

## Lesson 16 – Revelation 20

### Brief Summary of Revelation 1–15

#### Revelation 1 The Introduction: Scene: Earth. Time: Past (ca. 95 AD).

John introduces the book of prophecy with an explanation of the circumstances surrounding the Revelation. John was exiled on the island of Patmos when Jesus sent and communicated the vision of things which must soon take place. John is commanded to write and send the book to the seven churches in Asia.

#### Revelation 2-3 Messages to the Angels of the Seven Churches in Asia:

*Scene: Earth. Time: Present (to original readers in Asia).*

Jesus sends a unique message to each of the seven churches in the western part of the Roman province of Asia: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. The cities are listed in the order of the geographical circuit that the messenger of the book would naturally travel as he delivered the letters.

#### Revelation 4–5 Prelude of Praise:

*Scene: Heaven. Time: Future (Onset of the Great Seven-Year Tribulation which will complete the present age, conclude with Jesus' return, and usher in the Millennium).*

Revelation 4-22 records events that will take place in the future. Three consecutive periods of judgment lead to the second return of Jesus Christ: 7 Seals; 7 Trumpets; and, 7 Bowls. A prelude of praise in heaven precedes the onset of each three sets of 7 consecutive judgments. Revelation 4-5 records the initial heavenly prelude of praise that will precede the opening of the 7 Seals of judgment in Revelation 6, ushering in “a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will” (Matt 24:21).

#### Revelation 6 Seven Seal Judgments

*Scene: Earth. Time: Future (Chronology moves forward.)*

The seven seals contain the judgments of the Great Tribulation, concluding with the return of Jesus. The seventh Seal contains the seven Trumpet judgments, and the seventh Trumpet judgment contains the final seven Bowl judgments. The Trumpet and Bowl judgments are all contained within the seventh Seal, unfolding consecutively through the seven-year Tribulation Period. Through judgment, Jesus becomes King of all the nations.

Revelation 6 records John's vision of the Lamb breaking the first 6 of 7 Seals:

- Seal #1: First Apocalyptic Horseman (White Horse): Conqueror
- Seal #2: Second Apocalyptic Horseman (Red Horse): Removes Peace
- Seal #3: Third Apocalyptic Horseman (Black Horse): Famine
- Seal #4: Fourth Apocalyptic Horseman (Ashen Horse): Death and Hades (over ¼ killed)
- Seal #5: Cries of the Martyrs for Judgment and Vengeance
- Seal #6: Earthquake, Blackened Sun, Blood-like Moon, Falling Stars, Split Sky, Moving Mountains and Islands, Hiding Men, Great Day of Wrath

The seventh seal remains unbroken at the end of Revelation 6. Before the Lamb breaks the seventh seal (Rev 8), the foreheads of 144,000 from the 12 tribes of Israel are sealed.

#### Rev 7:1-8 Sealing of 144,000 from 12 Tribes of Israel: Scene: Earth. Time: Future.

The angels are commanded to refrain from harming the earth, sea, or trees until the bond-servants of God are sealed on their foreheads with the seal of the Living God. The 144,000 include 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel.

#### Rev 7:9-17 Prelude of Praise by Multitude in Heaven: Scene: Heaven. Time: Future.

Before the Lamb breaks the 7th Seal, containing the 7 Trumpets and 7 Bowls, there is a prelude of praise in heaven by a great, countless multitude from every nation, tribes, peoples, and tongues. The multitude, clothed in white robes with palm branches in their hands, stands before the throne and before the Lamb as they cry, “Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb” (7:10). The heavenly court responds in worship. One of the elders explains to John that the multitude came out of the great tribulation. They washed their robes, made white in the blood of the Lamb.

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### Revelation 8–9 Trumpet Judgments

*Scene: Earth. Time: Future (Chronology moves forward, Second Half of Tribulation)*

After the sealing of 144,000 from the twelve tribes of Israel and a prelude of praise by a great multitude in heaven, the Lamb breaks the seventh seal. In response, heaven is silenced for half an hour. The seventh seal contains the seven trumpets, the second of three 7-judgment series that are consecutively released during the Great Tribulation. The seven bowls are contained in the seventh trumpet. The seven trumpets are contained in the seventh seal. When the Lamb breaks the seventh seal, He is actually initiating the seven trumpets. Once the seventh seal is broken, the seven trumpet judgments occur consecutively. Revelation 8–9 records the consecutive release of six of the seven trumpet judgments.

- Trumpet #1: Hail, Fire (upon earth)
- Trumpet #2: Burning Mountain (upon sea)
- Trumpet #3: Wormwood (upon waters)
- Trumpet #4: Sun, Moon, Stars (upon heavens)
- Trumpet #5: Demonic Locusts (upon people)
- Trumpet #6: Horsemen (upon people)
- Trumpet #7: Announces 7 Bowls

### **Summary of Revelation 10–15:**

#### **Transition from Trumpets (8–9) to Seals (16)**

*Scenes: Earth (10-14) and Heaven (15) Time: Future*

Just as chapter 7, which deals with the 144,000 sealed Israelites and great multitude from all nations, serves as a transition between the Seal and Trumpet judgments, Chapters 10–15 serve as a transition between the Trumpet and Bowl judgments. The interlude provides background information pertaining to significant people, places, and events during the Great Tribulation without advancing chronologically through the judgment series.

Chapter 10 introduces an angel, perhaps Michael the archangel, who announces the 7th trumpet, which contains the seven final Bowl judgments leading to the return of Christ.

Chapter 11 records John's measurement of the temple of God and the altar, then it introduces the two witnesses who prophesy for 1,260 days (42 months) of the Great Tribulation. At the end of 3 ½ years, the two witnesses die and their bodies are displayed for 3 ½ days before they are brought back to life and ascend into heaven.

Chapter 12 is often considered the most symbolic chapter in the Bible. Five of seven major tribulation personages are identified: (1) the woman clothed with the sun=Mary/Judah (2) the red dragon (7 heads, 10 horns, 7 diadems)=Satan; (3) a male child=Christ; (4) Michael/angels; and (5) offspring of woman persecuted by the dragon=Israel.

Chapter 13 introduces the final two of seven major tribulation personages: (6) beast out of the sea=Antichrist; and, (7) beast out of the earth=false prophet.

Chapter 14 reveals the Lamb standing on Mount Zion and the worship of the 144,000 who have the name of the Lamb and the name of His Father written on their foreheads. After a prelude of praise, angels announce fallen Babylon and the reaping of the earth.

Chapter 15 records a heavenly prelude of praise in preparation for the final series of judgment. Those who had been victorious over the beast and his image sing the Song of Moses and Song of the Lamb. One of the four living creatures gives to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever, and the temple is filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power.

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### Brief Summary of Revelation 16 (The Grand Finale)

#### Revelation 16 – Seven Plagues/Bowl Judgments

*Scene: Earth. Time: Future (Chronology moves forward.)*

The seven seals (Rev 6, 8) contain all the judgments of the Great Tribulation, concluding with the return of Jesus. The seventh Seal (Rev 8) contains the seven Trumpet judgments (Rev 8–9, 11:15), and the seventh Trumpet judgment (Rev 11:15) contains the final seven Bowl judgments (Rev 16). The Trumpet and Bowl judgments are all contained within the seventh Seal, unfolding consecutively through the seven-year Tribulation Period. Through judgment, Jesus becomes King of all the nations.

Revelation 16 brings the terrible judgments of the Tribulation to conclusion through the pouring out of the final seven Bowl judgments.

- Bowl 1 (upon earth) Boils
- Bowl 2 (into sea) Blood
- Bowl 3 (into rivers) Blood
- Bowl 4 (upon sun) Scorching
- Bowl 5 (upon throne of the beast) Darkness
- Bowl 6 (upon the Euphrates river) Dries Up
- Bowl 7 (upon air) Earthquake, Hail

### Brief Summary Revelation 17–18 (Interlude)

*Scene: Earth Time: Future*

Revelation 17–18 form an interlude that describes the fall of Babylon, involving the destruction of its ecclesiastical form (Rev 17) and its political form (Rev 18).

### Brief Introduction to Revelation 19-22

#### Revelation 19 – The Second Return of Jesus Christ

After the fall of Babylon, a great multitude praises God and announces the marriage of the Lamb. Then John sees heaven open and a white horse on which was sitting Jesus, the Word of God, whose eyes are a flame of fire and on His head are many diadems. Jesus returns with the heavenly army to strike the nations over which He will rule as King of kings and Lord of lords. The beast and the false prophet are thrown into the lake of fire, and the rest are killed with the sword that comes from the mouth of Jesus.

#### Revelation 20 – The Millennial Reign of Jesus Christ

After the angel descended with a chain to bind the devil for a thousand years, Jesus reigns with the resurrected saints for a thousand years. At the conclusion of the thousand years, Satan will be released from prison and will deceive the nations to gather them for war against the saints and the beloved city. Afterwards, the devil is thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone and the dead are raised to stand before the Great White Throne for judgment. Death and Hades are thrown into the lake of fire, and anyone whose name is not found in the book of life.

#### Revelation 21 – The New Heaven and New Earth

After the Great White Throne Judgment, John's attention turns to the new heaven and the new earth which appear after the first earth has passed away. One of the seven angels shows John the new Jerusalem, the bride of the Lamb. The holy city, Jerusalem, comes down out of heaven from God.

#### Revelation 22 – Epilogue

The angel shows John a river of the water of life coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, and the tree of Life on either side of the river, bearing twelve fruits. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. There is no longer a curse or night, for the Lord God illumines them. Jesus testifies that He is coming quickly. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

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### **STUDY QUESTIONS:**

**Rev. 20:1** Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. <sup>2</sup> And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; <sup>3</sup> and he threw him into the abyss, and shut *it* and sealed *it* over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.

1. **What is the angel that John sees coming down from heaven holding? (20:1)**
2. **Of what does he lay hold? How is it described? (20:2)**
3. **For how long is Satan bound? (20:2) What is this period often called?**
4. **Where is Satan thrown? Why is he bound for a thousand years? (20:3)**
5. **What will happen to Satan after the thousand years are completed? (20:3)**
6. **What do you learn about God from Rev. 20:1-3? How could this truth transform your life?**

**Rev. 20:4** Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I *saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. <sup>5</sup> The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. <sup>6</sup> Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

1. **Who is sitting on the thrones? What is given to them? (20:4)**
2. **Who comes to life and reigns with Christ for a thousand years? (20:4)**
3. **Who does not come to life until the thousand years are completed? What is called the first resurrection? (20:5)**
4. **Who is considered blessed and holy? What has no power over them? (20:6)**
5. **What will they be? How long will they reign with Jesus? (20:6)**
6. **What do you learn about God from Rev. 20:4-6? How could this truth transform your life?**

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**Rev. 20:7** When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, <sup>8</sup> and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. <sup>9</sup> And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. <sup>10</sup> And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

1. **What happens to Satan when the thousand years are completed? What will he do? (20:7-8)**
2. **What is Gog and Magog? (20:8) What does Ezekiel 38:2 say about Gog and Magog?**
3. **Who/what do they surround on the broad plain of the earth? What comes down from heaven to devour them (20:9)**
4. **Who is thrown in the lake of fire and brimstone? Who is also there? (20:10)**
5. **How often will the devil, the beast, and the false prophet be tormented? How long? (20:10)**
6. **What do you learn about God from Rev. 20:7-10? How could this truth transform your life?**

**Rev. 20:11** Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. <sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. <sup>13</sup> And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one *of them* according to their deeds. <sup>14</sup> Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. <sup>15</sup> And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

1. **Describe what John sees? What flees away and no place was found for them? (20:11)**
2. **Who is standing before the throne? What were open? (20:12) What do the books contain?**
3. **What does the sea give up? What do death and Hades give up? How are they judged? (20:13)**
4. **What is thrown into the lake of fire? What is the second death? (20:14)**
5. **What happens to anyone whose name is not written in the book of life? (20:15)**
6. **What do you learn about God from Rev. 20:11-15? How could this truth transform your life?**

**Write a prayer response to Revelation 20.**