

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

The goal of this Bible Class is to give the students a working knowledge of the book of Revelation. It is an overview of the book of Revelation, preparing the students for the worship of our Savior. The various lessons are to be viewed by the teacher as thematic suggestions to help with preparation. While the lessons are not intended to be read to the class word for word, the main ideas should be the substance of what is taught. In preparation for the class the teacher should consider reading through the whole curriculum before beginning the class, as well as the whole book of Revelation several times. The lessons are largely based on, *A Brief Readers Guide to Revelation*, (Jordan, James B., Niceville, FL, Transfiguration Press, 1999), and should be read by the teacher if possible. This will provide the instructor with a broad and comprehensive understanding the book as it is being taught. At the end of the course, the class will be concluded with a Bible Knowledge Evaluation. The instructor should be sure to review the material sufficiently that the students are able to correctly answer the questions on the evaluation at the end of the course.

It is important that the instructor be not only knowledgeable about the material, but also able to teach it with enthusiasm and conviction. Students best learn from teachers that are themselves excited about the scriptures. The use of maps, diagrams, white boards etc. is extremely helpful. Some of these have been provided in the curriculum. It is suggested that the class be conducted in an interactive manner. This can be accomplished by having them read short portions of the scripture texts, asking them questions, and wholeheartedly encouraging them to ask questions. All students should be encouraged to bring a Bible to class.

The inclusion of the Westminster Shorter Catechism as part of the curriculum is designed to help the students acquire a broad understanding of Christian doctrine along with the specific Bible teaching. The Elders of the church will coordinate the specific questions and answers to be used in the class.

It will become evident to the teacher that this course curriculum, while not dealing with every verse and concept in the book of Revelation, is comprehensive and deeply theological. It is designed to help the students understand the book of Revelation in its wider biblical context, with emphasis on its place in the redemptive history of God's covenant people. The students will be confronted with and asked to understand and remember fairly difficult concepts. It should be remembered that children are able to comprehend much more than we often give them credit for. While this class will be a challenge for both the teacher and the students, the rewards for the efforts of those in the class will be surprising and exciting.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson One: A Historical Introduction

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

I. The book of Revelation – A fitting conclusion to the Bible

The book of Revelation is not only the last book of the Bible, but also is the conclusion of the story that God is writing about His relationship with His people.

The Bible begins in Genesis with the story of the creation of all things, including Adam and his bride. The Bible ends in Revelation with the new heavens and earth, with the Bride of Christ (21:1-2). Genesis begins in a garden with rivers flowing out into the world and special trees in the midst of it (i.e. the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil). Revelation ends with the city of God, a new and greater Jerusalem descending out of heaven to the earth (21:8f), with a pure river of water of life flowing from it and the Tree of life in the middle of it (2:7; 22:2, 14). Genesis begins with the commandment of Adam to take dominion. Revelation ends with Christ, the Greater Adam, taking dominion over the earth (1:6; 19:1-16; 21:2). In Genesis, Adam and Eve sin and are cursed. In Revelation, the curse is removed (22:3). In Genesis, the garden is guarded by angels to keep men from eating of the Tree of Life. In Revelation, men are given access again to the Tree of Life. In Genesis the nations are judged and scattered. In Revelation the nations are judged, healed and saved (2:26; 5:9; 7:9; 10:11; 11:9; 14:6; 15:4; 19:15; 20:3, 8; 21:24; 22:2).

Genesis	Revelation
Creation of all things, including Adam and his bride	New heavens and earth, with the Bride of Christ (Church) coming down (21:8f)
Garden with rivers flowing out into the world, and special trees in the midst of it (i.e. the Tree of Life and the Knowledge of Good and Evil)	City of God, with a pure river of water of life flowing from it and the Tree of life in the middle of it (2:7; 22:2, 14)
Adam commanded to take dominion, and given Eve as his bride	Christ, the Greater Adam, takes dominion over the earth, and marries His Bride the Church (1:6; 19:1-16; 21:2)
Adam and Eve sin and are cursed	The curse is removed (22:3)
Garden is guarded by angels to keep men from eating of the Tree of Life	Men are given access again to the Tree of Life.
The nations are judged and scattered	Nations are judged, healed and saved (2:26; 5:9; 7:9; 10:11; 11:9; 14:6; 15:4; 19:15; 20:3, 8; 21:24; 22:2)

II. The historical context of Revelation

After the judgment and scattering of the 70 nations listed in Genesis 10, God raised up Abraham as the head of the covenant people of God. Through God's covenant people the nations would be blessed. Yahweh took for Himself Israel as His Bride by covenant. This special covenant relationship was to be not only the basis for their own blessing, but also for the whole world. By remaining faithful to Yahweh, keeping His law and trusting in Him alone for salvation (both individually and as a nation), the nations would come to be blessed as they came to Yahweh in faith. But God's people were not faithful witnesses to the nations of who God is and how men are properly related to Him.

Eventually, because of Israel's unfaithfulness, she was exiled from the Promised Land and came under the care of the nations. With the promise of restoration to the land came the promise that Yahweh would return to His people and draw the nations to Himself to worship Him with the Jews. This was not fulfilled until the coming of Jesus the Messiah.

When Jesus began His ministry, He proclaimed that the Kingdom of heaven was coming soon. To the Pharisees of His day, this meant that the Messiah would come to Jerusalem, cast off the Roman domination of the Promised land, and rule the nations from His throne in Jerusalem. They thought that if they were strictly obedient to the Law of Moses that Yahweh would return to them. But in their zeal to keep their law, they set aside the law by making up their own traditions that caused them not only disobey the law, but to miss their whole mission in the world, to witness to the nations. Their zeal to keep the law (which they held as a point of pride), placed great importance on the temple, their law keeping (so called) and rejection of the Gentiles as those unfit for the Kingdom of God. The religious leaders of the day, the elders, the Priests, scribes and Sadducees had largely compromised the faith.

What Jesus proclaimed was something different. Jesus came to save sinners (e.g. tax collectors, harlots, Gentiles), the likes of which the Pharisees wanted nothing to do with. The goodnews that He declared was that both Jews and Gentiles had equal access to the Kingdom of God by faith. Gentiles did not need to become Jews in order to be full members of the Church of God. By faith they were made members of the kingdom of God. Sinners of every kind were welcome in the Kingdom of God by faith.

Because this was not what the Jews were expecting, they rejected both Jesus and His message. Jesus knew that this was what would happen and told the disciples that after He was killed by the Jews and resurrected from the dead (Lk. 9:22; 18:31-33), He would come in judgment against the Jews and destroy the temple. He told them that it would happen to that "generation."

Turn to Matt. 23, where Jesus pronounces woes against the religious leaders, and declared that judgment would come upon them, in that generation (v. 36). In Matt. 24 (cf. Mk. 13; Lk. 21) Jesus told His disciples that the temple would be destroyed. When the disciples asked about this, Jesus explained what would happen, warning them not to be confused and to get out of Jerusalem before it happens. They would know in advance because Jesus gave them signs of the end (Matt. 24:32-34). We know from history (cf. Josephus) that Christians saw what was happening just before the destruction of Jerusalem and fled the city, as Jesus commanded them to do.

The book of Revelation was written just before the Lord Jesus came in judgment against Jerusalem in 70 AD. Rev. 1:1 tells us that it is “the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants (the leaders of the Christian church) – things which must shortly take place.” Rev. 1:3 tells us that “...the time is near.” Rev. 22:20 says, “Surely I am coming quickly.” Thus, the events described in the book of revelation happen during the period between the beginning of the Church at Pentecost and the destruction of Jerusalem. It is basically the same period of time covered in the book of Acts and the Epistles, with a focus on the final events of that period. Thus, we need to understand Revelation in terms of what the rest of the New Testament writings have to say.

III. The purpose of Revelation

Revelation was written to the early Church (and to us) to call them to faithfulness in the midst of tribulation. Throughout the book of Acts the enemy of God’s people (the Christian church) is not primarily the Romans, but the Jews and the Judaizers, called the Circumcision. In Acts we regularly see the Romans defending the Church, while the Circumcision persecutes the Church. Revelation is not concerned with the war between the Jews and the Romans, which later resulted in the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem. Rather, Revelation is concerned with evangelism, faithfulness, martyrdom and the vindication of the saints who stand firm. Revelation was written to help the Church remain faithful during this difficult time before God judges the Circumcision by destroying Jerusalem and the Temple. There was a great temptation to reject the faith because of the persecutions they experienced once they became Christians. When Jesus came to judge Jerusalem for their rejection of Christ, the gospel and the Holy Spirit – those who trusted in him would be proven to have been right in the eyes of the world, especially the Jews.

Most Christians today believe that the prophecies of Revelation are all still future for us. These Futurists do not believe that the book refers to the destruction of Jerusalem, or about anything in the historic past. But this view cannot be true, simply because, as we have seen, it is addressed to people who would in a short time experience the things written in the book. The Futurist approach to Revelation believes that the much of the figurative and symbolic language in the book should

be understood literally (e.g. sun and moon being darkened). This approach almost completely ignores the biblical symbolism of the Old Testament as a means of understanding the book of Revelation. The result is that to most people Revelation is a mystery. But when we understand and apply both the biblical and historic context in which Revelation is written, we are able to understand what Christ is communicating to the churches.

Because it describes struggles that the church would experience not only before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, but also throughout the history of the church, Revelation is important for us as well. Revelation calls us to faithfulness to Jesus. It helps us to trust the Lord more fully when we struggle with the world around us. It tells us that if we avoid compromise with the world, we will be overcomers when Christ comes in history to judge at various times. It helps us to understand the importance of worship in the life of the Church. It teaches us that God is in control of all that happens in history, and causes us to keep faith with Him.

Next week we will take a broad look at the book to understand what its message is.

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 1-3. How many churches does Christ address?

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson One: A Historical Introduction

I. The book of Revelation – A fitting conclusion to the Bible

Genesis	Revelation
Creation of all things, including Adam and his bride	New heavens and earth, with the Bride of Christ (Church) coming down (21:8f)
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Adam commanded to take dominion, and given Eve as his bride	Christ, the Greater Adam, takes dominion over the earth, and marries His Bride the Church (1:6; 19:1-16; 21:2)
Adam and Eve sin and are cursed	The curse is removed (22:3)
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II. The historical context of Revelation

Rev. 1:1 “The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants (the leaders of the Christian church) – things which must shortly take place.” Rev. 22:20 says, “Surely I am coming quickly.” Thus, the events described in the book of revelation happen during the period between the beginning of the Church at Pentecost and the destruction of Jerusalem. Revelation was written in the late 60’s AD.

IV. The purpose of Revelation

Revelation is written to the early Church (and to us) to call them to faithfulness in the midst of tribulation.

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 1-3. How many churches does Christ address?

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Two: A Theological Introduction

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

❖ Review

The book of Revelation was written to the Church (specifically addressed to local churches in Asia, 1:4) to warn them to be faithful during the time of tribulation and persecution that they were suffering at the hands of the Circumcision before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. [From last week's homework assignment, how many churches did Christ address in Revelation 2-3? Answer: Seven] It was not written to Christians thousands of years in the future, but to people in the generation that followed the resurrection and ascension of Jesus. Because Christians throughout history will suffer tribulation and persecution, the book of Revelation is applicable to all Christians in all times. Revelation was written shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

New Heavens and New Earth

As we saw last week, Revelation corresponds to the book of Genesis. There were several similarities between the creation of Genesis and the new creation of Revelation. Revelation reveals that, by the work of Christ, the first heaven and earth was being replaced by a new heaven and a new earth (21:1). Certainly the old creation did not pass away in the sense that it no longer exists, for we still live on the original earth that was created in Genesis 1-2. What it means for the first heaven and earth to pass away is that it was judged in such a way that it will forever operate differently.

The way the Old Creation operated and was ruled was to be replaced by a new way for the creation to operate and be ruled. The Bible tells us that the Old Creation was supervised by angels, while the New Creation is supervised by redeemed humanity. Throughout Revelation angels are portrayed as bringing final judgments on the creation. In Genesis 3:24 we learn that when the Lord God drove Adam out of the Garden of Eden, He placed cherubim (angels) at the gate of the garden with a flaming sword which turned every way to guard the way to the Tree of Life. In the book of Revelation the angels bring judgments on the first creation so that men are again given access to the Tree of Life. Throughout the Old Creation men are considered immature, like children. Angels (the word meaning "messengers") were our tutors/teachers. Hebrews 2:2, Acts 7:53 and Galatians 3:19 tell us that the law-word of God came to us through angels.

Hebrews 2:2

For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward,

Acts 7:51-53

“*You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers *did*, so *do* you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept *it*.”*

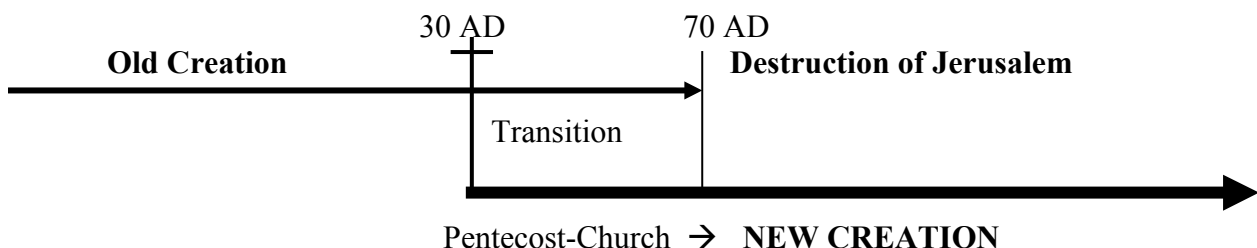
Gal. 3:19

What purpose then *does the law serve*? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was appointed through angels* by the hand of a mediator.

Jesus was revealed as the “Angel of the Lord” throughout the Old Testament, the greatest angel, along with His spirit angels, guided humanity toward maturity. In the Old Testament, Jesus is primarily revealed as “angel” (messenger) of Yahweh. Once He became a man, Jesus was revealed as the Second Adam. By His death, resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Father, Jesus rules not only the Old Creation, but also the angels. And because we are in Him, because we are members of His body, the Church, we rule with Him. 1 Cor. 6:3 tells us that we are no longer tutored by or judged by angels. Rather, we shall judge angels.

What this means for Revelation is that since angels are bringing judgments in Revelation, they must be judging the world that they supervised, the Old Creation. Because they had been faithful messengers for 4000 years, and the Old Creation (particularly the Jews) had not grown to maturity and faith, the Lord sent them to judge the Old Creation. The result of this judgment would be the establishment of the New Heavens and New Earth, ruled by Christ and the redeemed humanity.

The New Creation began at Pentecost, when the ascended and enthroned Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to enable us to disciple the nations, and in that sense to rule the world. The Old Creation did not end at that time, however, because God gave the Jews and God-fearing Gentiles a period of time to make the transfer from the Old Creation into the New Creation. They would be given time to come to faith in Jesus and live as new creatures before the end of the Old Creation. According to Matthew 23:34-38, all the sins and crimes of the Old Creation were to be rolled up and judged with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. This was 40 years after Pentecost.



God did not judge the Old Creation simply for rejecting Jesus. Jesus said that blasphemy (rejection of) against Him would be forgiven, but not blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Lk. 12:10; Acts 7:51; 28:25-27). Many Jews and God-fearing Gentiles did convert after the Spirit came, but for those who did not, the judgment came upon them to the uttermost (1 Thes. 2:14-16).

Matthew 24 is a passage where Jesus warns the disciples about the end of the Old Creation and the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem. One of the signs of the end was that the “gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come” (v. 14). The New Testament tells us that this indeed happened before the destruction of Jerusalem. Paul wrote to the Christians in Colossae of the gospel “which has come to you, as it has also in all the world...” (Col. 1:5-6), and exhorted them to not depart from the “the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven” (Col. 1:23). Also, to the saints in Rome Paul wrote that their faith was being “proclaimed throughout the whole world” (Rom. 1:8), and that the Gospel preachers had “gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world” (Rom. 10:18). A short time before the end of the Old Creation, Paul was accused by the Jews of causing dissention among them throughout the world because of his preaching of the gospel (Acts 17:6; 24:5). Even Gentile idolaters accused Paul of the turning people away from their idolatry throughout the world by his preaching (Acts 19:26-27).

Indeed the gospel had gone out into the entire world before the end of the Old Creation, so that when the judgment came, those who had heard the gospel of salvation would be left without excuse. They would know that Jesus was indeed the true and greatest prophet of God, and that He had truly ascended to heaven and became the King of king and Lord of lords. The final destruction of the Old Creation would be the public declaration that Jesus is who He said He was. Repeatedly throughout His ministry, Jesus warned that the destruction was going to come soon on the unbelieving Jews, and on the whole world. Occasionally Jesus told His disciples that He would be raised from the dead after He was killed by the Jews, but not nearly as often. The resurrection was a more private vindication of who He was and what He did, but no one saw it take place and Jesus only appeared to a few disciples. The destruction of the enemy city, Jerusalem, was His public proof of who He is. Not only so, it would also be the public declaration that those who believed in Jesus were truly members of the New Creation. They were justified before the world for their faith in Christ.

Once the Old Creation is judged, the New Heavens and New Earth would be revealed through the Church. Those who remain faithful during the persecution and suffering be seated with Christ at the marriage feast of the Lamb, and will

reign with Him over the New Creation. Through faithful witness, the nations will be converted and brought into the church. The Tree of Life will be given to all who put their faith in Christ.

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 1-3.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Two: A Theological Introduction

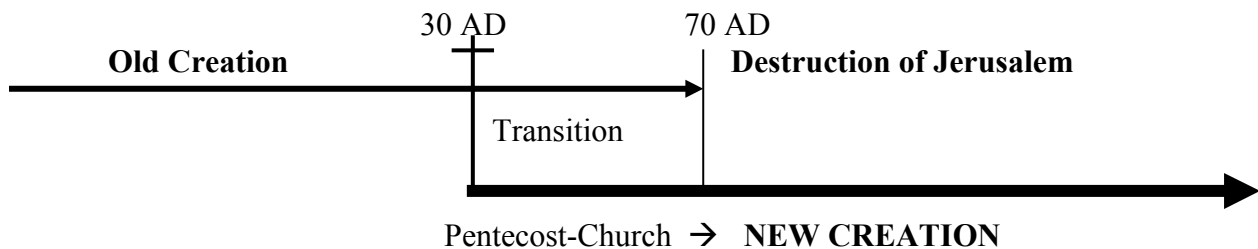
New Heavens and New Earth

Angels/“Messengers” - Old Creation tutors
Hebrews 2:2, Acts 7:53 and Galatians 3:19

New Heavens and New Earth, ruled by Christ and the redeemed humanity
1 Cor. 6:3

The New Creation began at Pentecost

Blasphemy (rejection) of the Holy Spirit – Lk. 12:10; Acts 7:51; 28:25-27



Gospel of the Kingdom preached to all the world – Before the end!
Matt. 24:14; Col. 1:5-6, 23; Rom. 1:8; 10:18; Acts 17:6; 24:5; 19:26-27

The destruction of Jerusalem – Public Vindication of Jesus and the Church

The Church in the New Creation

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 1-3.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Three: Jesus Descends to Earth to Meet With John Ch. 1

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

❖ Review

The book of Revelation was written to the early Church (and to us) to call them to faithfulness in the midst of tribulation and persecution. It describes the process of the passing away of the Old Creation and the coming of the New Creation. The Old Creation passed away with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 AD. The New Creation began on the day of Pentecost with the coming of the Spirit to the Church. Revelation is a warning to the Churches during the period between Pentecost and 70 AD to remain faithful to Jesus, even though they faced terrible persecution and suffering. The primary enemy of the Church was the “Circumcision” (i.e. Jews throughout the world, and the Judaizers). Revelation was written not long before 70 AD.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

The title of the book is given to us in the first words of the book, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:1); not the “Revelation of S. John the Divine” (as the translators of the King James version entitled it). The word “Revelation” in Greek is *apokalypsis*, which means “to unveil” or “to reveal.” You may have heard the word apocalypse before. It is often used to with reference to end times or very dramatic events. It is also used to describe a type of biblical literature that reveals God’s truth in a symbolic pictorial way (e.g. Daniel, Ezekiel and Zechariah). These Old Testament books use similar language and symbols, which make them important for our understanding of Revelation.

Revelation 1:1 tells us that it was given to Jesus by God (the Father) to pass on to His servant/slave John the Apostle. John is said to be the slave (literally in Greek) of Jesus, meaning that he was completely under the dominion and authority of Jesus. John was a slave by choice. As the Beloved disciple of Jesus (Jn. 13:23; 20:2; 21:7, 20), made himself a slave to serve Jesus. This service included suffering and exile on the Island of Patmos (Rev. 1:9), as well as bearing witness to Jesus Christ and the word of God (Rev. 1:2, 9). John wrote Revelation to the seven Churches of Asia (Rev. 1:4, 11) to reveal to them what he saw in the visions contained in the book (Rev. 1:11).

The fulfillment of the Revelation would “shortly take place” (Rev. 1:1, 3; 22:10). What would be revealed is given to us in vv. 5-8: (1) Jesus is the ruler over the kings of the earth, who loves us (Christians), having washed us from our sins with His blood. (2) He has made us kings and priests for His glory and dominion

forever and ever. It is the revelation that Jesus is “coming with clouds, and every eye will see (perceive, understand) Him,” including the Jews who killed Him and all the people of the earth (Rev. 1:7). Often in the Bible, “coming with (or in the) clouds” does not refer to a coming to earth, but to the Father. Daniel 7:13 says:

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

This seems also to be the sense of Matt. 24:30; 25:31; Mk. 13:26; 14:62; Lk. 21:27. The Kingdom of heaven began with the ascension of Jesus to the right hand of the Father, establishing the beginning of the New heavens and earth. As the Son of God, 1:8 tells us that Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega (the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet), the beginning and end of all things. He is the one who created the Old Creation, and the One who brings to pass the New Creation. He is the One who is, who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

The Lord’s Day

John tells us that he was “in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day.” The Lord’s Day refers to Sunday, the day in which the Church is gathered by the Spirit before God in weekly worship. It is the Day of the Lord, and, as with the Old Testament, the Lord draws near to His people with salvation and judgment. Jesus meets with His people to assure us of His love and forgiveness, proclaim His word and share a peace meal with us. When He draws near and sees that His people are being unfaithful, it is a time where they are called upon to repent and be faithful to Him. It is a time when the Church calls out to Jesus about Her enemies, calling upon Him to judge those who are persecuting and troubling them. The day of the Lord is the event where the Church calls upon Jesus to save and to judge for the sake of His people.

The whole book of Revelation takes place in a worship service. There is a call to worship (Ch. 1), an examination of sins (Ch. 2-3), a declaration of the Kingdom and forgiveness (Ch. 4-5), the reading of the Scripture (the book and trumpets), preaching based on the reading (Ch. 10), a sharing of the sacrament (the bowls and the Marriage Supper), and a call to go forth and take the gospel out (the River of, and the call of the Spirit and Bride, Ch. 22). [Note the outline provided.] Thus, Revelation is concerned with Christian warfare waged in the context of worship. It is the prayers and the faithfulness of the saints before God’s eye that set in motion the events in the book. The same is true for us today. As we worship the Lord in the Spirit, He makes things happen in the world around us, bringing His judgments and salvation to the world.

1. Jesus descends to earth to meet with John (Ch. 1)
2. The Seven Churches (Ch. 2-3)
3. Jesus ascends to heaven (Ch. 4-5)
4. The Seven Seals (Ch. 6-8)
5. The Seven Trumpets (Ch. 8-11)
6. The Church ascends to heaven (Ch. 11-15)
7. The seven Bowls (Ch. 16-19)
8. The Church descends to earth (Ch. 20-22)

Jesus appears in Revelation 1:12-20. He is the Standard by which the churches are measured, and by which Babylon and the Beast will also be measured. He is described as having seven characteristics in vv. 14-16. These seven characteristics will be used to measure the seven churches, and also provides a chiastic outline of the book of Revelation as a whole:

Head (v. 14) – Ch. 1 – Jesus

Eyes (v. 14) – Ch. 2-3 – evaluate Churches

Feet (v. 15) – Ch. 4-5 – fit to go to the Throne

Voice (v. 15) – Ch. 6-7 – the book

Hand (v. 16) – Ch. 8-15 – Jesus upholds the Church in tribulation

Mouth (v. 16) – Ch. 16-19 – judges enemies

Face-Sun (v. 16) – Ch. 20-22 – glorification of the Church

The way John describes the appearance of Jesus is clearly symbolic, combining many images found in the Old Testament. Interestingly there are only two of the mysterious elements that Jesus interprets for John: the seven stars in His right hand, and the seven golden lampstands that Jesus stood in the midst of (1:20). Jesus revealed to John that these represented the seven churches, each of which would receive a letter in the next section.

John's reaction when he saw this strange looking Jesus was to fall at His feet as dead (Rev. 1:17). He fainted and was unconscious, most probably out of fear. Faced with an image of Christ, the terrible Judge, it is understandable that John would feel fearful and undone (a common biblical response to such a situation, cf. Dan. 8:18; 10:8-10, 12, 17-19; Hab. 3:16; Is. 6:1-6). Sinful men should feel fearful in the presence of the holy God. But when God pronounce forgiveness to us, we should rise up in full assurance of God love and favor. Jesus laid his hand on John, and told him not to be afraid because Jesus is the first and last; the one who lives, and was dead, but is now alive forever more. Because of Christ's death for us we have forgiveness of sins. Because of Christ's resurrection we have newness of life in him forevermore. AMEN ("so be it")!

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 1-3.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Three: Jesus Descends to Earth to Meet With John Ch. 1

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Coming with the clouds

Dan. 7:13; Matt. 24:30; 25:31; Mk. 13:26; 14:62; Lk. 21:27

The Lord's Day

1. Jesus descends to earth to meet with John (Ch. 1)
2. The Seven Churches (Ch. 2-3)
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6. The Church ascends to heaven (Ch. 11-15)
7. The seven Bowls (Ch. 16-19)
8. The Church descends to earth (Ch. 20-22)

Head (v. 14) – Ch. 1 – Jesus

Eyes (v. 14) – Ch. 2-3 – evaluate Churches

Feet (v. 15) – Ch. 4-5 – fit to go to the Throne

Voice (v. 15) – Ch. 6-7 – the book

Hand (v. 16) – Ch. 8-15 – Jesus upholds the Church in tribulation

Mouth (v. 16) – Ch. 16-19 – judges enemies

Face-Sun (v. 16) – Ch. 20-22 – glorification of the Church

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 1-3.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Four: Introduction to the Letters to the Seven Churches

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

❖ Review

The book of Revelation is “the Revelation of Jesus Christ” to the churches. It was written to the early Church (and to us) to call them to faithfulness in the midst of tribulation and persecution. It describes the process of the passing away of the Old Creation and the coming of the New Creation. The Old Creation passed away with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 AD. The New Creation began on the day of Pentecost with the coming of the Spirit to the Church. Revelation is a warning to the Churches during the period between Pentecost and 70 AD to remain faithful to Jesus, even though they faced terrible persecution and suffering. The primary enemy of the Church was the “Circumcision” (i.e. Jews throughout the world, and the Judaizers). Revelation was written not long before 70 AD and the destruction of Christ’s primary enemies with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. When this happens, both Jesus and the Church would be vindicated or proven right before the world. Jesus is indeed the Messiah, the King of all the kings, and His kingdom would fill the world.

In Ch. 1, John was given a vision of Jesus, the absolute ruler of the entire world. This initial vision ends with the command to, “Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this” (1:19). The command is repeated at the beginning of each of the letters to the Churches: “To the angel (lit. “messenger” or pastor) of the church of ___ write...” At the end of each of the letters to the churches there is an invitation for those who have ears of understanding to listen to “what the Spirit says to the churches.”

It is likely that the whole book (including the letters to the churches) was circulated among all the churches as an encouragement and warning to all. Thus, the entire Church is addressed in each of the letters, i.e. the group of seven letters is a general letter to all of the churches (throughout church history). This general letter precedes the rest of the book because John’s interest is not predicting events, but rather, the promoting faithfulness in light of Jesus’ coming in judgment (i.e. Day of the Lord) to reward the faithful and destroy the wicked (both in the Church and those outside, namely, the Circumcision and the Gentiles). Judgment begins in the household of faith, and so we see that He is coming with judgment in 2:5, 16, 25; 3:3, 11. The overall message to all the churches is that faithfulness requires that you exercise discipline in the church, and remove the unfaithful from among you. Failure to do so means that Jesus will be forced to do it in His terrible judgments, similar to what is seen in the rest of the book.

As we saw last week, Jesus is revealed as the one is the standard of measurement for the faithful and the unfaithful, the Church and the rest of the world (i.e. Circumcision and Gentiles). He stands among the seven golden lampstands (1:12) to see, evaluate and make judgments about the Church (1:11). His eyes are like a flame of fire (1:14; 2:18), able to see and discern everything enabling Him to make just judgments. Throughout these letters, Jesus talks about and evaluates their works, which refer to their overall conduct in life. He discerns between what they say and think about themselves, and how they live their lives.

Jesus, the faithful and victorious witness in the world, invites the Church to share in His victory in the world. The one who offers this victory is the One who was slain for His faithful witness, but has conquered death, and as the great overcomer is now seated on God's throne at the right hand of the Father. The time of trial and great tribulation was about to begin. But even greater reward was reserved and promised for those who would prove to be overcomers with Him.

An outline is provide on the handout that demonstrates three important things:

- 1) The symbols used for the seven churches are taken from seven periods of Old Creation History.
- 2) The seven letters are arranged chiastically to demonstrate that if the churches do not remain faithful, and repent if necessary they will come under judgments. In the chiastic center we see that if Pergamum does not repent of her evils, she will become like Thyatira; and if she does not deal with the wicked in her midst, she will become like Sardis. Smyrna and Philadelphia are both faithful. Ephesus and Laodicea have both fallen into laxity/laziness in the faith.
- 3) The seven letters anticipate Revelation as a whole.
 - The enemy of the seven churches are the Nicolaitans (lit. "people-conquerors," Circumcision), the false prophets pictured in Ephesus (2:6).
 - The Circumcision of Smyrna are the focus in Rev. 6-12
 - The Beast & False Prophet (Balaam & Balak) are in Rev. 13 and Pergamum
 - The Harlot Jezebel is in Thyatira, Rev. 17
 - The Judgment of Jerusalem (Rev. 18) is threatened against Sardis
 - The conquering army of saints (Rev. 19) is pictured in Philadelphia
 - The choice to enter the New Jerusalem of Rev. 21 is set before Laodicea

Ephesus (2:1-7)

- Old Creation history, Eden – 2:7 Tree of Life
- The enemy of the seven churches are the Nicolaitans (lit. “people-conquerors,” i.e. Circumcision), the false prophets pictured in Ephesus (2:6).
- Fallen into laxity in love

Smyrna (2:8-11)

- Old Creation history, Joseph – 2:10 Prison, tested & Crown
- The Jews-Judaizers of Smyrna are the focus in Rev. 6-12
- Faithful but small and persecuted

Pergamum/Pergamos (2:12-17)

- Old Creation history, Wilderness – 2:14 Balaam & Balak
- The Beast & False Prophet (Balaam & Balak) are in Rev. 13 and Pergamum
- A few wicked people need to be kicked out of the church

Thyatira (2:18-29)

- Old Creation history, Kingdom – 2:20 Jezebel
- The Harlot Jezebel is in Thyatira, Rev. 17
- The wicked are about as strong as the righteous – full war is needed

Sardis (3:1-6)

- Old Creation history, Judgment and Exile – 3:2 Judgment is coming
- The Judgment of Jerusalem (Rev. 18) is threatened against Sardis
- The wicked outnumber the righteous in the church

Philadelphia (3:7-13)

- Old Creation history, Restoration – 3:7
- The conquering army of saints (Rev. 19) is pictured in Philadelphia
- Faithful, powerful and effective

Laodicea (3:14-22)

- Old Creation history, Apostasy in Jesus’ Day – 3:16 Greater David, synagogue, new temple
- The choice to enter the New Jerusalem of Rev. 21 is set before Laodicea
- Fallen into doctrinal laxity

For the next two weeks we will look in more detail at the letters to the seven churches. As we read and study these letters, we need to think about which of the churches our is most like, and what insight can we gain for the broader church of Christ in these messages to the churches.

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 2-5.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Four: Introduction to the Letters to the Seven Churches

- 1) The symbols used for the seven churches are taken from seven periods of Old Creation History.
- 2) The seven letters are arranged chiastically to demonstrate that if the churches do not remain faithful and repent if necessary they will come under judgments
- 3) The seven letters anticipate Revelation as a whole.

Ephesus (2:1-7)

- Old Creation history, Eden – 2:7 Tree of Life
- Fallen into laxity in love

Smyrna (2:8-11)

- Old Creation history, Joseph – 2:10 Prison, tested & Crown
- The Jews-Judaizers of Smyrna are the focus in Rev. 6-12
- Faithful but small and persecuted

Pergamum/Pergamos (2:12-17)

- Old Creation history, Wilderness – 2:14 Balaam & Balak
- The Beast & False Prophet (Balaam & Balak) are in Rev. 13 and Pergamum
- A few wicked people need to be kicked out of the church

Thyatira (2:18-29)

- Old Creation history, Kingdom – 2:20 Jezebel
- The Harlot Jezebel is in Thyatira, Rev. 17
- The wicked are about as strong as the righteous – full war is needed

Sardis (3:1-6)

- Old Creation history, Judgment and Exile – 3:2 Judgment is coming
- The Judgment of Jerusalem (Rev. 18) is threatened against Sardis
- The wicked outnumber the righteous in the church

Philadelphia (3:7-13)

- Old Creation history, Restoration – 3:7
- The conquering army of saints (Rev. 19) is pictured in Philadelphia
- Faithful, powerful and effective

Laodicea (3:14-22)

- Old Creation history, Apostasy in Jesus' Day – 3:16
- Fallen into doctrinal laxity

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 2-5.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Five: The Letters to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum Rev. 2-3

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

❖ Review

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|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Jesus descends to earth to meet with John (Ch. 1)2. The Seven Churches (Ch. 2-3)3. Jesus ascends to heaven (Ch. 4-5)4. The Seven Seals (Ch. 6-8)5. The Seven Trumpets (Ch. 8-11)6. The Church ascends to heaven (Ch. 11-15)7. The seven Bowls (Ch. 16-19)8. The Church descends to earth (Ch. 20-22) |
|--|

Revelation was written at about what time? [In the last 60's AD, just before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 AD.] Was it written to describe the end of the world? [Sort of ☺! It was written to help Christians

understand the conclusion/judgment/destruction of the Old Creation and the establishment of the New Creation.] The New Heavens and Earth would be ruled by Jesus Christ and the new humanity, the Church. The suffering believers in the Church needed to be encouraged to not only stand strong in the face of tribulation and persecution, but also to be faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ (the word translated “witness” is *martyr* in the Greek, from which we get our word, martyr). As they suffer persecution and even death for Christ, Jesus will cause their witness to be justified in history so that the Church would grow and prosper in the world.

Today we will begin to study the letters to the Churches. As we learned before, each of the letters is addressed to the “angel” of the church. The word angel means “messenger” in Greek, and in Revelation often refers to angelic beings as we normally think of them. Here, most scholars believe, the angels are human messengers: the pastors of the churches. In all but two of the letters, John is commanded to tell the churches about problems they have (Smyrna & Philadelphia are faithful churches). In all but one of the letters, John is told about things that the Lord commends or praises about the churches (Laodicea does not have anything praiseworthy noted). In all of the letters John is commanded to write instructions to the churches, as well as promises for faithfulness. Finally, all of the letters end by the command to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches and be overcomers of the tribulations they suffer in the world. [See chart with outline]

I. Ephesus – The Loveless Church (2:1-7)

The church in Ephesus (Acts 18; 19; 20; 1 Cor 15:32; 16:8; 1 Tim. 1:3; 2 Tim. 1:18; 4:12) is one that is referred to the most in other parts of the New Testament (Laodicea is the only other church referred to elsewhere, Col. 2:1; 4:13). On Paul's second and third missionary journeys he went to Ephesus (Acts 18:19-21; 19:1-

20:1) and had a very important impact on the city. Ephesus was the most important city in the region in terms of trade, cultural development and political importance in the Roman Empire. Additionally, it was one of the great cities of pagan worship, having the temple to Diana (Acts 19:27-28). The gospel was very well received by many in the synagogue in Ephesus because of the ministry of Paul. But many Jews were hardened against Paul and the Christians and spoke evil of the Christian faith, so Paul focused his ministry on those Jews who did believe and the Gentile converts. He taught the church there for more than two years, and did many miracles (Acts 19:8-12). Apparently there were some apostate Jews that had adopted pagan ideas and were involved in occultism and magical arts that also tried to use the name of Jesus in their strange practices. After God judged these wicked men, the fear of God came upon both Jews and Gentiles and the name of Jesus was praised in Ephesus so that many who practiced magic were converted and the word of God grew in the city (Acts 19:13-15, 18-20). Eventually, Paul and the Christians in Ephesus were severely persecuted because of the impact of the gospel on the production and sales of idols there. There was a riot over the issue that brought such confusion to the city that the Roman government had to step in save the believers that were caught by the mob (Acts 19:21-41). Paul met with the Ephesian Elders to encourage and warn them to remain faithful in their ministry (Acts 20:17-38). Later, Paul wrote the book of Ephesians to help the Christians better understand and live the Christian life. Paul also cared so much for the Ephesian Christians that he left Timothy to help them get established as one of the most important of the early churches (1 Tim. 1:3; 2 Tim. 1:18; 4:12).

With this background in mind, turn to Revelation 2:1-7. Jesus is the one who holds the seven churches (symbolized as stars) in His hand, and who walks in the midst of the seven lampstands to evaluate the churches to bring His judgments against them if they are unfaithful (cf. 1:13, 16). He also sees their good works and promises to bless them if they are faithful.

The letter begins with praise for the Ephesians' good works, their labor, their patience during tribulation, and that they do not tolerate false teaching. The Ephesians did not compromise the faith in any way, being faithful to the apostolic teachings. They were not afraid to discipline evil men, demonstrated in v. 2, "you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars" (cf. Acts 20:28-31).

But the Lord Jesus rebuked the angel/pastor of the Ephesians in vv. 4-6, and called upon them to repent. Their sin was a lack of love. Although they loved the truth and were willing to cast out those who taught what was untrue, they did not love people as they should. Love of truth does not ever justify a failure to love the brethren. Christians are required to be both orthodox and loving, and a lack of either will eventually result in judgment from God. Apparently the Ephesians had

at one time a good combination of both love and biblical doctrine (evidenced in Acts and the epistles of Paul). Jesus called upon the Ephesians to repent and to again do the deeds of love they once did. He called upon them to remember how they once loved each other, and begin again to faithfully love Him by loving others. If they do not repent, v. 5 tells us that Jesus will come quickly to them in judgment. He would remove their lampstand, meaning that their influence would be taken away and would cease to be a church. For their lack of love, the whole congregation was in danger of being excommunicated/disciplined by Christ. If the elders/pastors failed to discipline the church toward love as well as theological purity, Jesus would Himself administer His discipline.

True love for Christ and His people requires a hatred of evil and false teaching, and the Lord commended them for this in v. 6: “You hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans.” The Greek word *nikolaos* means “people-conquerors.” Interestingly, in the letter to Pergamum in 2:14 John writes against those who hold to the doctrines of Balaam, which name in the Hebrew means, “eaters/conquerors of the people.” John uses a play on words, linking the Nicolaitans of Ephesus with the Balaamites of Pergamum (2:15 the two hold to the same teachings). Additionally, the church of Thyatira (2:20-21) permits the false teachings of the prophetess Jezebel, which are the same as those mentioned of the Balaamites (i.e. eating things sacrificed to idols and sexual immorality). Thus, the same error is found in three different churches with three different names (i.e. Nicolaitans, Balaamites and Jezebel). It is only the Ephesians that do not tolerate any form of this error. Jesus says that they hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans.

In conclusion, Jesus said that if they properly hear what He says to them, they will be overcomers. The word used here to “overcome” is the Greek word *nikao*, the same root word for Nicolaitans. Jesus is saying that the church must overcome those who seek to overcome or conquer her. If the Ephesians overcome/conquer the Nicolaitans, they will be given the privilege to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God. Although this promise will be fulfilled at the end of history for all Christians, it is the present and increasing possession of the people of God as they obey the Lord and take dominion over the earth and the enemies of God. Revelation 21:1-7 tells us that as those who overcome will inherit all things in the New heavens and earth. 22:2, 14 tells us that they will eat of the Tree of Life. Where Adam did not overcome the serpent in the Garden of Eden and was restricted from eating the Tree of Life, the Ephesian would be overcomers.

II. Smyrna – The Faithful Persecuted Church (2:8-11)

Smyrna is one of the two faithful churches (Philadelphia is the other church). The letter begins (2:8) by reminding us of the vision John had of Jesus, who is the “Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last” (1:11). This is a name used for God in Is. 44:6 & 48:12 to remind His people that besides Him there is no God. He is Yahweh, the King and redeemer of Israel, Yahweh of hosts. Jesus was dead, and has come to life to provide victory over death for us. Regardless of the persecution suffered by the Christians in Smyrna, they cannot be defeated because Jesus is the resurrected Lord.

The Lord says that He knows that because they are Christians, the believers in Smyrna suffer both tribulation and poverty (although they are rich in Him). He knows their good works and that their enemies are really the congregation of Satan. He knows all about the blasphemy of their persecutors, who say they are Jews and are not. Those who are otherwise known as Nicolaitans, the followers of the false apostles and prophets of Balaam and Jezebel are identified as those who claim to be Jews, but are in reality children of the devil. These are Israelites that have rejected Christ, and thus, have reject the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Still today there are those who call themselves Jews faithful to God, but are in reality a congregation of apostates that are nothing more than a synagogue of Satan. Satan is the Devil, whose name means “Accuser.” The New Testament is filled with examples of Satanic false accusations and persecution of the Church by the Jews (Acts 6:9-15; 13:10; 14:2-5; 17:5-8; 18:6, 12-13; 19:9; 21:27-36; 24:1-9; 25:2-3, 7). The sons of the Devil (the Accuser) would accuse some of the Christians in Smyrna and have them cast into prison for a time. But Jesus, the First and Last, tells them not to fear what they were about to suffer. He was allowing this to happen, to test their faithfulness (v. 10). If they were faithful, Jesus would give them the crown of life. Just as Joseph was tested and cast into prison, later to be exalted and given authority to ruler over Egypt; so too, the Christians of Smyrna would be given a crown of life and dominion after they remained faithful during their persecution. The trials of Christians are not ordained ultimately by Satan, but by God; and the outcome is not the destruction of the Church, but purity and dominion of the Church in the world. The time of testing would cost the lives of many in the church. But if they were faithful even to death, they not be hurt by the second death (cf. Rev. 20:6), which is final destruction on the Day of Judgment.

III. Pergamum – The Compromised Church (2:12-17)

Pergamum is generally an unfaithful church. The letter begins (2:12) by reminding us of the vision John had of Jesus, who has a sharp two-edged sword coming out of His mouth (1:16). Hebrews 4:12 speaks about the two-edged sword: “For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner

of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” By His Word, Jesus discerned the thoughts and intentions of the church of Pergamum. By His Word the nations would be conquered and His enemies subdued (19:11-16).

The Lord tells them that He knows their works, and that where they live is where Satan’s throne is. Jesus knows that in the face of the kind of persecution that someone named Antipas was martyred/killed for the faith, the Christians of Pergamum held fast to the name of Jesus, and did not deny His faith. We have already seen that Satan has been identified as being united to the apostate Jews, who were the greatest enemy of the Church at that time in her history. Pergamum is a city where Satan, again through the Circumcision (as will become evident in the next verses), has his throne and is most powerfully persecuting the Church. The church of Pergamum has not denied the Lord even when faced with the possibility of martyrdom.

But what the Lord does have against them is that they have compromised with the very enemies of the Church: the Nicolaitans, the persecuting Circumcision (vv. 14-15). To avoid persecution they have tolerated the heresies of the enemies in their midst. To make his point, John describes these heretical enemies in their church in terms of an Old Testament enemy, Balaam. When it was discovered that the people of God could not be defeated in warfare (Num. 22-24), the false prophet Balaam suggested to the evil king of Moab, Balak, that the people could be corrupted from within. Thus, Balaam kept teaching Balak (cf. Num. 31:16) to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit sexual immorality (Num. 25:1-13). The church of Pergamum was allowing the same kind of corruption in its midst, compromising with Satan and his followers, the Circumcision. Satan was using false prophets (like Balaam of old) to destroy the Christians of Pergamum by corrupting them since he could not defeat them by open warfare and death. In the Jerusalem Council of Acts, the Church determined that Gentiles did not need to become Jews in order to be Christians, but they did need to avoid sexual immorality and eating food sacrificed to idols (Acts 15:28-29). The Nicolaitans convinced the church in Pergamum that it did not matter how they lived, enticing them to commit sexual immorality and eating food sacrificed to idols.

But Jesus told them that they must repent, or He would come and fight against them as His judgment. If they did repent, he would feed them with hidden manna, as He had done with Israel in the wilderness by placing it in the Ark of the Covenant (cf. 2:17, Ex. 16:33-34; Heb. 9:4). Those who overcome will be given a white stone with a new name written on it that only they knew, demonstrating that they are accepted by the Lord and given a new identity in the New Creation. In Revelation 19:11-16, Jesus is said to have a name written that no one knew except Himself, and He rode out to conquer the nations with the sharp sword that goes out

of His mouth. If the Christians of Pergamum repented and became overcomers, they would be enabled to ride with Christ to conquer the nations.

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 2-5.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Five: The Letters to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum Rev. 2-3

1. Jesus descends to earth to meet with John (Ch. 1)
2. The Seven Churches (Ch. 2-3)
 3. Jesus ascends to heaven (Ch. 4-5)
 4. The Seven Seals (Ch. 6-8)
 5. The Seven Trumpets (Ch. 8-11)
 6. The Church ascends to heaven (Ch. 11-15)
7. The seven Bowls (Ch. 16-19)
8. The Church descends to earth (Ch. 20-22)

I. Ephesus – The Loveless Church (2:1-7)

Acts 18; 19; 20; 1 Cor 15:32; 16:8; 1 Tim. 1:3; 2 Tim. 1:18; 4:12

The same error is found in three different churches with three different names (i.e. Nicolaitans, Balaamites and Jezebel).

The Greek word nikolaos means “people-conquerors” (2:6)

The name Balaam in the Hebrew means, “eaters/conquerors of the people” (2:14-15)

The Jezebel (2:20-21) leads the Church into the same errors of idolatry & immorality

II. Smyrna – The Faithful Persecuted Church (2:8-11)

Is. 44:6 & 48:12

III. Pergamum – The Compromised Church (2:12-17)

Num. 22-25; Acts 15:28-29

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 2-5.

Church	Commendation	Criticism	Instruction	Promise
Ephesus (2:1-7) Acts 18:19f; 19:1f; 20:16f; 1 Cor 15:32; 16:8; 1 Tim. 1:3; 2 Tim. 1:18; 4:12	Rejects evil, perseveres, has patience	Left their first love	Do the first works of love	The Tree of Life (cf. 22:2)
Smyrna (2:8-11)	Gracefully bears suffering	None	Be faithful until death	The Crown of Life, no second death (cf. 20:6, 14)
Pergamum/ Pergamos (2:12-17)	Keeps the faith	Tolerated immorality, idolatry and heresies	Repent	Hidden manna, and a stone with a new name
Thyatira (2:18-29)	Love, service, faith, patience is greater than at first	Tolerates idolatry and immorality	Judgment coming: Keep the faith	Rule over nations and receive Morning Star (cf. 22:16)
Sardis (3:1-6)	Some have kept the faith	A dead church	Repent; strengthen what remains	Clothed in white, Book of Life (cf. 21:27)
Philadelphia (3:7-13)	Perseveres in the faith	None	Keep the faith	A place in God's presence, a new name (cf. 22:4), the New Jerusalem (cf. 21:2)
Laodicea (3:14-22) Col. 2:1; 4:13	None	Indifferent	Be zealous and repent	Share Christ's throne

The Amphitheater at Ephesus



The Arcadian Way, the marble road shown in the picture, led from the harbor to the great theater and was the main entrance to the city of Ephesus from the sea. Marble columns lined each side of the road. The amphitheater seated about 25,000 people.

The Apostle Paul, on one of his missionary journeys, sailed from Syria to Ephesus. In Acts 18:19, we read that Paul came into Ephesus, entered into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. At the far end of the road is an area that was once the ancient harbor, which has silted in over the centuries. Paul left his ship and walked up this road to enter the city. The amphitheater

was where Paul's traveling companions, Gaius and Aristarchus, were taken by a large mob of Ephesians, who were angry at Paul's teaching against idols. The temple built for the goddess Diana at Ephesus was famous worldwide. Before Paul arrived at Ephesus, the craftsmen had a thriving business selling the silver images of the goddess.

For a man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis, was bringing no little business to the craftsmen; these he gathered together with the workmen of similar trades, and said, "Men, you know that our prosperity depends upon this business. "You see and hear that not only in Ephesus, but in almost all of Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away a considerable number of people, saying that gods made with hands are no gods at all. "Not only is there danger that this trade of ours fall into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis be regarded as worthless and that she whom all of Asia and the world worship will even be dethroned from her magnificence." When they heard this and were filled with rage, they began crying out, saying, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" The city was filled with the confusion, and they rushed with one accord into the theater, dragging along Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia. And when Paul wanted to go into the assembly, the disciples would not let him. Also some of the Asiarchs who were friends of his sent to him and repeatedly urged him not to venture into the theater. -- Acts 19:24-31



This is the view that the Apostle Paul saw as he left his ship at the port of Ephesus and walked up the Arcadian Way toward the amphitheater.



Remains of the Temple of Diana

Originally a small shrine to the goddess Diana (Artemis), the Temple of Diana was destroyed and rebuilt a number of times. The last building, called the Hellenistic temple, was built according to plans drawn up by the famous Dinocrates, the architect of Alexandria, Egypt. The whole structure was regarded as a marvel and considered one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. In the third century AD, the remains of the temple were quarried by the Emperor Justinian for the building of the nearby Basilica of Saint John and the Church of Saint Sophia at Constantinople (Istanbul).

Smyrna (Izmir)

Established as a Roman commercial center, the city was a port located on the Aegean. Smyrna was established thirty-five miles north of Ephesus on the road that lead to Pergamum. It was built near the ruins of a Greek colony that was destroyed in the 7th century BC.

The port was a natural one. Because of river access inland along with the major north-south highway the city grew to importance. The well watered



region produced significant crops, and this provided the backbone of a prosperous trade between land and sea.



The city was reputed to be the most faithful ally of Rome, according to Cicero.

Smyrna was noted for its beautiful public buildings, and its roads were commended for their geometric design. With a stadium that likely seated as many as 20,000 people, and a well developed infrastructure, scholars believe the city grew to about 100,000 by the time of the Apostle's Paul and John.

The Church of St. Polycarp reminds the modern visitor that Polycarp, an Apostolic Father and student of the Apostle John, was martyred in the city in AD 155. The site has little excavation. This important commercial port city is the second largest population in the modern Republic of Turkey.

Pergamum (Bergama)

Pergamum (also Pergamos) has been described as the most illustrious city of Asia, the most spectacular Hellenistic city because of its imaginative town planning, and a royal city.

It was located 16 miles inland from the Aegean Sea, about 57 miles north of Smyrna (Izmir), built on a precipice about 1165 feet above sea level, one thousand feet above the surrounding plain. The image of strength and permanence is obvious on first glance of the city's remains. The terraces that overlook the Caicus River valley lead to the entry gate of the city. The two small tributaries of the Caicus that neared the city, the Selinus to the west, the Cetius to the east were navigable by small vessels that transported goods in the ancient period from the sea. The city was also joined to an inland road climbing over toward Thyatira and on into Sardis. Today, the modern Turkish town of Bergama (population 45,000) surrounds the ancient precipice, and partially covers the ruins of Roman Pergamum.



There appears to have been a small settlement in antiquity, but little is known of its history. By the 5th century BC coins were issued. The city became prominent in the Hellenistic Period. In the Roman period, Pergamum became the capital of Asia, as the first city to make an alliance with Rome. Ephesus became the capital of the province, but scholars have argued that this city remained the focal point of the worship of the Roman Emperors. The city lost its great library to Alexandria when Mark Antony gave it to Cleopatra. The famous physician Galen, who served the emperors Marcus Aurelius, Commodus, and Septimius Severus, was born here in AD 129.

The religious life of Pergamum has been the subject of much research by scholars and historians. Three specific threads appear to be visible. First, the association with the worship of snakes and the handling of reptiles in antiquity appears valid. Other early signs of

the worship of Dionysus, the god of vegetation also appears to be well accepted. Later, worship of Asklepios (Roman Aesculapius) the god of healing emerged. The serpent became the emblem of Asklepios. A Pergamene coin shows the emperor Caracalla standing spear in hand before a great serpent twined around a bending sapling. Christians must have found the cult of the god of healing, and his serpent infested temple, peculiarly revolting.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Six: The Letters to Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia & Laodicea Rev. 2-3

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

❖ Review

Revelation was written by the apostle John as a message from Jesus to the seven churches in Asia. It begins with a vision of Christ descending to speak with John,

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Jesus descends to earth to meet with John (Ch. 1)2. The Seven Churches (Ch. 2-3)3. Jesus ascends to heaven (Ch. 4-5)4. The Seven Seals (Ch. 6-8)5. The Seven Trumpets (Ch. 8-11)6. The Church ascends to heaven (Ch. 11-15)7. The seven Bowls (Ch. 16-19)8. The Church descends to earth (Ch. 20-22) | |
|--|--|

giving him the message to the churches. In chapters 2-3 we see seven letters written to the pastor (angels) of the churches to encourage them to faithfulness in their ministry. The churches are specifically praise

them for various good works they had been doing, and he warned them of the coming judgment of Christ upon them if they fail to repent of various sins. [It is helpful to keep in mind the chiasmic outline given to the students in lesson four.]

I. Thyatira – The Sinfully Tolerant Church (2:18-29)

Thyatira is generally an unfaithful church. The letter begins (2:18) by reminding us of the vision John had of Jesus, who has eyes like a flame of fire and feet like fine brass (1:14-15). The Lord says to the church in Thyatira that He knows that there is much that can be commended among them. They were active in love, service, faith and patience (or perseverance). In fact, their works/deeds were increasing.

What the Lord had against them was that they allowed/tolerated false teaching in the church. Jesus again called their heresy by a symbolic name (just as he had done with the Nicolaitans and Balaamites). This time He identifies the error with Jezebel (2:20-23), during the kingdom period of the Old Creation. Jezebel was the wicked queen of Israel who led God's people into the idolatrous and adulterous worship of pagan gods (1 Kings 21:25-26; 2 Kings 9:22, where her actions are specifically called "harlotries" and "witchcrafts"). The Jezebel of the church in Thyatira similarly advocated compromise with paganism. It was apparently led by a woman that improperly called herself a prophetess, and taught the church things that mixed Christianity with paganism. [Some commentators believe that because 2:20 can be translated "you allow your wife Jezebel," she was the wife of the pastor of the church. It may also simply mean that the pastor was not guarding the bride of Christ, and allowed her to become a false prophetess. Because he failed, she became a harlot.] By her teaching the church became confused about the truth, and

began to commit the sins of sexual immorality and eating things sacrificed to idols. This is the same error spoken of in the church of Pergamum (2:14), and is directly connected with the Nicolaitan error (2:15).

The sin of the church of Thyatira is that they tolerated this teaching and the sinful acts that resulted from it. Biblical Christianity is intolerant of error. A church that tolerates evil and false teaching is a church under judgment; God will not long tolerate her. 2:21 says that Christ gave her time to repent of her sins, but she did not. 2:22-23 says that He would judge her with sickness and death, along with those who followed her (“her children”). Jezebel led people into adultery (either spiritually or literally), and her bed of sin now would become a sickbed, resulting in death (deathbed). The judgment of her followers is described as a great tribulation. The indication is that by associating with and compromising with the apostate Jews, the church would be destroyed along with Judaism in the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 AD.

The judgment on this church would be a warning to all the churches that Jesus is the one who searches the hearts and minds of Christians and brings His just judgments when necessary (2:23). Additionally, because the Lord knows who are faithful (refusing to learn the deep things of Satan and keep His works until the end), He promises that they will be given power over the nations (2:24-27).

II. Sardis – The Dead Church (3:1-6)

Sardis is an unfaithful church. The letter begins (3:1) by reminding us of the vision John had of Jesus, who the seven Spirits of God (1:4) which is the Holy Spirit working in His fullness in the Church. Jesus also has the seven stars in His right hand (1:16), representing the seven Churches (or angels of the churches), whom He cares for by the power of His hand. Christ says to the pastor that the Christians of Sardis has a name (reputation) that they are alive [for Christ] but they are really dead. They are really no different than the world around them. He says to them that they need to wake up (“be watchful”) and strengthen what remains alive in them because they are in danger of dying completely because the Lord will come to them in judgment.

Sardis may have looked like they were the most alive church in the region. Sardis had works; but they were not completed; they were not fulfilled in God’s sight. But because they experienced neither theological controversy nor persecution, the church was dead. They were probably indifferent to many important things. They were content to just be left alone. But the church needed to be a witness for Christ, even in the face great persecution, Sardis didn’t seem to be known enough for Satan to worry about them. They needed to stir up and awaken in themselves the things they were taught (3:3), and bring to completion the works that Christ has given the church to do.

This letter to Sardis corresponds to the Old Creation period of judgement and exile following the kingdom period. During the exile it was easy for God's people just to blend into the Babylonian world around them until God would bring them back into the land. But God wanted them to be witnesses to the nations. This would bring them into danger at times (e.g. Daniel & Esther). So too, Sardis needed to do the works of evangelism and witness, even being willing to suffer for the faith, which they were not willing at that time to do. They needed to not compromise with the world and blend in, but stand out as Christians.

Christ says that if they do not begin to do what He had taught them, He would come to them in judgment, as a thief does, without knowing when or how He would come (3:3). Some of the Christians in Sardis had not compromised themselves with the world (i.e. "defiled their garments"), and would be rewarded by walking with Him "in white" (garments) because they are worthy (3:4-5; cf. 3:18; 4:4; 6:11; 7:9, 13; 19:14). Those who overcome their sins will also be clothed in white garments, and their names would not be blotted from the Book of Life (cf. 21:27). Jesus will confess the names of all who remain faithful before His Father and the angels (Matt. 10:32-33; Mk. 8:38; Lk. 12:8-9). Many of the Christians in Sardis were denying Christ before their community, and if they refused to repent, Jesus would deny them before the heavenly community. But if they were faithful to witness for Christ, He would acknowledge them on the last day.

III. Philadelphia – The Persevering Church (3:7-13)

Philadelphia is second of the two faithful churches (Smyrna is the other church), both of which were especially persecuted by the apostate Jews. This letter to Philadelphia corresponds to the Restoration period (following the exile up to the coming of Christ) in the Old Creation, where holiness was the great issue of that period. The letter begins with the statement that Christ is the One who is Holy and True, and has the key of David that opens and shuts. The Lord announces that the leaders of the apostate Jews were false servants and would be shut out of the kingdom, being replaced by Christ and the officers of the Church. The keepers of the doors of the synagogue have excommunicated the Christians, declaring them to be apostates. In reality, Christ says that it's the synagogue of Satan that are the apostates and shut out of the kingdom of God (3:9; cf. 2:9); whereas, the Christians has an open door to the kingdom that cannot be shut to them (3:8).

Because these persecuted Christians had persevered in the faith, in 3:10 Christ says that He would keep them from the hour of trial/testing which would soon come upon the whole world. Specifically He says that the test would be for those who dwell in the land/earth, which twelve times in Revelation refers to apostate Israel (3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 13:8, 12, 14; 14:6; 17:2, 8). Israel had become a nation of pagan, and was about to be destroyed, exiled and replaced by a new nation, the Church.

When the Lord had purified ancient Israel during the exile and returned them to the land again, they rebuilt the temple. Now in 3:11-12 we see that if the Church remains faithful during the persecution, overcoming the world, Christ would make them a pillar in the new temple of God. The Church is the New Jerusalem, the city of God, which comes down from heaven (cf. Rev. 21).

IV. Laodicea – The Indifferent Church (3:14-22)

Laodicea is a generally unfaithful Church, and has fallen into laxity/laziness like Ephesus. The letter begins (3:14) by reminding us of John's introduction in 1:5 by saying that Jesus is the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the beginning and certainty of the [New] creation. Because His witness is true He can bear witness against the Churches.

This letter corresponds to the last part of the Old Creation period and the apostate Jews of in Jesus' day. Jesus said to the Laodiceans that He knows their works, and that they are neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm. This means that they are good for nothing (i.e., unlike lukewarm water, hot water is good for cooking and cold water is refreshing). The Christian's calling is not to blend in with the pagan world around them (being worthless like lukewarm water), but to convert it and reform it according to the Word of God (like hot and cold water). If a church is not transforming the society around it, what good is it? The result is that Jesus warned them that He would spit them out of His mouth (cf. Lev. 18:24-28). The church was in danger of being cut off from Christ, being excommunicated for being worthless.

The Christians of Laodicea said that they were rich, but Christ said that they were "wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked" before Him. He offered them mercy, and challenged them to buy from Him (by faith) gold (refined by fire – a life a godliness brought about by trial), white garments to cover their nakedness (disobedience), eye medicine so that their spiritual blindness may be cured (3:17-18). The Lord said that because He loves them, He is chastising them so that they would become zealous and repent (3:19). If will hear Him knocking at their door, and hear His voice as He calls to them and repent, He will come in and dine with them at the Lord's supper. He will dwell with them in fellowship (3:20). Not only so, but those who overcome the world around them, He will grant that they sit with Him on His throne, just as He overcame sin and death to sit with His Father on His throne.

Summary of the letters to the churches:

All of the letters ended with the command to hear what the Spirit was saying to the Churches. The overall message to all the churches is the churches that are acting faithfully need to persevere in the faith, even in the face of terrible persecution and suffering, knowing that Jesus is now the King of all the New Creation. Faithfulness requires that the churches need to deal seriously with the sin and error of its members. Church discipline needs to be exercised, and sinful members need to be kicked out of the churches if they refuse to repent. If the churches refuse to do so, Christ will come in judgment on the churches. The rest of the book of Revelation is like an eighth letter that warns the seven churches what will befall them if they don't shape up.

How can we apply the messages Christ sent to the churches of Asia to our own church(es) today? [Remain faithful to Christ and to one another, according to His Word. Do not compromise with the world around us in terms of what we believe or how we live. Do not allow biblical faithfulness to be an excuse to fail to love one another. Be willing to exercise church discipline against church members that refuse to repent of sin and error.]

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 2-5.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Six: The Letters to Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia & Laodicea Rev. 2-3

1. Jesus descends to earth to meet with John (Ch. 1)
2. The Seven Churches (Ch. 2-3)
 3. Jesus ascends to heaven (Ch. 4-5)
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 6. The Church ascends to heaven (Ch. 11-15)
7. The seven Bowls (Ch. 16-19)
8. The Church descends to earth (Ch. 20-22)

I. Thyatira (2:18-29)

II. Sardis (3:1-6)

III. Philadelphia (3:7-13)

IV. Laodiceans (3:14-22)

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 2-5.

Thyatira



An important trade center particularly for the textile industry of Hellenistic and Roman times, the city lay along a low lying corridor that followed a north south route, the Pergamum – Smyrna -- Laodicea Road. It was a cultic center to Apollo (the sun god), and apparent home of wealthy trade guilds.

The city was wealthy in ancient times, with its gentle rolling hills and fertile valleys. The combination of a low plateau for an Acropolis and the sloping valley surrounding it, gave an impression of the city as more cosmopolitan and open, as opposed to the more austere cliffs at Pergamum. The church at Thyatira, visited by St. Paul (Acts 19:10) and represented by a convert who was

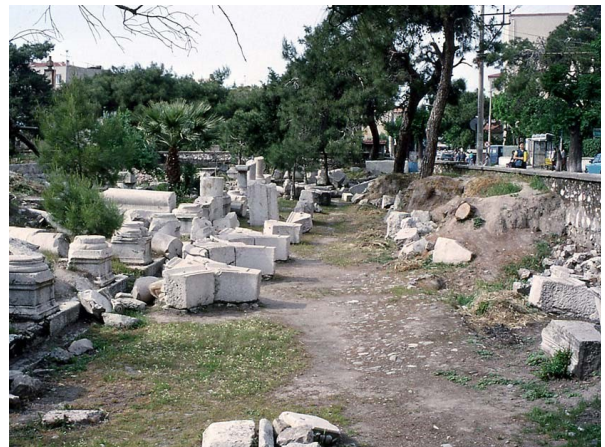
away doing business in Philippi (Lydia, cp. Acts 16:14) was also more open to heresy. Revelation suggests that her openness and gentleness in the face of heresy (Jezebel and Nicolaitins) was her downfall (Rev. 2:18-23). About 150 AD, Montanus began a cult practice from Thyatira, claiming his prophetesses spoke with the voice of the Holy Spirit (hence, Montanism). The city was wealthy, but did not reach its zenith until the 2nd century. The trade guilds that flourished there included wool workers, garment workers, linen workers, leather workers, dyers (purple), bakers, potters, slave dealers and bronze smiths. Each guild was accompanied by its patron gods and in many cases included immoral practices in participation with the guild members. A faithful Christian may have found it difficult to live his faith, as well as practice his craft.



Sardis

As one of the oldest cities of Asia Minor, the city lay along a highway that stretched from the Persian city of Susa, following a parallel course to the Tigris River, passing through Cappadocia to Sardis. It is about 30 miles southeast of Thyatira and about 45 miles of Smyrna (Izmir).

It was an economic stronghold of the wool industry. The acropolis was built about 1500 feet above the plain on a ridge of the 5,800 foot high Mount Tmolus. The precipice was difficult to reach and was considered unassailable by an enemy. The lower city was more accessible. Today the site is a ruin, but nearby the small Turkish village bears the name Sart. Sardis was a place of importance in the Lydian Kingdom in the 13th century BC. The last and most famous Lydian King, Croesus (560-546 BC), was said to have panned gold from the nearby river Pactolus, and introduced coinage of pure gold and pure silver.



Persian domination began in 546 BCE, when King Croesus and Sardis fell to Cyrus. Herodotus records the shock of the Lydian defeat, as they considered the city impregnable. According to the ancient historian, the Persian forces were in the valley below the citadel, when a Lydian soldier dropped his helmet over the city wall. He scaled down the rock to get it. A local slave watched carefully and when captured, revealed the city's vulnerability. The soldiers used the information to capture the city for Cyrus, and King Croesus was taken prisoner. At the end of the Susa Road, Sardis became the most important Persian city in Asia Minor.

Under Roman rule the city flourished until it was devastated by the great earthquake in AD 17 (called by Eusebius the greatest earthquake in human memory). The city's population was estimated as large as 120,000 in the time of the Apostle John.



Philadelphia

Philadelphia lies along a fault line, and is subject to frequent and sometimes powerful earthquakes, making the task of recovering the past in archaeology a difficult one.

The city may have been founded by Eumenes King of Pergamum (197-160 BC) in the 2nd century BC, and the name was likely after his brother Attalus (later reigned 159-138 BC), who through loyalty won the title Philadelphus (brother love). The city was handed over to Roman rule in 133 BC on the death of Attalus III. The city may well have been founded for a social purpose. Ramsey states that the city was a missionary city from the beginning, founded to promote a certain unity of spirit, customs, and loyalty within the realm.

Located along the Cogamus River, the valley connects with the Hermus River basin to the northwest, where Sardis stood 26 miles away. The valley road was the lifeline connection between the Phrygian territory to the east and the harbors of the Aegean to the west.



Earthquakes in the area are amply recorded in history, a severe one occurring in AD 17, which destroyed this city and eleven others. Sardis fared worse from the initial quake, but Philadelphia shook more frequently from severe aftershocks, traumatizing the population. After Emperor Tiberius aided in their rebuilding, it took the new name of Neocaesarea (New Caesar). Under Vespasian's rule (69-79 AD), it changed names to Flavia. By the third century, paganism had held on in the face of a Christianizing Empire, and the city became known as little Athens for its dedication to deities. None of these names or epithets lasted, and today the modern city is called Alasehir.

Early Church history reveals that Ignatius made a visit to the city on his way to his martyrdom in Rome, and sent a letter to the church there.

Laodicea

As a crossroad of two important roads, this city had an important commercial and logistical position. The road that carried John's letter began at Ephesus, and moved north through Smyrna and Pergamum before turning east to Thyatira. Dropping due south, the letters were carried to Sardis, then southeast to Philadelphia and finally Laodicea. Evidence of the ancient road demonstrates that it continued to Colossae and eventually to the Mediterranean port at Attalia (Antalya).

Intersecting with the Pergamum -- Attalia road was an inland roadway from Cappadocia via Apamea (due east of Laodicea). This road gently eased down to the coast at Ephesus, some 96 miles away. Ten miles east of the city lay the remains of Colossae, an important city in the writing and ministry of the Apostle Paul.

Though reasonably strong from trade in black wool and its thriving agricultural base, the city did need the assistance of Rome after an earthquake disabled the city in AD 60. The garment industry recovered, and competed with Hierapolis and Colossae for the textile trade. There was also development of a medical industry, based on the eye salves and Phrygian powders used in eye treatment (cp. Rev. 3:15-16). The banking and money exchange industry also thrived in the city, an ironic contrast to its church which was called poor and naked and blind.

Positioned a few miles from the hot calcium waters of modern Pammukale, the hot waters that pour out of the earth from a distance of more than four miles away would arrive at the city lukewarm, and need to be reheated. Many have noted the irony of Rev. 3:15.

The church of Laodicea was begun by Epaphras while Paul was at Ephesus (cp. Acts 19:10). The New Testament offers no direct evidence of a visit by Paul to the city, though he refers to believers there in the letter to Colossae. The letter to Laodicea did not survive (Col. 4:16).



The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Seven: The Ascension of Jesus to the Throne Rev. 4-5

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

❖ Review

1. Jesus descends to earth to meet with John (Ch. 1)
2. The Seven Churches (Ch. 2-3)
 3. Jesus ascends to heaven (Ch. 4-5)
 4. The Seven Seals (Ch. 6-8)
 5. The Seven Trumpets (Ch. 8-11)
6. The Church ascends to heaven (Ch. 11-15)
7. The seven Bowls (Ch. 16-19)
8. The Church descends to earth (Ch. 20-22)

Revelation was written to help the first Christians to understand their place in history. It was written before the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem in 70 AD. The Old Creation was going to be judged and would pass

away. The New Creation began with the establishment of the Church at Pentecost.

In chapter 1 we saw that Jesus descended to earth to meet with John on the Lord's Day. John saw a wonderful, symbolic vision of Jesus. Based on this vision, John was commanded to write letters to the seven Churches in Asia, encouraging and warning them to remain faithful to Christ in every way. If they failed to hear what the Spirit was saying to the Churches and in faithfulness overcome the world, they would suffer the judgments that would come upon the world around them (as revealed in the rest of Revelation).

In the days just before the Day of Pentecost, the disciples saw Jesus ascend in the clouds to the right hand of the Father. They knew that this was a fulfillment of Daniel 7:9-14. Turn to Daniel 7, where we see God revealed as gloriously sitting on a throne with thousands and thousands of angels worshipping Him (vv. 9-10). V. 10 says that books of judgment were opened. While Daniel was watching, he saw "One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven" coming **TO** the Ancient of Days to be given His kingdom made of all the different peoples of the world (vv. 13-14). His is a kingdom that will not be destroyed. V. 18 tells us that "the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom forever. Vv. 21-22 tells us that enemies would wage war against the saints, but the Ancient of Days came and executed His judgment in favor of the saints so that they would possess the kingdom.

Revelation 4-5 takes up this theme in Daniel and applies it to the saints during the time just before the destruction of Jerusalem, and the final establishment of the kingdom of Christ.

I. The Throne Room – Heavenly Worship Ch. 4

Turn now to Revelation 4, where we see that John, in the Spirit (referring to his experience as a prophet receiving a prophetic revelation by the Spirit), was called to come up to heaven to participate/observe heavenly worship. Every Lord's Day the church responds to God's call to worship and are brought into heavenly worship. In the Spirit, John saw a throne set in heaven, and One (God the Father) sat on the throne. The Father was surrounded by an emerald rainbow – emerald was the stone of the tribe of Levi. Around the throne of God were 24 other thrones, on which sat 24 elders wearing white robes and having golden crowns on their heads. These 24 elders are archangels representing the heavenly model of the 24 groups of Chief Levites and Chief Priests who served in the Temple according to 1 Chronicles 24-25. We are told in Revelation 4:10 that the 24 elders/archangels will fall down and cast their crowns before Him.

The Bible tells us that the Old Creation was supervised by angels, while the New Creation is supervised by redeemed humanity. Throughout Revelation angels are portrayed as bringing final judgments on the creation. What this means for Revelation is that since angels are bringing judgments in Revelation, they must be judging the world that they supervised, the Old Creation. Because they had been faithful messengers for 4000 years, and the Old Creation (particularly the Jews) had not grown to maturity and faith, the Lord sent them to judge the Old Creation. The result of this judgment would be the establishment of the New Heavens and New Earth, ruled by Christ and the redeemed humanity.

Throughout the book of Revelation we see exactly 24 actions by archangels in the book. Each archangel in his turn comes before the throne, removes his crown of ruling the Old Creation, and then goes forth to perform his last action of judgment against the Old Creation. This pile of crowns is then picked up by the saints, who enter heaven to replace the archangels as co-rulers with Jesus (Rev. 20:4). We, the saints in the Church, the new and redeemed humanity under Christ, the Greater Adam, are the ones that will rule the world with Him.

[The 24 actions of the archangels throughout Revelation is provided on the handout provided.]

The 24 Archangels

- A. One Strong Angel (5:2)
- B. Seven Trumpet Angels (Ch. 8-11)
 - C. Four Leading Angels (9:14-15; also 7:1-2)
 - C' Four Judging Angels (14:8, 9, 15, and 17+ 19)
- B' Seven Bowl Angels (Ch. 15-16)
- A' One Strong Angel (18:21)

As these archangels fall down in worship they praise the Lord for His worthiness as the Creator and Ruler of all things (v. 11).

Also in this glorious company of angelic worshippers are four living creatures (Rev. 4:6-9). These living creatures are full of eyes front and back, and have six wings. This reminds us of the cherubim of Isaiah 6:1-3 when he was taken up into heaven for a similar vision. Is. 6:3 tells us that these cherubim cried out to one another saying almost the same thing we see in Rev. 4:8:

Isaiah 6:3	Revelation 4:8
“Holy, holy, holy <i>is</i> the Lord of hosts; The whole earth <i>is</i> full of His glory!”	“Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!”

The four faces of the cherubim here (like a lion, calf/ox, man and eagle) are the same as those given by Ezekiel (Ezek. 1:10; 10:14, 21). These great angelic creature are directors of the heavenly worship, as the human angels of the churches direct the weekly worship of the Church on the Lord’s Day.

II. Worthy is the Lamb Ch. 5

In Ch. 5 we see in the right hand of the Father a book with words written on it front and back, and seven seals on it. This scroll is the book of the Kingdom, which has been sealed up before now. “A strong angel” cried out in a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?” All creation (including John) laments that the Kingdom has not really arrived, because there is no man, no Adam, worthy to take the Book and rule from it (5:3-4). But one of the elders proclaimed that there is one who is worthy, and will break or loose the seven seals. It is the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49:9-10); the root of David (Is. 11:1; Jer. 23:5; Zech. 3:8) – the One whom all the Old Creation saints had waited from, the Messiah. This One described as the Lion of Judah and root of David is Jesus, who appears in the form of a Lamb. In the gospel of John, John described Jesus as, “The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (Jn. 1:29). Having paid the price for the sins of His people, Jesus if found worthy to break the seals of the book and establish the Kingdom that will endure forever and ever. In 5:7 the Lamb takes the scroll out of the right hand of the Father, and the response of all creation is rejoicing and worship. Before they chanted/spoke their praise of God (4:8, 11), now the heavenly worship is filled with a new song accompanied by instruments (5:8; 9). This worship involves the heavenly hosts (including the 4 living creatures and 24 archangels and thousands of other angels), as well as every creature which is in heaven and earth. It is this worship that the church is caught up in every Lord’s Day, Hebrew 12:22-24: “But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.”

The book that Jesus took from the right hand of the Father is a large scroll. It is sealed along the edge with seven large wax seals. These seals are the things that kept the Kingdom from coming, things which kept the Book from being opened. Jesus, through the rest of the book of Revelation, will break the seals, thereby releasing the grip of the Old Adamic Creation. Then He will proceed to proclaim what the Book says in the Trumpets and implement it in the Bowls of judgment (see the outline of Revelation). The rest of Revelation down to 22:5 is the contents of the book, which is like an eighth letter, the letter that warns the churches of what will befall them if they don't act more faithfully.

This throne room vision is the revelation that Jesus, the Greater Adam, is the firstborn of the new humanity that will rule the New Creation forever and ever. With Him, we too have been given the Kingdom of God, and will rule with Him. As we remain faithful to Him, He will give us dominion over all the New Creation.

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 6-8:5

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Seven: The Ascension of Jesus to the Throne Rev. 4-5

1. Jesus descends to earth to meet with John (Ch. 1)
2. The Seven Churches (Ch. 2-3)
3. Jesus ascends to heaven (Ch. 4-5)
4. The Seven Seals (Ch. 6-8)
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6. The Church ascends to heaven (Ch. 11-15)
7. The seven Bowls (Ch. 16-19)
8. The Church descends to earth (Ch. 20-22)

I. The Throne Room – Heavenly Worship Ch. 4

Daniel 7:9-14
1 Chronicles 24-25

The 24 Archangels

- A. One Strong Angel (5:2)
 - B. Seven Trumpet Angels (Ch. 8-11)
 - C. Four Leading Angels (9:14-15; also 7:1-2)
 - C' Four Judging Angels (14:8, 9, 15, and 17+ 19)
 - B' Seven Bowl Angels (Ch. 15-16)
- A' One Strong Angel (18:21)

Is. 6:3 & Rev. 4:8; Ezek. 1:10; 10:14, 21

II. Worthy is The Lamb Ch. 5

Lion of Judah (Gen. 49:9-10); Root of David (Is. 11:1; Jer. 23:5; Zech. 3:8); Jn. 1:29

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 6-8:5

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Eight: The Seven Seals – Releasing the Kingdom Rev. 6-8

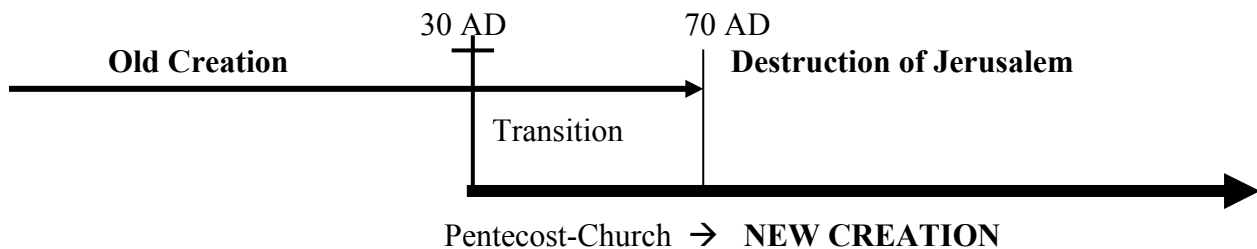
❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

❖ Review

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3. Jesus ascends to heaven (Ch. 4-5)
4. The Seven Seals (Ch. 6-8)
5. The Seven Trumpets (Ch. 8-11)
6. The Church ascends to heaven (Ch. 11-15)
7. The seven Bowls (Ch. 16-19)
8. The Church descends to earth (Ch. 20-22)

Revelation is the divine explanation of the transition from the Old Creation to the New Creation, covering the period from 30 AD to 70 AD. The Kingdom of God was established with the ascension of Jesus to the

right hand of the Father and the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost. But it did not fully come until the Old Creation passed away. Revelation describes things that “which must shortly take place” (1:1), and was written in the late 60’s AD, just before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. It was a time when the Christians took the gospel throughout the world as a witness, and they suffered persecution and martyrdom, primarily by the Jews. Just as God gave Israel 40 years of wilderness wandering before entering the Promised Land following the exodus, God gave the Jews 40 year period of time to repent and believe the gospel and come into the New Creation before the Old Creation passed away.



We have already studied the first three sections of Revelation. [Teacher: Quickly review the section titles that must be memorized.]

The Kingdom of God had been sealed up in the book that we learned about last week in Ch. 5. In Ch. 6-8 the One who is able/worthy to take the book and release the New Creation Kingdom breaks the seals, Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, the Lamb that takes away the sins of the world (5:5-7). Following the heavenly worship offered to Jesus by the whole created order (5:8-14), He began to open the seals in Ch. 6-8, releasing the kingdom at last.

Some commentators believe that the seven Seals, Trumpets and Bowls each talk about the same events in three different ways. But the clear order presented in Revelation is progressively moving from one set of events to another. The Seals open the book. The Trumpets are the proclamation of the contents of the book. The Bowls are the application of those contents. Historically, the Seals concern the very beginning of the Kingdom in AD 30. The Trumpets concern events from Pentecost to the end of that period, just before 70 AD. The Bowls concern the events of the end, at 70 AD.

The first four Seals release four horses and four riders. The four cherubim we learned about last week call these out (4:7-9 – Lion, Ox/calf, Man, Eagle). The four horses represent the Church, and the four riders are Jesus. This is similar imagery that is seen in Zechariah 1:8-11; 2:6 and 6:1-5, where we learn that the four horses had patrolled the whole earth and reported that the world was at rest. This report was not a good thing because God had said that He would be shaking the nations to restore the glory of Jerusalem. These four also represented the four winds or spirits of heaven, which God used to spread His people of throughout the earth. Jesus had sent the Church out by the Spirit into all the world to preach the gospel. The colors of the horses come from the colored stones of the tribes of Israel. The order of the horses is the order of evangelism and conquest.

1st Seal – Evangelistic Conquest (6:1-2)

When the Lamb (Jesus) opened the first seal, John heard one of the four living creatures call out the first horse, white, the color of Naphtali, the tribe that symbolizes the Bride of God. On this horse, representing the Church, is Christ, who is represented as the One riding out to conquer. We see in 19:11-16 the same image of Jesus (“His name is called the Word of God”) riding on a white horse going forth to conquer with a sharp sword that comes out of His mouth, ruling the nations as the King of kings. The first seal opens the kingdom by witness and evangelism, preaching the good news of Jesus the King who has risen to reign at the right hand of the Father.

2nd Seal – Relational Conflict produced by the gospel (6:3-4)

When the Lamb (Jesus) opened the second seal, another of the four living creatures call out the second horse, red, the color of Judah, the tribe that led in war. This is not an image of regular, political warfare. It was the kind of conflict that Jesus said would come as a result of the gospel and kingdom of God. Jesus said in Matthew 10:34-37: “Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to ‘set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law’; and ‘a man’s enemies will be those of his own household.’ He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.” It is the conflict experienced in every society when

the gospel comes, and it was the conflict experienced especially by those Jews who became Christians and suffered persecution.

3rd Seal – The Starvation of the Old Creation (6:5-6)

When the Lamb (Jesus) opened the third seal, another of the four living creatures call out the third horse, which is black (corresponding to Joseph). The rider (Jesus) holds scales in His hand to weigh things, representing famine. The famine is not just a lack of ordinary foods. The three foods mentioned are sacrificial/sacramental foods: grain, oil and wine. Grain and oil make bread, the food you eat in the morning. Wine is what you drink after your work is done. Bread is symbolically priestly food, and wine is kingly. Bread focuses on the old creation, when men were priests, but not yet fully kings; while wine focuses on the New Creation, when we rule in Sabbath rest with Jesus. Moses brought bread, Jesus made wine. The black horse pictures the gradual starvation of the Old Creation order, while the gifts of the New Creation order are protected and preserved for the church (as we will see shortly in 7:3).

4th Seal – Death and Persecution (6:7-8)

When the Lamb (Jesus) opened the fourth seal, another of the four living creatures call out the green/pale horse came forth, and the name of the rider was Death. Green is the color of Levi, and it was the Levites that were guards of the Temple, armed with spears to kill anyone who approached the altar or sanctuary improperly. This last horse brings actual physical conflict and death. The outbreak of a final violent conflict between those holding on to the Old Creation and those converted to the New happened among the Jews in the late 60's AD, and it happens each time the kingdom comes to a new people.

The things symbolized in these first four breaking of the seals is the same sequence of events that brings the Kingdom to every nation of the world, fulfilling the Great Commission of Christ, who commanded us to disciple the nations. It did not happen before 30 AD because the Kingdom was sealed up; but now that Jesus the Lamb had broken the seals, it will continue until He returns at the end of history.

5th Seal – The Cry of the Witnesses (6:9-11)

When the fifth seal is broken we see saints under the altar. This image is taken from the Old Testament sacrifices, in which the blood of the slain victims would stream down the sides of the altar and form a pool at its base. The blood of the martyrs has been poured out (2 Tim. 4:6; 1 Tim. 1:6-8), crying out for vengeance and justice. Although they were given a white robe, symbolizing their purity and acceptance before the Lord, they are told that they must wait a little longer. They must wait until the number of their fellow servants and brethren (in suffering as martyrs) are also killed as they were. This number of witnesses/martyrs is set in Ch. 7, and are martyred in Ch. 14.

6th Seal – Final judgment on the Old Creation (6:12-7:17)

When Jesus the Lamb broke the sixth seal He breaks the restraint on the final judgment of the Old Creation. Immediately the Old Creation begins to come to an end. The land quakes apart, the stars fall, the moon displays the blood of the saints, and all men run and hide from the wrath of the Lamb. But as soon as this judgment starts, it is stopped. The judgment hangs over men, but is frozen in time until something else happens. Just as the martyred saints needed to wait a little while, so must the final judgment on the Old Creation. That judgment will resume when we get to the Bowls in Ch. 16. In the meantime, the Old Creation peoples are given a final opportunity to repent and be saved.

Revelation 7:1-8 continues with the sixth seal, explaining why the judgment is stopped. Four of the archangels come forward to seal a group of people on their foreheads. The sealed people consist of a symbolic number of 144,000 converted Jews, symbolically 12,000 from each tribe of Israel. These faithful will be killed by the apostate Circumcision in Ch. 14. Revelation 7:9-17 shows a vast multitude of Gentile believers who are also going to be killed in the great tribulation that is about to come in the late 60's AD. These are Christians killed by the Roman Emperor Nero and his representatives in the Roman Empire, the Beast. These saints are dressed in white robes, and cry out with the angels in worship around the throne.

7th Seal – (8:1-5) Outpouring of the Holy Spirit (8:1-5)

When the seventh seal is broken by the Lamb singing in heaven stops for half an hour. It takes up again when this period of history is over in Ch. 15, after the martyrdom of the saints. The singing stops so that the trumpets, given to seven angels, can be heard (in the next section). In our worship services, the singing stops so that the sermon can be heard.

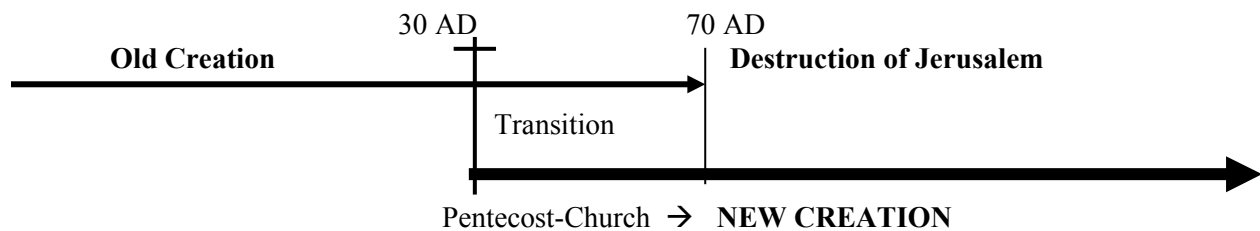
The seventh seal held back the Holy Spirit, who is now poured out as fire. The fire poured out in 8:5 is not a picture of wrath, but is a reference to the tongues of fire that was poured out upon the Church by the Spirit in Acts 2. This is clear by the fact that the Spirit is poured out by "Another Angel," which is not one of the 24, but is their captain, the Angel of the Lord, the Son of God. Before the day of Pentecost, the disciples were in the upper room in prayer, waiting for the coming of the Spirit (Acts 1:12-14). These prayers, along with the faithful saints throughout the Old Covenant period, are represented in Revelation 8:3-4 as the prayers of the saints. Christ had these prayers in a golden bowl and presented them as an offering to the Father. The result was that the Spirit was poured out upon the Church. Now that the scroll is open, the proclamation of the contents of the scroll can begin, as we will see next week in the seven Trumpets section.

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 8-11

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Eight: The Seven Seals – Releasing the Kingdom Rev. 6-8

1. Jesus descends to earth to meet with John (Ch. 1)
2. The Seven Churches (Ch. 2-3)
3. Jesus ascends to heaven (Ch. 4-5)
4. The Seven Seals (Ch. 6-8)
5. The Seven Trumpets (Ch. 8-11)
6. The Church ascends to heaven (Ch. 11-15)
7. The seven Bowls (Ch. 16-19)
8. The Church descends to earth (Ch. 20-22)



Zechariah 1:8-11; 2:6 and 6:1-5

1st Seal – Evangelistic Conquest (6:1-2)

2nd Seal – Relational Conflict produced by the gospel (6:3-4)

3rd Seal – The Starvation of the Old Creation (6:5-6)

4th Seal – Death and Persecution (6:7-8)

5th Seal – The Cry of the Witnesses (6:9-11)

6th Seal – Final judgment on the Old Creation (6:12-7:17)

7th Seal – (8:1-5) Outpouring of the Holy Spirit (8:1-5)

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 8-11

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Nine: The Seven Trumpets of Warning Rev. 8-11

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

❖ Review

1. Jesus descends to earth to meet with John (Ch. 1)
2. The Seven Churches (Ch. 2-3)
3. Jesus ascends to heaven (Ch. 4-5)
 4. The Seven Seals (Ch. 6-8)
 5. The Seven Trumpets (Ch. 8-11)
6. The Church ascends to heaven (Ch. 11-15)
7. The seven Bowls (Ch. 16-19)
8. The Church descends to earth (Ch. 20-22)

Review the first four points of the outline. As we learned earlier, angels supervised humanity in the Old Creation. Now that the Old Creation was drawing to a close and was passing away, we see the Lord using the angels to pass

judgments on the Old Creation. The result of these judgments will be that the New Creation will emerge in the form of the Church.

The Kingdom of God had been sealed up in the book that we learned about in Ch. 5. Ch. 6-8 revealed the One who is able/worthy to take the book and release the New Creation Kingdom. Last week we saw that He broke the seven seals, releasing the Kingdom of God (Ch. 6-8:5). Once the seventh seal was broken (8:1), there was silence in heaven for half an hour, and seven angels were given the seven trumpets to proclaim the contents of the book of the kingdom (which we will study today in 8:6-11:18). After these angels were given their trumpets, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Church to do the work of witnessing to the nations. Historically, the Seals concern the very beginning of the Kingdom in AD 30. The Trumpets concern events from Pentecost to the end of the transition period, from 30 AD to just before 70 AD. The Bowls (which follow in Ch. 16-19) concern the events of the end, at 70 AD.

It is important to remember that the pastors of the churches were called angels, and the trumpet blowing angels proclaim a message about the coming of the Kingdom. As we have seen, the period between 30 AD 70 AD was a time that God gave for the gospel to go out into the world, and for men to repent and believe in Jesus the King. This was especially important for the Jews who had rejected the Lord. When the trumpets are blown and judgments follow, in each case only a third of things are destroyed. Many of these are like the warning plagues that God sent upon Egypt before destroying the firstborn and the army of Egypt. And so, in 8:6, we learn that the seven angels with trumpets prepared to proclaim their judgments on the Jews, who had become a new Egypt.

1st Trumpet Sounds Against the Land (8:7)

When the first trumpet was sounded, it was against the land. Throughout the Bible, the phrase, “the land” represents most often the Promised Land of Israel. When the trumpet sounded against the land, it is a judgment against the apostate Jews, the Circumcision. One third of the trees and green grass are burned up by hail and fire mixed with blood (similar to the seventh plague of Egypt, Ex. 9:23-25).

2nd Trumpet Sounds Against the Sea (8:8-9)

When the second trumpet sounded, it was against the sea. Throughout the Bible, the sea is associated with the Gentiles. In this judgment a burning mountain is thrown into the sea, and one third of the water became blood, killing one third of the sea creatures and destroying one third of the ship (similar to the first plague of Egypt, Ex. 7:17-21). The mountain of the Lord, the place of the temple, was to be a place where the Gentiles were expected to come and worship Yahweh (Is. 2:2-3). But now, as apostates, the Jews had become a destroying mountain. Instead of being a means of salvation to the nations, Israel had become a means of judgment to the Gentiles because of their unfaithfulness to the Lord. Jesus said in Mark 11:23 that the disciples should have faith, so that “who ever says to this mountain, ‘be removed and be cast into the sea’...he will have whatever he says” (cf. Matt. 21:21-22). The persecuted Church began praying for God’s vengeance upon Israel (Rev. 6:9-11), calling for the mountain of Israel to be cast into the sea. Thus, the Jews were judged as if they were Gentiles.

3rd Trumpet Sounds Against the Springs of Water – The Temple (8:10-11)

When the third trumpet sounded, it was against the springs of water, which refers to the temple, from which flow streams of water to the world (Ezek. 47). Because of the apostasy of the Jews, bitter waters flow from the temple in the form of poisonous teachings that are deadly. A great star, named wormwood (which means, “bitterness”), fell from heaven onto one third of the rivers and springs of water, making the waters wormwood (bitter), and many men died because of the bitterness. Wormwood is a term used in the Old Testament law and prophets to warn Israel against apostasy (Deut. 29:18; Jer. 9:15; 23:15; Lam. 3:15, 19; Amos 5:7).

The fall of this great star is an allusion to the fall of Satan, who was said to be the “Star of the morning...fallen from heaven” (Is. 14:12-15). Wormwood is the first of seven names used for Satan in Revelation. The picture we see is that Satan has taken up his seat in the temple because the Circumcision has rejected Jesus. With him is the High Priest, the Man of Sin of 2 Thessalonians, also known as the Land Beast and False Prophet of Revelation.

4th Trumpet Sounds Against the Sun, Moon and Stars (8:12-13)

The fourth trumpet sounds against the sun, moon and stars (similar to the ninth plague of Egypt, Ex. 10:21-23), which is an allusion to the fourth day of creation (Gen. 1:14-19), where these heavenly bodies are said to symbolize rulers. Throughout the Bible disturbances of the sun, moon and star represent a change in rulership and authority. Jesus is now the King of a New Creation, and all other rulers must bow to Him.

Revelation 8:13 tells us that the last three blasts of the trumpets were woes against the inhabitants of “the land,” the Circumcision.

5th Trumpet Releases Satan and His Demonic Army (9:1-12)

When the fifth trumpet sounded, we are again told that a star falls from heaven to earth, another reference to Satan. Satan is given the key to release his swarming demonic army the pit of hell (referred to as locusts, similar to the eighth plague of Egypt, Ex. 10:12-15). Throughout the Old Testament, symbolically, locusts are used by God to judge His people for their unfaithfulness and sin (Judg. 7:12; Is. 33:4; Joel 1:4; 2:25; Nah. 3:15-17). This is a warning that apostate Israel is about to be cast out of God’s presence and filled with demons. Throughout His ministry, Jesus cast out demons in Israel; now Jerusalem would be tormented by them because of the Jews’ reject of Him. These demons are described as horrible beasts, tormenting men. They are the Circumcision that torment unbaptized Israelites (“those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads,” 9:4) with their false teachings. But their evil doctrines do not torment believers in Jesus. The king of these demons is identified as the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name is Abaddon (meaning “Destruction” in Hebrew) or Apollyon (meaning “Destroyer” in Greek), the second and third names for Satan in Revelation. He leads the apostate Jews into battle against their own people by their false teachings, making the Jewish nation a hell on earth. This is the first of the three woes (9:12; cf. 8:13). The next two woes were still coming.

6th Trumpet – The Witness of the Church (9:13-11:14)

The sixth trumpet contains three visions, each being a vision of the Church.

1st Vision – The Warfare of the Church (9:13-21)

Just as we have seen that Jesus wages battle against His enemies with the sword that comes out of His mouth (Rev. 1:16; 2:12; 19:15, 21), so too the Church goes for with the preaching of the Word of God and to kill men by converting them. In the first vision following the sounding of the sixth trumpet we see a great army of many thousands of angels (9:16, 200 million literally reads in the Greek, “200 thousand thousand”). This army of preachers put a third of the world’s population to death by fire of the Spirit breathed from their mouths.

2nd Vision – John and the Little Book (10:1-11)

In the second vision of the sixth trumpet, John sees “another mighty angel” that hold a little book, and has one foot on the sea (Gentiles) and the other foot on the land (Israel). This is a vision of the Lord Jesus who is the King of the world. The contents of this little book is the Seven Thunders, which John was about to write down. But He is told not to write them. After the great angel, the Lord Jesus, tells John that the coming of the Kingdom would no longer be delayed. Then John was commanded to take the little book and eat it. Although it would be sweet to the taste, it would make him feel sick. The meaning of this is given in 10:11, that John should preach/prophesy about what God would do in the world.

3rd Vision – Two Witnesses (11:1-14)

The third vision of the sixth trumpet concerns two witnesses (martyrs). In 11:1-2, John is given a measuring rod to measure the temple of God, the altar and those who worship there, but not the outer court of the Gentiles. This is familiar imagery from the Old Testament prophets (Is. 28:17; Ezek. 40:3-5; 42:15-20; Zech. 2:1-2), where the New Covenant people, the Church is identified as the true people of God. John measures/identifies the Church as the true people of God, but casts out the apostate Jews as those outside of the true temple, who will be delivered for destruction (the 42 months, or 3½ years of 11:2 is taken from Dan. 7:25, where it symbolizes a limited period of time in which the wicked are triumphant; but also a period of wrath and judgment due to apostasy).

In 11:3-14 Jesus said that he would give power to His two witnesses to prophesy/preach for 1260 days, or 3½ years before Jerusalem is destroyed. These witnesses are Spirit empowered (olive oil fed) lampstands that shine the light of God’s Word into the darkness of the world. They are dressed in sackcloth, like Elijah (and John the Baptist), and have the power to do the same kind of miraculous works he did (i.e. sending fire against his enemies, 11:5, cf. 2 Kings 1:10-12; and shutting up the heavens of rain, 11:6, cf. 2 Kings 17:1; Lk. 4:25; James 5:16-18). These witnesses symbolically represent the Church in its witness against the Jews. 11:8 tells us that they were persecuted and eventually put to death by Satan (the beast from the pit, 9:1-11), and their bodies were in the street of Jerusalem, “the great city,” which had become like Sodom and Egypt, where our Lord was crucified. The wicked Circumcision are happy that the witnesses are dead. They send presents to each other, as the godly Jews did after the death of their enemies in Esther 9:19. The witnesses are raised from the dead after 3½ days, and ascended to heaven in a cloud in view of their enemies. The result of the death and resurrection of the Church as she witnesses is that many are converted (11:11-13).

7th Trumpet – The Kingdom Proclaimed (11:15-18)

When the seventh trumpet sounds, a loud voice in heaven declares that, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever.” The entire heavenly host fell on their faces in worship because the kingdom of the Son has become manifested and will endure forever. The last event of the Old Creation is over, and all that remains is for the Bowls of wrath to clean up the mess.

Following this trumpet section is a description of the history of this period (11:19-15:4), which we will look at next week.

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 11-15

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Nine: The Seven Trumpets of Warning Rev. 8-11

1. Jesus descends to earth to meet with John (Ch. 1)
2. The Seven Churches (Ch. 2-3)
3. Jesus ascends to heaven (Ch. 4-5)
4. The Seven Seals (Ch. 6-8)
5. The Seven Trumpets (Ch. 8-11)
6. The Church ascends to heaven (Ch. 11-15)
7. The seven Bowls (Ch. 16-19)
8. The Church descends to earth (Ch. 20-22)

1st Trumpet Sounds Against the Land (8:7)

2nd Trumpet Sounds Against the Sea (8:8-9)

3rd Trumpet Sounds Against the Springs of Water – The Temple (8:10-11)

4th Trumpet Sounds Against the Sun, Moon and Stars (8:12-13)

5th Trumpet Releases Satan and His Demonic Army (9:1-12)

6th Trumpet – The Witness of the Church (9:13-11:14)

1st Vision – The Warfare of the Church (9:13-21)

2nd Vision – John and the Little Book (10:1-11)

3rd Vision – Two Witnesses (11:1-14)

7th Trumpet – The Kingdom Proclaimed (11:15-18)

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 11-15

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Ten: The History of the Trumpet Times – Rev. 11:19-15:4

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

❖ Review

1. Jesus descends to earth to meet with John (Ch. 1)
2. The Seven Churches (Ch. 2-3)
3. Jesus ascends to heaven (Ch. 4-5)
4. The Seven Seals (Ch. 6-8)
5. The Seven Trumpets (Ch. 8-11)
6. The Church ascends to heaven (Ch. 11-15)
7. The seven Bowls (Ch. 16-19)
8. The Church descends to earth (Ch. 20-22)

Revelation was written to help the first Christians to understand their place in history. It was written before the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem in 70 AD. The Old Creation was going to be judged and would pass

away. The New Creation began with the establishment of the Church at Pentecost.

Review the first five points of the outline: 1) Jesus was revealed to John as the great and glorious judge of the world. 2) Letters to the seven churches of Asia, focusing on the sins of the churches and their need to discipline the unfaithful. 3) Jesus is revealed as ascending to heaven as the One who is worthy to open the sealed book and to receive worship and praise. 4) The seven seals were broken, releasing the Kingdom of God during the period between Pentecost and the final judgment of the Old Creation.

5) Last week we saw that the seven trumpets proclaimed the contents of the book. Because of the coming of the Kingdom by the proclamation of the gospel by the Church (the witnesses), persecution was brought against the Christians. The seventh trumpet announced in vv. 11-15 that “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign (have dominion) forever and ever.” The entire heavenly host fell on their faces in worship because the kingdom of the Son has become manifested and will endure forever. The last event of the Old Creation is over, and all that remains is for the Bowls of wrath to clean up the mess.

Today we will look at the section (11:19-15:4) between the Seven Trumpets and the Seven Bowls of Judgment, which symbolically lays out the history of the development of the Kingdom. 11:19 gives a view of the heavenly temple of God, with the ark of the His covenant – indicating that the judgments of God were about to come to the world based on His Covenant Word.

I. The Woman, the Child (Seed of the Woman) and the Dragon (12:1-17)

In the Garden of Eden, after Adam had sinned by failing to guard His bride from the serpent/dragon and eating the forbidden fruit, the woman was promised that one of her seed would crush the head of the serpent (Gen. 3:14-15). We know that the promised seed was Jesus, who defeated Satan at the cross. Throughout the Bible Satan tried to prevent Jesus from coming into the world by attacking the Bride of God.

In Revelation 12 we see a woman ready to give birth, and a dragon standing before the woman ready to devour the Child as soon as it was born. In this section we see the last four names of Satan in the book of Revelation: Dragon, Serpent, Devil and Satan). Before Jesus was born, Satan tried to use Herod to attempt to kill the baby Jesus, but failed. The Child that was born would rule all the nations (v. 5), and was caught up to God and to His throne, which happened after the failure of the dragon to defeat Christ and He was raised from the dead and ascended to heaven. Satan was cast down to the land (Israel-Jerusalem), where he took up residence Temple as Wormwood – but only for a short time (12:7-12).

Right away the Dragon sought to persecute the woman, the bride of Christ, the Church (12:13-17). This represents the events in Acts 3-7, ending with the stoning of Stephen. The woman fled into the wilderness, which we see in Acts 8 as the Christians flee Jerusalem. After a number of years of peace for the Church (Acts 9:31; Rev. 12:14), Wormwood (Satan-Bitterness) poured out his poisonous waters, the false teachings of the Jews to try to corrupt the woman-Church (12:15). But God raised up Paul to defeat Satan and the Judaizers, but the Jews drank up the false doctrine of the Dragon (12:16). Satan uses both persecution and corruption. Because the persecution and corruption of the Jewish Christians did not work, he began to persecute Gentile Christians, the “rest of her offspring” (12:17).

II. The Sea Beast (13:1-10)

John stood on the sands of the sea (which is symbolic of the Gentiles) and saw a Sea Beast rising up. This is imagery taken from Daniel 7, where we see the original sea beasts as guardians or protectors of God’s people. Each time one of the beasts went bad and turned against God’s people, God removed it and raised up another to take its place (Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome). In the book of Acts, the Romans primarily protected the Church. But when Nero came to the throne, he began to change the Roman empire. When Rome burned down in 64 AD, Nero blamed the Christians. This was the end of old (protecting) Rome and the arrival of the last of the sea beasts. 13:7 tells us that he was given permission to persecute the Gentile Church throughout the Roman world. Additionally, those who did not believe the gospel of Christ worshipped this last sea beast, to their destruction. 13:8-10 is a warning to the Church to remain faithful during this time of persecution and misplaced faith in the beast.

III. The Land Beast (13:11-15)

Next, John saw another beast, coming up out of the earth (referring to the land of Israel, the Circumcision). The Circumcision (Jews in Israel) worshipped the first beast (Rome). They had rejected Jesus as their Messiah, saying, "We have no king but Caesar." They wanted a political kingdom, hoping that a Jewish Empire would eventually replace the Roman Empire as they gained political influence. This land beast is also a false prophet (13:14), and has two horns on its head, which represent the Herods and the High Priests of Israel. The Herods were Edomite kings that served Rome in Palestine. These Herodian kings were the ones that appointed the High Priests during this time.

The false prophet/Land Beast of 13:13-14 is said to call down fire from heaven to the land. This reminds us of Elijah the prophet when he confronted the prophets of Baal, and called forth fire from heaven that consumed the sacrifice. It also reminds us of Revelation 8:5, where God is said to pour out the Spirit, as fire, on the day of Pentecost upon the Church, establishing His new Temple on the earth. The false prophet tried to imitate the works of God. Herod's temple (the temple during the life of Christ and the early Church) was completed in 64 AD, the same year that the old Rome burned and the new Rome began to be built to persecute the Church. The completion of the Temple was taken as a sign by the wicked Circumcision that God was on their side. It encouraged them to rebel against Rome, which resulted in their destruction. The completion of the Temple resulted in the Circumcision thinking that the Christians were the apostates, and they began to persecute the Church as never before. They killed the two witnesses (Rev. 11), the 144,000 (cf. 7:1-8).

The False Prophet set up an Image for the Sea Beast, and ordered that those who do not worship the Beast Image should be killed (13:14-18). The Beast image is the completed Temple. Worshipping the Beast Image is signified as buying and selling, and requires the mark of the Beast on the hand or forehead. The number of the Beast is the number of a man. "Man" means "Jew." It was a Jewish number, which comes from 1 Kings 10:14, referring to the 666 talents of gold that Solomon had. The kings of Israel were not to multiply gold, because they would begin to trust in wealth rather than Yahweh. In Revelation, the religious leaders of "the land" (Israel), the High Priests, are called kings. It must be remembered that it was Solomon that built the first Temple. The apostasy of the High Priest is related to Solomon's sin of multiplying gold and compromising the kingdom, which resulted in the false worship and the division of Israel between the Northern and Southern kingdoms. Thus, the number of the beast, 666, is desire of the Jewish leaders to be influential in the Roman Empire by causing the people of Israel to be buy and sell under the direction of Rome. The Temple became a symbol, not of faithfulness to the Lord, but compromise with Roman prosperity.

IV. The Massacre of the 144,000 (14:1-20)

In Revelation 14 we have a picture of the great massacre commanded by the Land Beast, the false prophet. In 14:1, the 144,000 of Revelation 7:1-8 are on the earth with Jesus on Mt. Zion. They were faithful to the Lord during a time when most of Israel was unfaithful. They did not take upon themselves the number of the beast; they had the name of the Father on their foreheads. In 15:2 these faithful saints are in heaven. Between 14:1 and 15:2 they are martyred, and are identified as the first fruit harvest of the new creation (14:4, 12-13).

Beginning in 14:6 we see six angels appear. Four are from the 24 archangels (4:4), and two are Jesus, the Angel of the Lord, the “other Angel.” First, in 14:6-7, Jesus preaches the everlasting gospel, good news, to all people (Jew and Gentile). The good news is that the hour of judgment had come. That hour would start with the great tribulation, the massacre of the saints (the 144,000). Because of their witness, the saints are murdered. The judgment would continue with the destruction of Babylon (Jerusalem) (14:8-11), and end with the destruction of the Beast and the False Prophet. [The great tribulation is **not** the suffering of the Jews during the time of the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem, but the suffering and martyrdom of the Church at the hands of the Circumcision and Gentiles.]

In vv. 9-12 there is a warning that any that apostatize from the Church because of the persecution and compromise with the evil Temple would be cast into hell. This warning is given to help the saints to persevere during the tribulation. 14:13 tells the faithful that if they do persevere, even unto death, they will be blessed.

In 14:14-16 we see a vision of One like the Son of Man, who stands ready to reap the grain harvest. An archangel comes and cried out for Him to reap the harvest with His sharp sickle. Another archangel appeared with a sickle to reap the grape harvest (14:17-19). Bread (grain) and wine (grapes) are symbols of the body and blood of Christ. We, the Church, are the body of Christ in the world. The harvest of grain and grapes is the harvest of Christ’s Church and represent the final massacre of the martyrs. The blood of the grapes completely covers and fills the land (14:20). Whenever the blood of the innocents is spilled, it cries out for the vengeance of God (Gen. 4:10, Ex. 1:22 + 7:20 + 12:23; Num. 35:9-34; Deut. 21:1-9). The blood cries for God’s wrath to be poured out, and that is what follows this section in the outpouring of the Bowls of wrath (Rev. 15:5-16:21). As the saints join Christ in His death outside of the city (Heb. 13:11-14), they go to their deaths so that the wrath of God will come upon the wicked. The final massacre is what seals the Babylon’s (Jerusalem’s) doom.

V. The Victory of the 144,000 (15:1-4)

In 15:1 the third great sign appears (see 12:1-3: 1st sign is the woman with child; 2nd sign is the Dragon). The first two signs represent the establishment of the

Kingdom of God by the birth of Christ, and the persecution of the Church by the Dragon following His resurrection and ascension. Now we have the announcement of the seven last plagues. These are the plagues that strike in response to the massacre of the saints. The saints are those who have not compromised with the beast, and stand on the sea of glass/fire before the door of the heavenly sanctuary. Because of their victory over the Dragon, they sang the song of victory that Moses sang, which becomes the song of the Lamb (Ex. 15:1-21; Deut. 32:1-43). It is not until later in Revelation that the saints actually enter the heavenly sanctuary. After the judgment of Babylon (Jerusalem) is complete, the saints rejoice in heaven with the Father (Ch. 19).

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 15-16

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Ten: The History of the Trumpet Times

1. Jesus descends to earth to meet with John (Ch. 1)
2. The Seven Churches (Ch. 2-3)
3. Jesus ascends to heaven (Ch. 4-5)
4. The Seven Seals (Ch. 6-8)
5. The Seven Trumpets (Ch. 8-11)
6. The Church ascends to heaven (Ch. 11-15)
7. The seven Bowls (Ch. 16-19)
8. The Church descends to earth (Ch. 20-22)

I. The Woman, the Child (Seed of the Woman) and the Dragon (12:1-17)

Gen. 3:14-15

Acts 3-9

II. The Sea Beast (13:1-10)

III. The Land Beast (13:11-15)

1 Kings 10:14

IV. The Massacre of the 144,000 (14:1-20)

Gen. 4:10, Ex. 1:22 + 7:20 + 12:23; Num. 35:9-34; Deut. 21:1-9

V. The Victory of the 144,000 (15:1-4)

Ex. 15:1-21; Deut. 32:1-43

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 15-16

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Eleven: The Seven Bowls of Final Judgment Rev. 15:5-16:21

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

❖ Review

1. Jesus descends to earth to meet with John (Ch. 1)
2. The Seven Churches (Ch. 2-3)
3. Jesus ascends to heaven (Ch. 4-5)
 4. The Seven Seals (Ch. 6-8)
 5. The Seven Trumpets (Ch. 8-11)
6. The Church ascends to heaven (Ch. 11-15)
7. The seven Bowls (Ch. 16-19)
8. The Church descends to earth (Ch. 20-22)

Revelation was written to help the first Christians to understand their place in history. It was written before the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem in 70 AD. The Old Creation was going to be judged and would pass

away. The New Creation began with the establishment of the Church at Pentecost.

Review the first six points of the outline: 1) Jesus was revealed to John as the great and glorious judge of the world. 2) Letters to the seven churches of Asia, focusing on the sins of the churches and their need to discipline the unfaithful. 3) Jesus is revealed as ascending to heaven as the One who is worthy to open the sealed book and to receive worship and praise. 4) The seven seals were broken, releasing the Kingdom of God during the period between Pentecost and the final judgment of the Old Creation. 5) The seven trumpets proclaimed the contents of the book. Because of the coming of the Kingdom by the proclamation of the gospel by the Church (the witnesses), persecution was brought against the Christians. The seventh trumpet announced in v. 15 that “The kingdom of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign (have dominion) forever and ever.” The entire heavenly host fell on their faces in worship because the kingdom of the Son has become manifested and will endure forever. The last event of the Old Creation is over, and all that remains is for the Bowls of wrath to clean up the mess. 6) Last week we looked at the section (11:19-15:4) between the Seven Trumpets and the Seven Bowls of Judgment, which symbolically lays out the historical development of the Kingdom (events of the Seven Trumpets). The saints that did not compromise with the Beast ascended before the heavenly sanctuary to sing God’s praises.

Today we will study the Seven Bowls of Judgment (15:5-16:21). Like the section explaining the historical events of the Seven Trumpets, it begins with a vision of the temple of God in heaven (cf. 11:19, 15:5). Like the Seven Trumpets, in Revelation 15:6-7 we see seven angels come out, and the full of the wrath of God is given to them in bowls by one of the four cherubim (cf. 4:6-11; 5:8; 14; 15:7). Then the glory of God filled the heavenly temple/palace, and no one was able to

enter it (15:8. At this point, if you were counting the various times the angels left their thrones to do something you would see that all 24 of the archangels have left and their thrones (4:4) are empty, but the saints have not yet entered to take the thrones. (The last archangel acts in 18:21, but must have left his throne before this event, possibly with the seven bowl angels).

~~Like the Seven Trumpets, the first four Bowls are against the Circumcision, Gentiles, Temple and Rulers. [The chart provided on the outline helps to illustrate the similarities between the Seven Trumpets and Seven Bowls.] Just as the Trumpet section was followed by a section symbolically describing the history of the period described by the Trumpets, so too, the Bowls section is followed by a symbolic historical description of the events of the final Bowl judgment of God (which we will look at next week, Ch. 17-18).~~

Trumpets (8:6-11:18)	Bowls (16:1-21)
1 st Trumpet Sounds Against the Land (8:7)	1 st Bowl Against “Men” in the land (16:2)
2 nd Trumpet Sounds Against the Sea (8:8-9)	2 nd Bowl Sounds Against the Sea (16:3)
3 rd Trumpet Sounds Against the Springs of Water – The Temple (8:10-11)	3 rd Bowl Sounds Against the Temple & Poisonous Waters of the Temple (16:4-7)
4 th Trumpet Sounds Against the Sun, Moon & Stars (8:12-13)	4 th Bowl Against the Sun – Rulers (16:8-9)
5 th Trumpet Releases Satan & His Demonic Army (9:1-12)	5 th Bowl Against the Gentiles (16:10-11)
6 th Trumpet – The Witness of the Church (9:13-11:14)	6 th Bowl War Against the Church (16:12-16)
7 th Trumpet – The Kingdom Proclaimed (11:15-18)	7 th Bowl – “It is Done!” Proclaimed (16:17-21)

A loud voice calls out in 16:1 to command the seven angels “Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth.”

1st Bowl Against “Men” in the Land (16:1)

As we saw last week, the mark of the beast was associated with the Jews compromising with the wealth of Gentiles, and their false worship by choosing to serve Roman rather than Christ. Here we see the wrath of God poured out against the Jews (“men”) for their compromises.

2nd Bowl Against the Sea (16:2)

The second bowl is against the sea and completely kills the sea. As we have seen, the sea is symbolic of the Gentile nations. What does the word Gentile mean? [Non-Jew.] The idea of Gentile only has meaning as compared to the Jews. The Jews were to be the special priestly nation to preach salvation to the Gentile nations. After the establishment of the Church, she is the special priestly nation to the world (both Jew and Gentile). With the elimination of the old chosen people in 70 AD, calling everyone else Gentiles no longer had any biblical meaning. There would still be people that were racially and culturally Jewish and non-Jewish (Greek and Roman) after 70 AD, but biblically they should either be considered

believers or unbelievers. Because of God's judgments on the Jews, the Gentiles ceased to exist as a separate category of people.

3rd Bowl Against the Temple & Poisonous Water – The Temple (16:4-7)

As we have seen, the Temple had become the throne of Satan because the Circumcision had rejected Jesus, and out of the Temple came the Wormwood (Bitter) poison waters of false teaching (3rd Trumpet, Rev. 8:10-11). 16:6 tells us that in these judgments God is avenging His saints, as punishment against Israel for every martyr from Abel to the 144,000 (Matt. 23:35). Those who had been slain for the word of God in 6:9-10 who cried out, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" is now answered in 16:7 with, "Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments."

4th Bowl Against the Sun – Rulers (16:8-9)

The 4th bowl is poured out against the sun, and concerns rulers and governors. The sun is not put out, but intensifies and becomes oppressive. Oppressive government is a punishment from God. Increasingly the Romans were oppressive in their government of the Jews as they rebelled against them. But the Jews did not repent and turn to Jesus.

5th Bowl Against the Gentiles (16:10-11)

In the 5th bowl the judgment of God comes upon the Roman Beast (13:11f). This probably refers to the chaos and confusion in Rome in the last years of the Emperor Nero and in the "year of three emperors" (68-60 AD). Notice that it is not "men" (as in 16:2, 3, 9) who blaspheme and would not repent, but are referred to as "they," meaning the Gentiles.

6th Bowl War Against the Church-The Mountain Festival Assembly (16:12-16)

In the 6th bowl we have the famous battle of Armageddon or Har-Magedon (meaning Har = Mountain & Magedon = Megiddo). What is interesting is that Megiddo is a city on a plain (flat area), not a mountain. The closest mountain is Mt. Carmel where Elijah defeated Jezebel's false prophets (1 Kings 18). Thus, there may be an allusion to the defeat of the false teachings of the Circumcision (cf. the Jezebel of 2:18-22). Also, God's people defeated the pagan kings of the land at Megiddo (Jud. 5:10); and kings of Israel were killed there (2 Kings 9:27; 23:29-30). More importantly, the death of Josiah, who was killed at Megiddo, was mourned God's people down through the time of Ezra during the restoration period. In Zechariah 12:10-11, after promising to "destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem (Zech. 12:9), God says that they will look at Christ, whom they have pierced and turn to the Lord and weep like they did at Megiddo [with the death of Josiah]. What follows is God's declaration that He would remove from Israel the idols, false prophets and evil spirits (Zech. 13), and would bring hostile

armies to besiege Jerusalem (Zech. 14). John is setting up an image that recalls for God's people events recorded in the Old Testament so that they can understand what He is doing for them.

Literally, the words "Armageddon" or "Har-Magedon" mean Mountain (Har) Festival Assembly (Meged). The battle of Armageddon is a battle at the Church. The actual battle is pictured in Revelation 19, where, at the Festival of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, a battle is fought in which the Beast is destroyed.

Two armies are brought together to fight the battle. Satan gathered the wicked Romans together with the wicked Circumcision to fight against the kingdom of God. But the Romans decided to destroy Jerusalem instead. The first is the Army of the kings of the east that cross over the Euphrates River that had been dried up. When Cyrus the Persian conquered the Babylonians in 539 BC, they temporarily dried up the Euphrates River and took the city by surprise. Jerusalem had become the new Babylon, an enemy of God that must now be conquered by a new Cyrus, the Romans. The result was that the Church would be saved from the Jews in the new Babylon.

The second army is the Three-Frog Army that are spirit is demons coming from the mouth of the Dragon, Satan. These are related to the mouth of the Beast (Romans) and the false prophet (High Priest of Israel). Together, these leaders of the Romans and Israel go out to the kings of the whole world to gather them together for the War of the great day of God. By their false prophecy and amazing works they incite armies to fight against God, but in the end they attack and destroy Jerusalem. What they do not realize is that God is bringing them together for His purposes.

In 16:15 a warning is given to the Church. He says that He is coming like a thief. This refers back to Jesus' words in Matt. 24:42-44 and Lk. 12:34-40 (cf. 1 Thes. 5:1-11). Jesus also warned the Church of Sardis in 3:2-3, 4-5 of the same thing. The Church must remain faithful during the judgments that were coming upon the Jews by keeping their garments clean.

7th Bowl – "It is Done!" Proclaimed (16:17-21)

As the 7th bowl of judgment is poured out, a loud voice from the temple in heaven declared that "It is done!" Both Jerusalem/Babylon and the nations of the Gentiles are shaken so that what remains is the City of God. The Jewish people and the Roman empire continued to exist, but would be progressively transformed by the Church. Eventually in history, both Israel and the Roman Empire ceased to exist because of the judgments of God and the growth of Christ's kingdom.

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 17-18

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Eleven: The Seven Bowls of Final Judgment Rev. 15:5-16:21

1. Jesus descends to earth to meet with John (Ch. 1)
2. The Seven Churches (Ch. 2-3)
3. Jesus ascends to heaven (Ch. 4-5)
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1st Bowl Against “Men” in the Land (16:1)

2nd Bowl Against the Sea (16:2)

3rd Bowl Against the Temple & Poisonous Water – The Temple (16:4-7)

4th Bowl Against the Sun – Rulers (16:8-9)

5th Bowl Against the Gentiles (16:10-11)

6th Bowl War Against the Church-The Mountain Festival Assembly (16:12-16)

1 Kings 18; Rev. 2:19-22; Jud. 5:10; 2 Kings 9:27; 23:29-30; Zech. 12:11
 Matt. 24:42-44; Lk. 12:34-40 (cf. 1 Thes. 5:1-11). Re. 3:2-3, 4-5

7th Bowl – “It is Done!” Proclaimed (16:17-21)

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 17-18

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Twelve: The Judgment of Babylon Rev. 17-18

❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism**

❖ **Review**

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2. The Seven Churches (Ch. 2-3)
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7. The seven Bowls (Ch. 16-19)
8. The Church descends to earth (Ch. 20-22)

Revelation was written to help the first Christians to understand their place in history. It was written before the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem in 70 AD. The Old Creation was going to be judged and would pass

away. The New Creation began with the establishment of the Church at Pentecost.

Review the first six points of the outline: 1) Jesus was revealed to John as the great and glorious judge of the world. 2) Letters to the seven churches of Asia, focusing on the sins of the churches and their need to discipline the unfaithful. 3) Jesus is revealed as ascending to heaven as the One who is worthy to open the sealed book and to receive worship and praise. 4) The seven seals were broken, releasing the Kingdom of God during the period between Pentecost and the final judgment of the Old Creation. 5) The seven trumpets proclaimed the contents of the book. Because of the coming of the Kingdom through the proclamation of the gospel by the Church (the witnesses), persecution was brought against the Christians. The seventh trumpet announced in v. 15 that “The kingdom of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign (have dominion) forever and ever.” 6) After the Trumpets was a different symbolic look as the same historical period, concluding with the saints who were victorious over the beast having ascended to heaven. 7) Last week we looked at the Seven Bowls of Judgment, which symbolically shows the wrath of God being poured out on the various parts of the rebellious world.

Today, in Revelation 17-18, we will see the final history of the Old Creation played out symbolically. In this section we will see the apostate Jews judged by God, using the Roman Empire as His instrument of destruction.

I. The Great Harlot (17:1-6)

While the Babylon spoken of is Jerusalem, it includes not only the city, but also the Circumcision wherever they were (i.e. the apostate Jews of Israel and the Judaizers throughout the world). In 17:1-2 we are introduced to a new symbolic figure, the

great harlot. In the Old Testament unfaithful Israel was repeatedly called a harlot (1 Chron. 5:25; 2 Chron. 21:11; Ps. 73:27; 106:39; Is. 1:21; 57:3-5; Jer. 2:20; 3:1-6; 13:27; Ezek. 6:9; 16:15; 20:30; 23; Hosea; Amos 7:17; Mic. 1:7). Now, Israel is again likened to a harlot, and this time she sits on many waters, meaning that her unfaithfulness is expressed all over the world. The great Harlot is said to have corrupted the kings of the earth so that they are drunk with her sins and compromises with the wicked of the earth. The Jews, after the exile, were scattered throughout the world, and took their perverted theology wherever they went. This is why the Apostle Paul and the Church were persecuted by the Jews wherever the gospel went.

In Revelation 12 we saw the faithful Church represented as a woman in the wilderness, persecuted by Satan, the dragon. She was attacked by the evil Circumcision. Now, in Ch. 17, unfaithful Israel is characterized as an unfaithful woman sitting in the wilderness on a scarlet beast with seven heads with ten horns (17:3). On her forehead a name was written, "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (17:5). Symbolically, Israel should have been represented by what was written on the forehead of the High Priest, "Holy to Yahweh." Instead, she was an apostate Bride, not holy but an abomination. 17:6 tells us that John saw that the harlot was drunk with the blood of the saints, those who had died because of their witness of Christ. She not only had blood on her hands, but had their blood inside themselves, demonstrating how wicked they were. This vision was a great amazement to John.

II. The Beast that Carries the Harlot (17:7-18)

The angel that showed these things to John went on to explain to him the meaning of the vision. Jesus is said to be the One "who is, and who was, and who is to come" (1:8). In 17:8, the beast is described as one who "was, and is not, and yet is." The beast on which the wicked woman sits is a combination of the Red Dragon (Satan) and the Sea Beast (Rome). The Dragon, the beast from the bottomless pit (the abyss) from Revelation 9:1-2, 11 "was" when he led the Circumcision against the Church in 9:1-11 and 12:15. Then he "was not" when he was defeated by Paul and the Apostles in the book of Acts. Then he was shown to come back out of the abyss/bottomless pit for his final attack on the Church in 11:7 and 13:15-17. Eventually, he will go to destruction. First, his Sea Beast and False Prophet will be destroyed (19:20), and then Satan himself will be destroyed (20:10).

~~17:9 explains more of the symbolism of the beast, saying that the seven heads are seven mountains. In the Old Testament, mountains are generally symbols of kings or kingdoms. In the book of Daniel we learn that God was setting up several kingdoms that would be guardians of Israel following the kingdom period in Israel. These were Babylon, Persia, Alexander the Greek, Greek Egypt and Greek Syria.~~

~~The sixth of these kingdoms existed during the time Revelation was written, Hellenistic Rome, who was still protecting the Church. The seventh kingdom (which was also an eighth head, 17:11) was about to come in 64 AD, the demonic Imperial Rome (Nero). In Daniel 7:8 there is a vision similar to this, where the beast is said to have ten horns (ten Roman Emperors), and a little horn that uprooted three of the ten horns. The little horn was the Herods, who were appointed and represented Rome in Palestine. Three Roman Emperors gave their power to three Herods. These ten horns on the beast represent the Roman Empire that turned against the Harlot. Formerly, the Romans supported the Jews by granting them special privileges in the Empire. This is why the Roman protected the Church, because the Romans thought the Christians were part of a Jewish sect. When the Jews rebelled as a nation when the Temple was completed in 64 AD, Rome turned against them. After the coming of the final Roman king, the Roman beast would also make war against Christ and the Church, but He will overcome them (17:14). But the beast will gather the nations together and be sent by God to overthrow the Jews, the harlot, Babylon.~~

Julius Caesar	
Augustus Caesar	Herod the Great – Tried to kill Jesus
Tiberius Caesar	Herod Antipas – Killed John the Baptist and Jesus
Gaius (Caligula) Caesar	
Claudius Caesar	Herod Agrippa I – Killed James
Nero Caesar (64 AD) (Beginning of demonic Imperial Rome that began to persecute the Church)	
Galba	
Otho	
Vitellius	
Vespasian (Rewarded for punishing Jerusalem)	

III. The Fall of Babylon (18:1-21)

In Revelation 18, we are given a picture of rejoicing and lamentation over the destruction of Jerusalem-Babylon. Another great angel came down from heaven to declare that “Babylon the great is fallen and has become a habitation of demons” (18:1-2).

Then John heard another voice calling God’s people (the Church) out of Jerusalem-Babylon (18:4-8). In Matthew 24:15f Jesus told the disciples to leave

Jerusalem when the city was about to be destroyed. We know (from Josephus, the Jewish historian at the time) that the Christians all escaped from Jerusalem before its destruction.

What follows are three lamentation over the destruction of Jerusalem. 1) The lamentation of the kings of the land, the religious leaders (18:9-10). 2) The lamentation of the merchants of the land, the ordinary worshippers (18:11-16). The items listed correspond to the items gathered to build the Tabernacle and Temple (Ex. 25:4-7; 1 Chron. 28-39). 3) The lamentation of the Gentile “seafarers” who supported the Jews (18:17-19) and had rejected the Kingdom of Christ.

Finally, the Church is called upon to rejoice in the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem-Babylon (18:20). The cause for rejoicing is that God the Husband has avenged His murdered Bride (18:20, 24). In 18:21, the last of the 24 archangels threw a great stone into the sea, signifying that the Jews were scattered among the Gentiles. The result is that the great city is no longer a bride, and she can no longer deceive the nations. God has taken up a new bride, which we will look at more next week.

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 19-20

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Twelve: The Judgment of Babylon Rev. 17-18

1. Jesus descends to earth to meet with John (Ch. 1)
2. The Seven Churches (Ch. 2-3)
3. Jesus ascends to heaven (Ch. 4-5)
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8. The Church descends to earth (Ch. 20-22)

I. The Great Harlot (17:1-6)

1 Chron. 5:25; 2 Chron. 21:11; Ps. 73:27; 106:39; Is. 1:21; 57:3-5; Jer. 2:20; 3:1-6: 13:27; Ezek. 6:9; 16:15; 20:30; 23; Hosea; Amos 7:17; Mic. 1:7

II. The Beast that Carries the Harlot (17:7-18)

Julius Caesar	
Augustus Caesar	Herod the Great – Tried to kill Jesus
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Nero Caesar (64 AD) (Beginning of demonic Imperial Rome that began to persecute the Church)	
Galba	
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Vitellius	
Vespasian (Rewarded for punishing Jerusalem)	

III. The Fall of Babylon (18:1-21)

Ex. 25:4-7; 1 Chron. 28-39

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 19-20

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Thirteen: The Bride & The Millennium Rev. 19-20

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

❖ Review

1. Jesus descends to earth to meet with John (Ch. 1)
2. The Seven Churches (Ch. 2-3)
3. Jesus ascends to heaven (Ch. 4-5)
4. The Seven Seals (Ch. 6-8)
5. The Seven Trumpets (Ch. 8-11)
6. The Church ascends to heaven (Ch. 11-15)
7. The seven Bowls (Ch. 16-19)
8. The Church descends to earth (Ch. 20-22)

Revelation was written to help the first Christians to understand their place in history. It was written before the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem in 70 AD. The Old Creation was going to be judged and pass away. The

New Creation began with the establishment of the Church at Pentecost. [Teacher: Briefly review the outline.] During the old creation period, the Kingdom of God was sealed up, awaiting full manifestation by the Lamb, Jesus Christ. With the opening of the Seals, the book of the Kingdom was opened and the old creation began to be judged. The judgment was announced by the Trumpets, which at the same time was the proclamation of the completion of the “mystery of God,” the opening of the Kingdom and heavenly temple to the whole world. This began the persecution of the Church and many of the saints were martyred for their witness. What followed was the pouring out of the Bowls of God’s wrath on the world (i.e. the Circumcision and the Gentile world). Jerusalem was no longer the Bride of God (18:23). Today we will see that the New Bride, the Church, is brought to Her groom for the great Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

I. The Marriage Supper of the Lamb (19:1-10) & The Battle of the Festival Mountain People (19:11-21)

In 6:9-11 God’s people had prayed for Jerusalem’s destruction because they had been persecuted for their faith in Christ. Progressively through Revelation we have seen that the Church is brought closer to heaven and the Throne. Now, in Ch. 19 we see the rejoicing of the saints in heaven and all of the heavenly hosts because of the judgment of God against the destruction of their enemies – Babylon/Jerusalem/ and those whom The great Harlot had corrupted (19:1-6). Because of His judgments, the Lord reigns! With this judgment on the world, the Bride of Christ is now made ready to rejoice and feast forever with Christ (19:7-9).

As we saw in Ch. 16, there was a gathering of armies to the place called Armageddon. As we saw before, literally, the words “Armageddon” or “Har-

Magedon” mean Mountain (Har) Festival Assembly (Meged). The Church, the Mountain Festival Assembly, has now been made ready for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. The Great Festival began at Pentecost, but it arrives in its fullness now that Jerusalem has been destroyed. The Lord’s Supper that we observe every week is the celebration that we (Church) are now the Bride of Christ in the world.

The battle of Armageddon is a battle at the Church. The actual battle pictured in Revelation 16 is fought here in Revelation 19, where, at the Festival of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb the Beast is destroyed. Two armies are brought together to fight the battle [cf. Ps. 2]. Satan gathered the wicked Romans together with the wicked Circumcision to fight against the kingdom of God. But, as we have seen, the Romans turned against the Circumcision and destroyed them. During the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, with Christ, the Church rides forth in history to conquer all the nations (19:11-14). The nations are conquered by the sword that comes out of Jesus’ mouth, which is the preaching the gospel of the Kingdom (19:15-16). The birds are called upon to come to the supper of the great God, and eat the flesh of the peoples of the world (19:17-18). This is a common Old Testament image of ultimate judgement (1 Sam. 17:46; Jer. 12:9; Ezek. 39:17-20). The Sea beast and the False Prophet (i.e. the Herods and the High Priest) are destroyed and removed from history (19:19-21).

II. The Millennium (20:1-14)

After these events in 70 AD, the Millennium begins. The word millennium means 1000, and refers to a period of time. A study of biblical history shows that from the time of the building of Solomon’s temple to 70 AD is 1000 years. This was the first Millennium, a shadow/symbol of the great Millennium revealed here in Revelation 20. Remember that Solomon’s 666 apostasy (1 Kings 10:14) is a foreshadowing of the 666 apostasy that ends the 1000 year first kingdom (13:18). The eternal Kingdom of Christ is not limited to 1000 years, but is an eternal kingdom and Jesus will rule forever (1:6; 11:15). Thus, the second Millennium is a symbolic number that refers to an eternal kingdom.

At the beginning of the Millennium, Satan is cast back into the bottomless pit and bound. This does not mean that Satan can do nothing, but rather, he can no longer deceive the nations and keep the Kingdom from them (20:1-3). The gospel would go forth and the nations will be converted and brought into the kingdom. From the time of 70 AD, for the first time in history the knowledge of God went forth with power and the name of Jesus is now praised throughout the world. There is yet much evangelism to be done, but clearly, Satan has been bound throughout the world.

In 20:4-6 we see that the thrones previously occupied by the archangels (4:4) are now occupied by the ascended saints who were martyred are now in the heavenly Temple. They are said to rule with Christ (20:4) in the eternal kingdom (not just

for 1000 years). These saints are said to have been resurrected, which refers to the Church being resurrected from her persecution and brought into favor as God's people. Christians that die are brought into the presence of God at their death, which is a "first resurrection." They join the enthroned saints that have been resurrected to God and reign with Him.

The "rest of the dead" are the wicked, and do not rise until the last day (20:5). These remain outside of the presence of God until the last day, when they are given back their bodies, only to be cast into the lake of fire before God.

20:7-8 tells us that the Millennium, which began after 70 AD, will not last all the way to the second coming of Christ at the last day. There is a brief time after the Millennium in which Satan will once again be released from the bottomless pit to deceive all (i.e. the four corners of the earth) the nations. He will gather together the nations, spoken of as Gog and Magog (Gog = Prince & Magog = people, symbols which come from Ezekiel 38-39), at that time to do battle against the Church, the beloved city (which we will learn about next week (Ch. 21). This battle against the Church on earth following the Millennium will be brought to an end by fire coming down from God out of heaven to destroy the enemies of the Church (20:9-10).

In 20:11-14 we see the Great White Throne judgment. At the last judgment on the last day, God will come and fill all of heaven and earth, and they will "flee away." When God fills His Temple, no one can remain in it. At that time, all men, both small and great will stand before the throne to be judged. Books were opened in John's vision of the last day, and everyone was judged according to their work, determining if they were faithful or faithless. Those who are judged faithless will be cast into the Lake of Fire (which is referred to as the "second death"), along with Death and Hades (the place of death for the unfaithful after they die). Those whose names were found in the Book of Life (20:12) are brought into everlasting life with Christ, and the second death has no power over them (cf. 20:6).

This picture of the last day concludes the history of the world. Next week we will see that the process of history is the passing away of the Old Creation, and the full manifestation of the New Creation in the Church. The goal/direction/end of history is the Church, the Bride of Christ. We have been made partakers of Christ's everlasting Kingdom. We know that He will be victorious over Satan and all the wicked men throughout history that seek to destroy the Church.

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 21-22

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

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1. Jesus descends to earth to meet with John (Ch. 1)
2. The Seven Churches (Ch. 2-3)
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I. The Marriage Supper of the Lamb (19:1-10) & The Battle of the Festival Mountain People (19:11-21)

Rev. 16 - Literally, the words “Armageddon” or “Har-Magedon” mean Mountain (Har) Festival Assembly (Meged).

II. The Millennium (20:1-14)

Millennium literally means 1000

Gog and Magog (Gog = Prince & Magog = people; symbols which come from Ezekiel 38-39)

Homework assignment: Read Revelation 21-22

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Fourteen: The New Jerusalem Rev. 21-22

❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism**

❖ **Review**

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

Following the visions we have already seen in the book of Revelation we see the coming of the new heaven and new earth. This was something that the prophet Isaiah wrote about centuries before, and was anticipated by the Church (Is. 65:17-19; 66:22; 2 Pt. 3:13). As we saw last week, at the Great White Throne Judgment the old earth and heaven fled before the face of God. Now in Ch. 21 the new heaven and earth are revealed as the everlasting Kingdom. But as we have seen, the Kingdom is also a present reality of the Church age. In this last section we see the New Jerusalem with her gates open and converts coming in, and the Spirit and the Bride are evangelizing (21:24; 22:17). Thus, the Church is the New Jerusalem in the New Creation.

What makes the new heavens and earth new is not something physical, but represents a change in rulership. Where the first Adam failed as the ruler over the old creation, the second Adam, Jesus, was the one who conquered sin and death and ascended to heaven to sit on the Throne of God (Ch. 5). At Pentecost, the enthroned ruler of the new heavens and earth sent His Spirit to release the Kingdom (Ch. 6-9). In Ch. 9 we saw that Satan was cast out of heaven to the earth and the earth was judged. But this was only the first part of the coming of the Kingdom. The fullness of the *new heavens* came when the saints joined Christ on the thrones of heaven (20:4). The fullness of the *new earth* came when Satan was removed from the earth (20:1-3, 10).

The Church began to be formed in her New Creation at Pentecost, but over the next 40 years the Spirit worked through the Apostles and Prophets to establish her in greater fullness. During this time the Bible was completed, and the Spirit caused the Church to bring together both believing Jews and God-fearing Gentile into the

Kingdom. All of this took some time and involved some difficulty for the Church, as we see in the book of Acts and in the Epistles (letters). When the process was completed, many in the Church were martyred (Ch. 14) and then the Bride was fully prepared and formed. The crucified and resurrected Christ now has a martyred and resurrected Bride who rules with Him.

We have seen that the Bride had become formed by the time of the Battle of the Mountain Festival Assembly (19:7-9). At the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, the Church was given white, holy garments to wear. Now (21:2) we read that the Holy City, called New Jerusalem, is made ready as a Bride adorned for her Husband. This only happened after the old Jerusalem, Babylon, the Whore, is destroyed (Ch. 18). Once the wicked Jerusalem of the apostate Jews is judged and the temple destroyed in 70 AD, the New Jerusalem is revealed in the Church. The feast continues until the end of history. At the end of history (after the last judgement), the Bride and the Groom live forever in marital happiness in the everlasting Kingdom, free from tears, death, sorrow, crying, pain and the presence of sinners (21:2-8).

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

But what we see in 21:9ff are aspects of the New Jerusalem that do not apply to the everlasting Kingdom. In 21:9-10 John is shown the Bride, called the great city, the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven. Hebrews 12:22 and Galatians 4:26 calls the Church the heavenly New Jerusalem which existed from the time of Pentecost. She is seen as discipling the nations, who gradually come into her as the gospel is proclaimed throughout the world (21:24; 22:17). Throughout the last 2000 years the Church has been growing in glory and beauty as the nations have been converted and brought into the Church.

The New Jerusalem, the Church is described in 21:11-21. 21:11-13 tells us that she is guarded by a great and high wall with twelve gates (representing the twelve tribes of Israel, the first form of the Kingdom) and twelve angels/messengers at the gates (which are pastors, as we saw in the letters to the Churches, Rev. 2-3). The city is built on the foundation stones of the twelve (martyred) apostles (21:14). John was shown the enormous size of the city, which is equivalent to about 1380 miles on each side, showing symbolically that it is very great. The stones used to construct the city are the gemstones of the tribes of Israel and now represent the twelve apostles (v. 14). The twelve gates were each made of a single pearl that come from the Gentile Sea. The New Jerusalem is made up of both Jews and Gentiles, now fully formed into one body, the Church.

21:22 tells us that there is no temple in this heavenly city because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple. This City is Temple, and the Temple is city. The glory of God shines out of the Church, the Temple-City, into the world (21:23). The nations that are converted come into the Church, bringing their glory and honor into her, and make her more glorious. The gates of the Kingdom are always open for men to come into the Church. Nothing defiles the Temple to make God leave it because it is populated by those whose names have been written in the Lamb's Book of Life. (22:24-27).

III. "I am Coming Quickly" (21:6-21)

When Satan was cast out of heaven in Ch. 8-9 we saw that he caused one third of the rivers and springs of water to be made wormwood (bitter), and many men died because of the bitterness. Wormwood is a term used in the Old Testament law and prophets to warn Israel against apostasy (Deut. 29:18; Jer. 9:15; 23:15; Lam. 3:15, 19; Amos 5:7). As Satan occupied the Temple, he caused the apostasy of the Jews to increase, and bitter waters flowed from the Temple in the form of poisonous teachings that were deadly to the world. Now in 22:1 the poisonous waters of Wormwood are gone, and a stream of life-giving water, the Holy Spirit, flows from the throne of God, bringing new life to the world. Not only so, men are restored to the Tree of Life, which man was forbidden to eat after the fall of Adam (22:2). There shall be no more curse because God the throne of God and of the Lamb is in the Temple of the New Jerusalem, and the saints shall serve Him, not the serpent (22:3). The dead saints rule in heaven on the thrones of the archangels (4:4; 20:4), and the living saints on earth reign forever and ever, disciplining the nations (22:5). With this, the visions are over.

Revelation concludes with some final reminders to John. He is told not to seal (to keep quiet about) the words of the prophecy. The events that he witnessed, which were about to come to pass, were things that the seven churches needed to understand if they were to remain faithful during difficult days ahead. Several times John is told that the time is at hand, and that Jesus was coming quickly (22:10, 12, 20), just as it did in 1:1, 3. The urgency of the message is clear, Jesus is coming quickly to fulfill all that is written in the book, therefore, stand firm and be faithful. They will be tested, persecuted and even martyred, but they can stand firm because they know that Jesus will vindicate them (demonstrate to them and the world that they were correct to put their trust in Him), just He Himself was vindicated (proven to be the Messiah). If they (and we) do not stand firm, the contents of the book that has now been opened to the Church will be brought against them (and us), just as it was on Babylon and the Beast.

The book of Revelation concludes with a blessing: “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.” We can remain faithful to Christ through our various testings and tribulations because the grace of God has been given to us.

Homework assignment: Complete the Student Evaluation and return to the teacher

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

Is. 65:17-19; 66:22; 2 Pt. 3:13

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

Hebrews 12:22 and Galatians 4:26

III. “I am Coming Quickly” (21:6-21)

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The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Student Evaluation

Student Name _____ Date _____

1. _____ to earth to meet with John (Ch. ____)
2. The _____ (Ch. 2-3)
3. _____ to heaven (Ch. _____)
4. The Seven _____ (Ch. _____)
5. The Seven _____ (Ch. _____)
6. The _____ to heaven (Ch. _____)
7. The Seven _____ (Ch. _____)
8. The _____ to earth (Ch. _____)

The Book of Revelation was written by _____

The Book of Revelation was written at about what date? _____
A) 33 AD B) 45 AD C) 64 AD D) 96 AD

Why was the book of Revelation written? _____

- A) To reveal what the future is for us
- B) To help the Christians of the first century to understand their place in history and to remain faithful during persecution.
- C) To provide exciting reading for the Christians throughout history
- D) To describe the wickedness of the Circumcision and the Romans

From the list below, what are the names of the seven churches that received letters from Christ in Revelation? _____

Sardis	Babylon	Pergamos	Egypt	Jerusalem	Smyrna
Philippi	Thyatira	Rome	Samaria	Athens	Philadelphia
Laodicea	Armageddon	Sodom	Ephesus		

The "Circumcision" were what two groups of apostate Jews? _____

- A) Unbelieving Jews in the land
- B) The zealots who fought Rome
- C) Jews scattered throughout the world
- D) The Judaizers

What do the following symbols refer to? (choose from the list below):

- A) The Lamb (Ch. 5) _____
- B) The Beast from the bottomless pit (Ch. 11) _____
- C) The Sea Beast (Ch. 13) _____
- D) The False Prophet (Ch. 16) _____
- E) The mark of Beast – 666 (Ch. 13) _____
(1) The apostasy of Solomon (2) Jesus (3) Rome
(4) Satan (5) The High Priest & the Herods

What two events happened in 64 AD? _____

- A) The burning of Rome
- B) The destruction of the Temple
- C) The death of the 144,000
- D) The completion of Herod's Temple

What event was the beginning of the New Creation? _____

- A) The death of Jesus
- B) The destruction of Jerusalem
- C) Pentecost

What event was the end of the Old Creation? _____

- A) The death of Jesus
- B) The destruction of Jerusalem
- C) Pentecost

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Student Evaluation

Student Name _____ Date _____

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The Book of Revelation was written by John.

The Book of Revelation was written at about what date? C) 64 AD
A) 33 AD B) 45 AD C) 64 AD D) 96 AD

Why was the book of Revelation written? B)

- A) To reveal what the future is for us
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From the list below, what are the names of the seven churches that received letters from Christ in Revelation?

Sardis Pergamos Ephesus Smyrna Thyatira Philadelphia Laodicea
 Babylon Egypt Jerusalem
Philippi Rome Samaria Athens
 Armageddon Sodom

The "Circumcision" were what two groups of apostate Jews? _____

- A) Unbelieving Jews in the land C) ~~Jews scattered throughout the world~~
- B) ~~The zealots who fought Rome~~ D) The Judaizers

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A) Jew in the land D) The Judaizers

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What do the following symbols refer to? (choose from the list below):

- A) The Lamb (Ch. 5) (2) Jesus
B) The Beast from the bottomless pit (Ch. 11) (4) Satan
C) The Sea Beast (Ch. 13) (3) Rome
D) The False Prophet (Ch. 16) (5) The High Priest & the Herods
E) The mark of Beast – 666 (Ch. 13) (1) The apostasy of Solomon
(1) The apostasy of Solomon (2) Jesus (3) Rome
(4) Satan (5) The High Priest & the Herods

What two events happened in 64 AD?

A) The burning of Rome by Nero D) The completion of Herod’s Temple

- A) The burning of Rome by Nero
B) The destruction of the Temple
C) The death of the 144,000
D) The completion of Herod’s Temple

What event was the beginning of the New Creation? C) Pentecost

- A) The death of Jesus
B) The destruction of Jerusalem
C) Pentecost

What event was the end of the Old Creation? B) The destruction of Jerusalem

- A) The death of Jesus
B) The destruction of Jerusalem
C) Pentecost