

Lesson 17 – Revelation 21

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.

*(A)=Application (C)=Context (D)=Difficult (DOC)=Doctrine (O)=Opinion (PER)=Personal (PR)=Principle (P)=Prophecy

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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. 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer *any* sea. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, ⁴ and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.”

1. **Why does John see a new heaven and a new earth? (21:1)**
2. **Describe the new Jerusalem? How has she been made ready? (21:2)**
3. **What does a loud voice from the throne say? Who will be among them? (21:3)**
4. **Who will wipe away every tear from their eyes? (21:4)**
5. **What will there no longer be? What has passed away? (21:4)**
6. **What do you learn about God from Rev. 21:1-4? How could this truth transform your life?**

Rev. 21:5 And He who sits on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” And He said, “Write, for these words are faithful and true.” ⁶ Then He said to me, “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. ⁷ “He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. ⁸ “But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part *will be* in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

1. **What is He who sits on the throne making new? Why does He say to write? (21:5)**
2. **Who says, “It is done”? How does He describe Himself? What will He give to the one who thirsts? (21:6)**
3. **What is promised to the one who overcomes ? (21:7)**
4. **Whose part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone? (21:8)**
5. **What is the second death? (21:8)**
6. **What do you learn about God from Rev. 21:5-8? How could this truth transform your life?**

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Rev. 21:9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, “Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.”

10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, **11** having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper. **12** It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names *were* written on them, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. **13** *There were* three gates on the east and three gates on the north and three gates on the south and three gates on the west. **14** And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them *were* the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

1. Who does one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls say that he will show to John? (21:9)
2. To where does the angel carry John? What does he show John? From where does it come? (21:10)
3. Describe glory and brilliance of the holy city, Jerusalem. (21:11)
4. What did Jerusalem have? How many gates does the wall have? What is written on them? (21:12)
5. Describe the location of the twelve gates around Jerusalem. Describe the foundation stones. What is written on them? (21:13-14)
6. What do you learn about God from Rev. 21:9-14? How could this truth transform your life?

Rev. 21:15 The one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city, and its gates and its wall. **16** The city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal. **17** And he measured its wall, seventy-two yards, *according to* human measurements, which are *also* angelic *measurements*. **18** The material of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. **19** The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; **20** the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. **21** And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

1. Why does the one who spoke with John have a gold measuring rod? (21:15)
2. Describe the measurements of the city. (21:16-17)
3. What is the material of the wall? The city? (21:18)
4. Describe the foundation stones. (21:19-20)
5. What is each one of the gates? What is the street of the city? (21:21)

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6. What do you learn about God from Rev. 21:15-21? How could this truth transform your life?

Rev. 21:22 I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. **23** And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp *is* the Lamb. **24** The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. **25** In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; **26** and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; **27** and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

- 1. Why does John not see a temple in it? (21:22)**
- 2. Why does the city have no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it? (21:23)**
- 3. With what light will the nations walk? What will the kings bring into it? (21:24)**
- 4. How often will there be night and its gates closed? (21:25)**
- 5. What will they bring into it? What shall never come into it? Who may come into it? (21:26-27)**
- 6. What do you learn about God from Rev. 21:22-27? How could this truth transform your life?**

Write a prayer response to Revelation 21.