" is everyone who hears this book read in the seven churches of Asia, as was common in John's day. But we believe we can also apply this to all "hearers" who are thirsty for the knowledge of the Truth.'

let him who thirsts come . . Using the metaphor of Isa_55:1-2; Mat_5:6;

The ***thirsty*** can ***drink freely*** from God's provision (see Rev_21:6; Rev_22:1; Psa_42:1; Isa_55:1; Joh_4:10-14). - NLTSB

Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely . . cf. Rev_21:6**;** John is instructed to invite "whosoever will" to come and share in the blessings of this book.

freely . . i.e. "without money and without price:" see on Rev_21:6. - CBSC

÷Rev_22:18
Rev_22:18

I testify . . Μαρτυρῶ ἐγὼ παντὶ τῷ; Is the "I" here the John of Rev_1:4? or is it Jesus? "I" is the personal pronoun, here, emphatic "I". - WG

Is this John or Jesus speaking? It seems that sense Jesus can be identified as the speaker in Rev_22:20 that Jesus' dialogue begins here in vs. 18. - WG

The Speaker is still surely Jesus, and not, as many commentators have supposed, St John. Jesus has borne testimony throughout the Book by His angel, and now He bears it in person. - Swete

Jesus offers extended testimony on the authority and finality of the prophecy. He commissioned John to write it, but He was its author. - MSB

I solemnly declare . . NLT John issues an oath to protect the integrity of the book of Revelation. He declares a curse upon anyone who alters the contents of the book or its message (cp. Deu_4:2; Deu_12:32). - ESVSB

I testify to everyone . . A warning is giving against tampering with anything in this book.

See 2Ti_3:16 note for the "**Authority of the Bible"**

to everyone . . Refers to the seven churches to whom this apocalypse is circulated. - FSB

if anyone adds to them . . Or alters them (see Deu_4:2; Deu_12:32). John, as God's prophet, speaks on behalf of God. His message is true, authoritative, and final. - FSB [cf. Pro_30:6; Jer_26:2]

God will add to him the plagues . .

The curse, if understood in the latter sense, has been remarkably ineffective, for the common text of this book is more corrupt, and the true text oftener doubtful, than in any other part of the N. T. - CBSC

This does not refer to believing interpreters or scribes who pray earnestly and seek God's will, but according to Ireneaus in his *Contra-Heresies*, 30:12, it referred to false teachers who add, change, or delete the words of Scripture, which is the thrust of this passage. Remember that we cannot proof-text one verse to establish a doctrine which goes against other clear teachings of Scripture. - Utley

written in this book . . This refers to the message of Revelation (see Rev_1:11) - FSB

÷Rev_22:19
Rev_22:19

And a warning is giving against tampering with anything in this book.

if anyone takes away . . Cf. Deu_4:2; Deu_12:32; Pro_30:6; Jer_26:2. (see comments also on Rev_22:18)

God shall take away . . Those who take away from John's words will be judged (see Deut 4:2; 12:32). - FSB

the Book of Life . . Some MSS read "from the tree of life".

from the holy city . . The "holy city" is the church that Jesus died to save Eph_5:23; Eph_5:27; Joh_3:29; Rev_21:2; Rev_21:9;

the things which are written in this book . . The reference is to this book, Revelation, the letter written to the seven churches of Asia. While is is said and referred to here to Revelation, the principle of course applies to all of God's Word. Deu_4:2; Deu_12:32; Pro_30:6; Jer_26:2.
÷Rev_22:20

Rev_22:20

He . . This testimony or witness is from Jesus Christ, see Rev_1:1 .

He who testifies to these things . . Since it seems clear that this is a reference to Jesus, it lends support to the identification of Jesus as the speaker in Rev_22:18 as well.

Surely . . The word is that rendered ***Even so*** in Rev_1:7, and in the next clause here, and which might be better rendered ***Yea***. It should be omitted in the next clause, so that the whole will read, "He that testifieth these things saith, 'Yea [in answer to the prayers of Rev_22:17] **I** come quickly.' Amen: come, Lord Jesus. - CBSC

"Surely I am coming quickly" . . Another affirmation that the Lord comes quickly (soon). John gives his

sanction to the Lord's promise to come quickly by saying "Amen."

Yes, I am coming quickly . . The third affirmation of this statement (see Rev_22:7, Rev_22:12). This threefold formula highlights the truth and certainty of Christ's claim. - FSB

Amen . . "Yea", "even so", "so be it".

Even so, come Lord Jesus! . . See 1Co_16:22 "Maranatha" = *"Lord Come"* (Aramaic) and Phi_4:5 "*the Lord is at hand."*

Come, Lord Jesus . . The Greek phrase used here is the equivalent to the Aramaic expression *Marana tha* (meaning "Our Lord, come!"; see 1Co_16:22). This became the cry of the early church as it began facing persecution. Its inclusion here suggests that John's audience knew the phrase. (Cf. FSB)

÷Rev_22:21

Rev_22:21

The grace of our Lord . . Is this last verse added by John, or an angelic declaration? Probably by John, the correspondent of the letter to the churches.

> How different the closing verse of the NT from that of the close of the OT (Malachi) ... "***lest I come and smite the land with a curse***." (NASB)

the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all . . A typical benediction, especially in Paul's letters (e.g., Rom_16:20; 1 Cor 16:23; Gal_6:18). - FSB

be with you all . . We should read either only **with all**, or more probably **with the saints**. Many authorities omit "Amen" here, as after the benedictions ending many of St Paul's Epistles. CBSC

> This benediction is a prayer that all its hearers and readers may respond to the revelation of this book appropriately. It is an unusual way to end an apocalypse, but it was a common way to close a first-century Christian letter (cf. Rev_1:1). - Constable

> An ending of this kind is unusual in Apocalypses, as Bousset points out; but it is suitable to an Apocalypse which is also a letter to the Churches (Rev_1:4, note), designed to be read in the congregation. - Swete

Amen . . αμην Amen. G281 amēn

> **Thayer Definition:** 1) firm; 1a) metaphorically faithful; 2) verily, amen; 2a) at the beginning of a discourse - surely, truly, of a truth; 2b) at the end - so it is, so be it, may it be fulfilled.
>
> It was a custom, which passed over from the synagogues to the Christian assemblies, that when he who had read or discoursed, had offered up solemn prayer to God, the others responded Amen, and thus made the substance of what was uttered their own.

Practical themes for us:

1. Heaven knows and cares about our struggles
2. Be Faithful til the endἀμήν

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Resources:

CBSC = Cambridge Bible for School and Colleges

Constable = Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible

Coffman, James Burton Commentary on Revelation

DL = Dan Jenkins's Class in Revelation, BBSD.

DM = Don McWhorter - Fayette Class, MSS and Tapes

EBSNT = The Expository Bible Commentary on the New Testament

ESVSB = The English Standard Version Study Bible

FC = Franklin Camp - Adamsville Class in Revelation, also on CD

FSB = Faithlife Study Bible

Gentry, Kenneth Before Jerusalem Fell

Gentry, Kenneth The Beast of Revelation

Hendriksen, William More Than Conquerors

Josephus, War of the Jews

MSB = The MacArthur Study Bible

McClish, Dub Studies in the Revelation

NIVZSB = Zondervan's NIV Study Bible

NLTSB = The New Living Translation Study Bible

Ogden, Arthur M. The Avenging of the Apostles and Prophets

RR = Richard Rogers - Sunset SOP, tapes

Shaff, Philip History of the Christian Church

Strauss, James D. The Seer, the Savior, and The Saved

Swete, Henry Barclay Commentary on Revelation

Wallace, Foy E. Commentary on the Book of Revelation

Utley = Bob Utley's commentaries

Plus many other books and articles.

See WG charts on premillennialism.

APPENDIX: A One Lesson Overview of Revelation (Hand Out)

REVELATION (Background Study)

Four Vital Things to Remember ***

1. It is a ***Revelation;*** Rev_1:1

The Apocalypse (apokalupsis) "The Revelation" = "an uncovering, or unveiling." The word is used about a dozen times in the NT and related words about another 30 times.

a. The Revelation is an uncovering or unveiling of impending events.

b. The book, by the very definition of its title, is something that is being make known. Many people think the book cannot be understood, but if it is a revelation, that means it is something that is now

being made known. The language is primarily drawn from the Old Testament.

2. It is a revelation to ***seven churches in Asia***, Rev_1:11; Rev_1:4
John was to write what is revealed to these seven churches.
The book of Revelation is a book of warning.
a. It warns five of the seven churches of Asia to repent or else.
b. It warns those who had the mark of the beast, (Rev_14:9-11); and warns all the wicked of the earth (Rev_21:8).

3. A revelation in ***"signs."***
Verse Rev_1:1 "signified" thus these things are not "literal" but revealed in symbolic language. We should not expect the devil to look like a real dragon. Symbols stand for something, like a wedding ring stands for marriage. (Revelation symbols are political cartoons, like the donkey and elephant in our newspapers.)
a. The language is unlike any other in the New Testament. The message was signified ("sign-i-fied") to John. Its use of signs or symbolic language is drawn from the Old Testament. One must study the OT prophets and their language is he is to understand the NT book of Revelation.
b. "The book speaks not the language of Paul, but the Old Testament prophets Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel."
c. "The Book of Revelation is the most thoroughly Jewish in its language and imagery of any New Testament book."
d. Further identification with the OT is the fact that the book shows God's vengeance upon those who killed the prophets (Rev_16:6; Rev_18:24; Rev_19:10).

4. A revelation of things ***"which must shortly happen***."
Rev_1:1 "things which must shortly come to pass."
Rev_1:3 "for the time is at hand."
Rev_22:6 "the things which must shortly be done"
Rev_22:10 "for the time is at hand."

The time element is emphasized at the beginning of the book, and lest the reader has forgotten during the course of the book, it is emphasized again at the end of the book, as well as several reminders along the way, i.e., Rev_6:10 "a little season," or "a little while."

Any interpretation of Revelation that ignores these vital points is a wrong interpretation.

Unique Features of the Book

1. Four books about Christ; one about the spread of Christianity; twenty-one teach how to live, and one is prophecy of impending events.
2. The book reveals the crowning of those who overcome, and it is itself the crown of all revelation. An encouragement to those suffering persecution.
3. There are 404 verses in Revelation and 278 reference to O.T. passages.

What Revelation Is About:

Revelation is NOT about the "last days" before Christ's second coming, but about the "last days" of

Judaism, and the fall of the nation and the destruction of their capital city Jerusalem, the temple, and the Jewish hierarchal system.

It is a parallel to the subject the Lord dealt with in **Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21**. It concerns the vengeance and judgment of God upon the Jewish nation for their rejection of the Son of God and their persecution of Him and the church

Notice especially:

Mat_23:34-36	Rev_6:9-10; Rev_16:6
Luk_21:20-22	Rev_18:20-24
Luk_11:47-51	Rev_16:6
Luk_18:7, Luk_13:33	Rev_18:24; Rev_17:6
Luke 13:33; Act_7:51-52 . .	Rev_11:8

Author: We understand the Apostle John to be the author of the last book in the New Testament (Rev_1:1, Rev_1:4, Rev_1:9; Rev_21:2; Rev_22:8). He is "a brother, and a companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ" (Rev_1:9).

Evidence from within the book indicate that it was written by the same author as that of the Gospel and Epistles which bear John's name. From the nature of the book no other John can measure up to what is demanded by the essence of the book.

Date: The book of Revelation is unique in that the date of its composition affects the interpretation placed upon its message. There are two general views, called "The Early Date"@. AD 64-68) and "The Late Date" @. AD 96).

Some think the book was written about AD 96 during the reign of Domitian (AD 81-96) and that he had banished John to Patmos. The tradition for this however is unreliable and there is no internal support. Those who take the Late Date hold to various views of its interpretation, generally the fall of Rome.

For those who understand the book is dealing with the destruction of the Temple, Jerusalem, and Judaism, a date before AD 70 is essential, and therefore a date from the time of about AD 65-68 seems valid.

Reasons for Holding to the Early Date:

1. The parallel between passages in the Gospel and in Revelation that deal with the destruction of Jerusalem would call for a date before the destruction of the city which occurred in AD 70.

2. Allusions to other apostles still alive besides John at the time of the writing. This would not be true if written about AD 96.

3. The state of Israel and the temple still existed at the time of the writing. These were destroyed in AD 70 and thus the necessity for a date prior to this event.

4. The use of Hebrew phrases and idioms that would be appropriate before the destruction of the nation, but came into disuse after AD 70.

5. The fact that a Jewish persecution of Christians in Asian cities existed at the time of the writing give strong evidence that the Revelation was written before AD 70. There was no Jewish persecution of foreign Christians following the destruction of the national order and Jerusalem and the temple.

6. In the most ancient version or translation made of the Bible into another language (The Peshitta in the second century into Aramaic) the superinscription says the letter was written by the Apostle John during the reign of Nero.

7. John expected to leave Patmos (in ch. 1) and go and preach among the churches to whom he addressed this letter. That could be expected of a man who was 60 years old, but it could hardly be expected of a man who was 96 years old.

8. One of the problems that John faced as he wrote these letters to the seven churches of Asia were those Judaizers who were attempting to turn Christians back to the Temple worship at Jerusalem. That would not have been true after the destruction of the Temple which brought an end to institutional Judaism in AD 70.

9. The Temple of Herod was still standing, and John makes reference to the temple, when he writes this book, that would not have been true if this were written at a later date.

10. The twelve tribes still existed as the twelve tribes when John wrote this letter. That was not true after AD 70.

11. John says that the visions occurred in the reign of the sixth Roman Emperor. That within itself nails down the date without any doubt. Julius, Augustus, Tiberius, Caliguia, Claudius, and Nero. Nero reigned from AD 54 to 68.

12. The code name in chapter 13, the mystical number of 666 is a clear reference to Nero, the then reigning ruler over the empire.

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Jesus' Prophecy of the Destruction of the City and Nation

Why did Jesus prophesy so much about the destruction of the Jewish temple, city, and the nation? When this fulfillment came within their own generation (a 40 yr period) it would verify his identity.

Sign of Jesus in Heaven - Sign = "token, indication". (Vine)

The fulfillment of **Matt. 24** was a "sign" to the Jews that Jesus, the true Messiah of God, had come into the world, and had been rejected, and was now in heaven, as the NT apostles and prophets taught. (Important see the KJV or ASV **Mat_24:30** which have the exact reading and word-order as in the Greek.

The NIV and NASV give an interpretation (from the 3rd century) and completely miss the significance of this verse. This KEY verse informs us of the prophetic value of the Destruction of Jerusalem.

It was a SIGN to the Jews who rejected Jesus that He is indeed the Messiah and was resurrected and has ascended to heaven as the apostles preached.)

This Generation -- Complete listing of New Testament usage:
Mat_11:16, Mat_12:41, Mat_12:43, Mat_12:45; Mat_23:36;
Mar_8:12, Mar_8:38; Luk_11:30, Luk_11:32, 32, Luk_11:50-51, Luk_17:25; Act_2:40

Shortly ... (ἐν τάχει) occurs 8 times: Luk_18:8; Act_12:7; Act_25:4; Act_22:18; Rom_16:20; 1Ti_3:14;

Rev_1:1; Rev_22:16)

At Hand ... NT it occurs 21 times: Mat_4:17; (see Mar_9:1) 2Ti_4:6, etc.

The Last Days

Joel and many other OT prophets spoke of "the last days" and things that would happen in those days. Many erroneously take the phrase to refer to the last days before Jesus' second coming and the final end and judgment of the world.

But Joel and the prophets were speaking of the "Last Days" of the Mosaic dispensation, and the last days of the physical nation of Israel and Law of Moses as a covenant with God. The Law ended with the cross, and the rituals, the temple sacrifices, genealogical records, and the nations ended in AD 70.

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The Last Days (plural)-- The Last Time, Last Days of Judaism

Act_2:16-17 "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of by spirit..."
Heb_1:2 "God...Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son..."
1Jn_2:18 "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time."
1Pe_1:20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you
Act_3:24 "Yea, and all the prophets...foretold of these days."

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The End -- **The End Times** (End of the Nation of Israel)

Heb_9:26 "...but now once in the end of the world (age) hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."
1Co_10:11 "...and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."
1Pe_4:7 "But the end of all things is at hand."
Mat_24:3 "...and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and the end of the world (age)."
Mat_24:6 "...Hear of wars and rumors...; but the end is not yet."
(Mar_13:7, Luk_21:9, "but the end is not immediately"
Mat_24:13
Mat_24:14 "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come." (see Col_1:6; Col_1:23)
Mat_24:33 "So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it (the end, Mat_24:14) is near, even at the doors." (Rom_13:11)

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The Last Day (singular) – Second Coming, Final Judgment of All

Joh_6:39-40, Joh_6:44, Joh_6:54; Joh_11:24; Joh_12:48 (Joh_5:28-29) This is the Second Coming, the day of the Resurrection, and final judgment. See also
1 Thess 4:13 - 5:12; 1Co_15:23-24; Joh_14:3

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Identification of Revelation Symbols

The **Dragon** - (ch Rev_12:9) is the Devil;
The **Beast** is Rome, and is identified by Daniel's prophecy in Dan_7:17-21; Dan_2:32-40;
The **Second Beast** (the False Prophet) is the religious elements supporting the persecution against God's people (Rev. 13);
Babylon (the Harlot) is Jerusalem and the Jewish system (See Rev_11:8);
The **Woman on the Moon** (ch. 12) represents the righteous people on earth. (In the OT they are called "the remnant" in the NT it is the church.)

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