

General help for understanding symbols in Revelation

The book of Revelation can be difficult to understand. One reason is that the book explains things we can see and things we can't see. The book talks about government and wars and churches and hunger, all things that happen on earth. It also talks about things that happen in heaven, and how things happen from God's perspective. Those two things can be confusing sometimes. If you don't understand some verses, it is important to know if it is happening in the spiritual world we can't see, or if it is happening in this world we can see.

The book of Revelation also uses many symbols. These symbols mean or stand for something else. For example, the lampstands in chapter one are symbols for churches. When you read "lampstand," you should understand "church." There are different kinds of symbols used.

1. Numbers.
2. Living things. These include animals, people, and strange beasts.
3. Colors.
4. Natural things. These are things you see in the world like stars, the earth, sun, moon, hail, etc. If the verses use a natural symbol, then it means something you can see on earth. For example, Revelation 8:6 talks about a third of the earth burning up, a third of the trees, and a third of the grass burning up. Those things are natural, so it is not talking about the spiritual world. That verse is talking about some disaster we will see on earth.
5. Many other symbols are used. If the symbols are not normal things we see or experience on earth things, the verses are talking about something that happens in the spiritual world, something we don't see. An example is the dragon/serpent in Revelation 12.

Jesus

Alpha & Omega	Name for God the Father (Rev. 1:8, 21:6), name for Jesus (22:13)
Beginning & End	Name for God the Father (Rev. 21:6) and Jesus (Rev. 22:13)
First and Last	Name for Jesus (Rev. 22:13)
Key of David	A key shows power and control. David was a great king. Because Jesus has the key of David, that means Jesus is a great King with full power.
Lamb	Name for Jesus as the Lamb of God, the willing sacrifice for sin.
Lion of tribe of Judah	Name for Jesus. Shows His power, strength, and that He is king.
Root of David	Name for Jesus, meaning He is from David's family. Actually means He began David's family, He is the head and leader of it.

Numbers

- 1/3 (one third) A part, doesn't mean literally one third. Usually used for part of something in God's creation that sin destroyed.
- 3 Three is normally God's number, meaning the Trinity. In Revelation, the devil tries to copy God. Revelation chapter 13 talks about a dragon and two beasts, adding up to 3. Three can be used to mean the whole spiritual world.
- 4 Mostly used for four living creatures. Four because they represent all directions, all space? Used with the earth, means the whole earth. (like 4 directions – north, south, east, west)
- 5 In Revelation, used for 5 months. Means a limited time. It won't go on forever.
- 6 People. Not quite 7, because we are not perfect.

- 7 Perfection, or complete. God's number. Can mean something is holy, perfect, from God.
- 10 Completeness. Nothing missing, nothing more to add.
- 12 There are 12 families in Israel. In the N.T., 12 means God's people, Jews and non-Jews.
- 24 Used for 24 elders. Could be 24 elders for 12 tribes of Israel and 12 apostles.
- 42 months, or 1,260 days, 3 ½ (three & one-half) years, or "time, times and half a time". These are all the same. The number means the time of much persecution. It is not literally 3 ½ years long.
- 666 6 is the number meaning man. 666 is the number meaning the second beast, usually called the antichrist. It is three 6's, which could emphasize that the antichrist is man and not God. Or the three 6's could be related to the number 3, the dragon and the two beasts.
- 1,000 Rev. chapter 20 talks about believers ruling for 1,000 years with Christ. This does not mean exactly 1,000 years. It means the whole time between Jesus' first and second coming.
- 144,000 All of God's people, really emphasized. 12 means God's people, and 10 means complete. Cubed (10x10x10) is holy and perfect. 144,000 is 12x12x10x10x10 (2 - 12's and 3 - 10's), so this is really all of God's people, holy and perfect.
- Thousands upon thousands, 10 thousand times 10 thousand. Means more than you can count.

Stones and Colors

- Pearls, jasper, sapphire, chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, carnelian, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chryoprase, jacinth, amethyst. All just show riches and beauty. John uses them most of the time to try to describe how beautiful heaven is.
- Many colors Several times, many colors are used to describe God, or heaven, or Jerusalem, or God's throne, or other beautiful things. The colors don't mean anything specific. It is only John's way to try to explain how beautiful something is.
- Black Death, maybe famine (much hunger, starving to death).
- Gold Means a king, or glory.
- Pale or Pale Green Sickness or death.
- Green Green like a tree or plant means life, usually eternal life.
- Rainbow Shows God's glory. A normal rainbow has a beginning and end. This rainbow is a complete circle around God's throne.
- Red depending on how it is used, could mean blood, could mean war.
- Scarlet and purple Usually mean riches like a king has. Scarlet and purple cloth were very expensive.
- White Means either clean, pure, or victory and triumph. If it means victory, it is not always a good victory. The white horse in Rev. chapter 6 means victory, but it is not a victory from God. In Rev. 16, Jesus rides on a white horse, and that means Jesus' victory. His people have white clothes on, which means Jesus' cleanness and perfection.

Living Things

- Angels The book of Revelation has many angels. They are truly angels, and don't mean anything else.
- Beast Many people think a beast means one person who will do terrible things. Really, a beast probably means many people who will do the same kinds of terrible things.
- Dragon The devil. Also called a serpent (snake).
- Elders There are 24 elders. 12 represent O.T. believers, 12 represent N.T. Christians.
- Eyes Used with God, many eyes means that God sees everything. Usually means the Holy Spirit.

Four living creatures Also called cherubim or seraphim. We think these are like God's personal servants. They are very close to God and His throne and they carry His word.

Horse Horses were usually used in war, so a horse means war or maybe strength and power.

Lion Shows power.

Locusts Locusts are always terrible for farmers. They eat and destroy many crops. So many locusts usually means very little food. In Revelation, locusts can mean much loss and destruction.

Michael Michael is called an archangel. In some places in the Bible, it seems like Michael is another name for Jesus. In other places, it seems like Michael is an angel and not Jesus. Probably, Michael is a very high angel who leads God's army of angels.

Woman in Rev. 12 This woman first means the Old Testament Jewish believers, then means the church. The dragon (the devil) wants to kill the child born from Old Testament promises (Jesus), then wants to destroy her (the church).

Miscellaneous

Altar In the O.T., the place for sacrifice and prayers to God. In Revelation, the altar can mean God with His people, it can mean worshipping God, it can mean the church.

Book of life the names of everyone who believes in Jesus and is saved.

Bow, sword Things used in war; means war.

Bowl of incense Means the prayers of God's people.

Censer Holds hot coals and incense for prayers.

Clothes A picture of a person's soul. If the clothes are clean, the person is righteous. If the clothes are dirty, the person is full of sin and is not righteous.

Cloud Shows God is there. God or Jesus often come on or in a cloud.

Crown Means being a king, or having glory and honor.

Earth Sometimes the earth is simply the place things happen. If the earth is a symbol, it often means the unbelievers or false religion.

East Or the place the sun rises. This often is connected somehow with God. If something is from the East, it could be from God, or from the land of Israel, or connected with God's people.

East, west, north, south All four directions together means the whole earth.

Face of a man Intelligence, ability to think and reason.

Four corners of the earth Means the whole earth

First resurrection The first resurrection means having faith in Jesus. When you believe in Jesus, you are alive in Him. Your body will die, but you will never die the second death (hell). The second resurrection is when Jesus comes again and your body rises from the grave.

Gates A gate is the way into a city when it is open, it is a way of protecting the city when the gate is shut. Jesus is the gate, our only entrance into heaven. Notice in Revelation chapter 21 that the gates are never shut. That is because there is no night and no danger in heaven.

Heads The heads on a beast mean kingdoms or kings. So if a beast has 7 heads, that means 7 kingdoms or kings. Note: here, 7 does not mean from God. It is a sign that the beast is trying to copy God and be like God.

Horns A horn shows power. The horns on the beast in Revelation mean kings, so 10 horns means 10 kings.

Iron scepter Ruling with an iron scepter means ruling very strictly, or very harsh, cruel, mean.

Jerusalem Jerusalem can mean God's people, or it can mean heaven. The New Jerusalem always means heaven.

Lake of fire	Hell.
Lampstand	Usually means a church. We show God's light to the world.
Left	Usually means the weak side. You don't have God's favor.
Manna	God's food that gives life.
Moon	Can mean the moon in the sky. Like the sun, can also mean all creation, or it can be a symbol of beauty and glory.
Mount Zion	Means Jerusalem. Mount Zion and Jerusalem both often mean heaven.
Pillar in temple	A strong place in God's temple that will never leave.
Right	Usually means the side of power, the side of justice. Means having God's favor.
Robes	The same meaning as clothes. A picture of a person's soul. If the robes are clean, the person is righteous. If the robes are dirty, the person is full of sin and is not righteous.
Sack cloth	Shows much repentance and sorrow for wrong doing and sin.
Seals	Hide the secrets of the future. Only God knows them, only God can open the seals.
Second death	The second death means to go to hell. The first death is that we are dead in sin.
Sharp, double-edged sword	God's word.
Spirits of God, Seven Spirits	Means the Holy Spirit
Star	A star means several things. It can mean a star, it can mean an angel, it can mean a demon (angel who rebelled against God). The Bright Morning Star is Jesus.
Sun	Sun can mean the sun in the sky. With the moon and stars, it can mean all of creation. Or it can be a symbol of beauty and glory.
Throne	God's throne, the place where God is. The center of all His glory and power.
Tree of life	Eternal life. Back in Genesis 2, when you eat from the tree of life, you will live forever.
Trumpet	God's way of announcing things.
Water of life	Water often means life, especially connected to Jesus means eternal life.
Wedding	A picture of when the church and Jesus will be together in heaven.
Wine	Can mean wine. If the verse talks about drinking the cup of wine, it means you accept what is given to you, or it can mean you must take what is given to you. If people drink the wine of God's anger, it means God is punishing them and they must accept it. If people drink the wine of immorality, it means they share in doing terrible sins. Cup means the same thing as wine.

What did a priest do in the Old Testament? Read Hebrews 8:3 (1511).

How are we priests? What do we offer to God? Read Romans 12:1 (1423).

Revelation 1:7-8.

We see another name used for God in verse 8. The Lord God is the “_____ and the _____.” What does that mean?

Revelation 1:9-20.

Where was John? Why was he on Patmos?

When you think of Jesus, what does He look like? When John saw Jesus, what did Jesus look like? Which is true?

What happened to John when he saw Jesus?

Why did John not have to fear? What does Jesus have? Also, how is Jesus’ name like God the Father’s name?

To Think About...

Think about the names we saw for God the Father and for Jesus. Is there anything God doesn’t know or can’t do? Does that scare you, or give you peace? Why?

The Book of Revelation God’s Picture of History and Heaven

Lesson 1, Chapter 1:1-20

Why study the book of Revelation?

We study this book because it is God’s word. Through all the Bible, God talks to us and shows us His love and His plan to save us. Many people misunderstand the message of Revelation and they make people afraid. We want to study this book to see what God will teach us.

Who wrote Revelation?

Rev. 1:1-3 says John wrote this book. The church has almost always said this is John the Apostle, the same man who wrote the Gospel of John and the three other letters in the New Testament, 1, 2 & 3 John.

Why did John write the book?

When John wrote the book (around 95 A.D.), Christians were getting persecuted. John wrote the book to encourage them that God is in control. They didn’t need to be afraid. While we study, we should always look to see how God is still in control.

Some people think John wrote this book to talk about the future. Read John 5:39. Who does the whole Bible talk about? Read Revelation 1:1. Who is the book of Revelation about?

Different Views about Revelation

There are many ways of interpreting Revelation. We can't fully explain each way, but these questions will help you understand the differences.

1. What about numbers and strange images, like a dragon and 1,000 years?

A. Interpret literal meaning. A dragon means a dragon. 1,000 years means 1,000 years.

B. Some things are symbols. A dragon means the devil. 1,000 years means until that time is finished.

2. When does Revelation happen?

A. Finished happening in the past.

B. Happening in the past, now and in future.

C. Only happens at end of world, in the future.

3. How does John tell the story in Revelation?

A. One long story.

B. He repeats one story several times.

Different churches answer those questions differently. So they interpret Revelation different ways. We believe some things in Revelation are literal and some are symbols. We believe (1) B, (2) B, (3) B.

Now we will begin studying the book itself.

To Begin...

Suppose you lived in the Midwest all your life and you never saw a mountain or a picture of a mountain.

Can I easily describe a mountain for you? Why or why not? How is that like John writing this book?

Revelation 1:1-3.

Jesus told someone about future events. Who?

How soon will those things happen?

Revelation 1:4-6.

John wrote this letter to whom?

In verse 4, what is God the Father's name? Look at Exodus 3:14-15 (68). How is God's name in Revelation like God's name in the Old Testament?

Who is/are the "Seven Spirits?"

How does John describe Jesus (vs. 5-6)?

1. The _____.

2. The _____ One.

3. The _____ to come back to _____.

4. The _____ over the kings of the earth.

5. The One who _____ us.

6. The One who _____ us from our sins.

7. The One who made us a _____,
_____ for God His Father.

Do we have problems like any of these churches? Which church, which problems? Why?

In each letter, Jesus gave a warning about judgment. Read Rev. 3:20 again. Is Jesus a strict and angry judge, or is He patient and wants people to come back to Him?

Jesus Gives Promises

1. Rev. 2:7, we will eat from the tree of life. Where is the tree of life? What does it mean to eat from that tree?
2. Rev. 2:11, the second death will not hurt them or us. What is the first death (Genesis 2:17, p. 2)? What is the second death (Rev. 20:14-15, p. 1561)?
3. Rev. 2:17, a white stone showed innocence. Manna is bread. Who is the manna/bread of life (John 6:31-35)?
4. Rev. 2:27-28, we will rule nations and Jesus will give us the morning star. Read Rev. 1:5-6. Who is the ruler of the nations? What did He make us?
5. Rev. 3:5, our names are in the Book of Life.
6. Rev. 3:12, we will have a new name.
7. Rev. 3:21, Jesus shares His victory with us.

To Think About...

Suppose you found a letter from Jesus to you personally. What praise, warnings, and promises do you think Jesus would tell you?

The Book of Revelation God's Picture of History and Heaven

Lesson 2, Chapter 2:1-3:22

To Begin...

Suppose you got a letter from an enemy. The letter praised you, but also criticized you and gave ideas how you can improve. What would you think? Suppose a good friend sent the exact same letter. Would you see that letter differently if a friend sent it?

Seven Letters to Seven Churches

The seven churches were seven cities where Christians lived. Jesus told John to write these letters to the seven churches (Rev. 1:11) Why seven? One meaning of the number "7" is completeness. So seven churches can mean all Christian churches together. So we want to read and see what Jesus said to them and us.

Look at the sheet that compares all seven letters. In each letter, Jesus

1. Names Himself
2. Praises the church
3. Warns the church about a problem
4. Tells them to repent
5. Gives them a promise.

Read Revelation 2:1. Each letter is written to an "angel of the church." What does that mean? (One hint: "angel" means "messenger.")

Jesus Names Himself

In Revelation 2:1, what does it mean that Jesus holds 7 stars and walks among 7 golden lampstands? (read Rev. 1:20 for help.)

Rev. 2:12 says Jesus has a sharp two-edged sword. Read Hebrews 4:12-13 (1508). What is the sword? How will Jesus use it?

What does it mean that Jesus' eyes are like fire and His feet like bronze (Rev. 2:18)?

Jesus Praises the Church

What do you think is the best thing these churches did? Why?

In Ephesus, there were false teachers. How did the church do the right thing? What did they do? (Rev. 2:2)

The church in Sardis had a few people who didn't get their clothes dirty. Jesus said they will be dressed in white. (Rev. 3:4) What does that mean?

Jesus Warns the Church and Tells Them to Repent

What is the worst thing these churches did?

Ephesus: Lost their first love (Rev. 2:4). Who was their first love? What does it mean that Jesus will remove their lampstand (Rev. 2:5)?

Smyrna: People were afraid of suffering. How long did Jesus tell them to be faithful (Rev. 2:10)?

Pergamum: Some people (not all) thought they could believe in Jesus and enjoy a sinful life, too. What did Jesus say (Rev. 2:14-16)? Why does Jesus talk about His sword? What does that mean?

Thyatira: The people let "Jezebel" teach in church (Rev. 2:20). Jezebel was a woman in the Old Testament (1 Kings 16:31-33) who worshiped idols and led people to many sins. How is this woman in Thyatira like Jezebel?

Sardis: What did Jesus say about their life (Rev. 3:1)? What will happen if they don't repent (vs. 2-3)?

Philadelphia: What was their biggest problem (Rev. 3:8). During testing, who will protect them (vs. 10)?

Laodicea: Read Rev. 3:17. How did they see themselves? How did God see them? They were not eager for God. What did God warn (vs. 16)?

To the Church in:	Picture of Christ	Praise	Problem/Warning	Repent	Promise for Faithfulness
Ephesus Rev. 2:1-7	Holds the seven stars in right hand, walks among seven golden lampstands.	Work hard, don't accept wicked people. Tested apostles for truth.	First love is gone.	They should do what they did at first, or Christ will remove their lampstand.	He will give honor of eating from the tree of life in God's kingdom.
Smyrna Rev. 2:8-11	The First and the Last, who was dead and is now alive.	Christ knows their suffering and poverty.	People are afraid of suffering.	Don't be afraid of suffering. Be faithful and He will give the crown of life.	The second death will not hurt them.
Pergamum Rev. 2:12-17	Jesus holds the sharp two-edged sword.	They kept Jesus' name and didn't deny Him.	Some worship idols and sin sexually. Some follow Nicolaitans' teaching.	Repent, or Jesus will fight against you with the sword from His mouth.	He will give hidden manna and a white stone with a new name on it.
Thyatira Rev. 2:18-29	Son of God, eyes like fire and feet like brass.	They have love, faith, service, endurance. Greater than before.	Accept the woman prophet Jezebel. She teaches sexual sin and worshiping idols.	Jezebel and people who follow her will get killed.	You will rule nations with iron scepters. Jesus will give the morning star.
Sardis Rev. 3:1-6	The One who has God's seven spirits and the seven stars.	A few have kept their clothes (lives) clean. They will be dressed in white.	They have a reputation of being alive but are really dead.	Keep the teaching you received. Watch! Jesus will come like a thief.	They will always wear white clothes, name is always in book of life, Jesus will announce them before the Father.
Philadelphia Rev. 3:7-13	One who is holy, true, has the Key of David, opens and shuts doors.	Paid attention to Jesus' word and didn't deny His name.	Only have a little strength.	Hold on to what you have, don't give up. Jesus will protect you during testing.	He will make them a pillar in the temple. They will never leave it. They will have God's name, Jesus' name, Jerusalem's name.
Laodicea Rev. 3:14-22	The Amen, faithful and true witness, source of God's creation.	(nothing good)	They are lukewarm, not committed to anything, don't recognize their own sin and shame. Pride.	Jesus will spit them out. Repent and get cleaning and healing. Jesus will discipline. He knocks on the door and waits.	They will sit with Jesus on His throne.

Songs of Praise to God

Revelation 4:8

The four great angels sing praise to God. What one word do they use to describe God? _ _ _ _.

Why do they sing “Holy” 3 times? What does that mean?

How often do these great angels sing praise to God?

Revelation 4:9-11

How do the 24 leaders (and all God’s people) praise God?

Why do they praise God now? What did God do? (more reasons for praising God will come in later verses.)

To Think About...

This is a verse from a song often used in churches. Notice how it is much like what Revelation chapter 4 describes. Can we begin singing this praise to God before we get to heaven? How?

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!

All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea

Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty

God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

The Book of Revelation God’s Picture of History and Heaven

Lesson 3, Chapter 4:1-11

To Begin...

If you think someone is awesome, how do you praise them? Think about your favorite sports hero or movie star. What do you say about them? What does that person do to deserve your praise?

Descriptions of Greatness, Songs of Praise

Before John sees how God works in history, he sees God in heaven. Revelation chapter 4 is an amazing picture of God’s glory in heaven. Words can’t describe what heaven will really be like, but John does the best he can to describe it for us.

John Sees God on His Throne

Revelation 4:1-3

Who calls John up to heaven? Whose voice called him? (see Rev. 1:10-13 for help.)

Who is the only one who can open the door into heaven? (see Rev. 3:8 for help.)

How would you describe the sun? What does it look like? How does John describe God on His throne? What does God look like?

A rainbow surrounds God's throne. When did a rainbow first appear? (see Genesis 9:12-16.) The rainbow is a sign of God's _____ or _____.

Revelation 4:4-5

John saw 24 leaders (or elders). Why 24?

How many sons did Jacob have? Genesis 49:28 (63)

How many disciples did Jesus have? Read Matthew 10:1-4 (1221).

_____ (Old Test.) + _____ (New Test.) = 24

Who are these leaders? There are two ways to interpret it.

1. Read Matthew 19:28 (1237). 24 leaders could mean 24 people who will judge/rule/take care of God's people.
2. Read Revelation 1:6 & 3:21. There are not 24 people who are leaders. 24 simply means all of God's people will sit on thrones and rule with Him.

Revelation 4:6-8

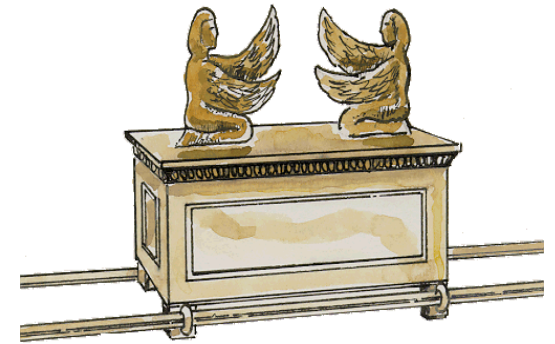
What About...	<p><i>The Sea of Glass?</i> In front of God's throne was a sea of glass. For the Jews, the sea or ocean meant chaos, no order, everything wrong and out of control. The sea can also mean our sins that separate us from God. Notice that in front of God, the sea is calm, the same-as glass, completely under God's control.</p>
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Brightly Burning Angels

John saw four living creatures around the throne.

Describe them. What do they look like?

Read Exodus 25:17-22 (95). The Ark was the place where God met with Moses or the high priest. What was always there on the ark with God?



Now read Isaiah 6:1-3 (858). Did Isaiah see the same living creatures?

Isaiah called them seraphim. "Seraphim" means...

<p><i>The Number 4?</i> John saw 4 of these great angels. Why 4? Some people think it is because of 4 gospels in the Bible – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. More likely, the number 4 means everything God created. For example, the Bible sometimes talks about the "four corners of the earth," or the "four winds" (Revelation 7:1). The four great angels are like God's personal angels, and they represent all of creation giving praise to God all the time.</p>	What About...
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Revelation 5:11-12

Who is in the second group to praise Jesus? How large is the group? Where is the group?

Because Jesus gave up His life, He deserves to receive...

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 5. |
| 2. | 6. |
| 3. | 7. |
| 4. | |

Compare that list with the praise to God in Rev. 4:11. Does this list make Jesus look less than God, or equal?

The church praised Jesus for saving them. Do the angels praise Jesus for saving the church? For saving angels?

Revelation 5:13-14

Now who is praising? Where is this group? Who is receiving the praise?

“Every creature in heaven, on earth, under the earth, and on the sea” is singing praise to Jesus. Will unbelievers sing that? (Does this song praise Jesus for salvation?)

To Think About...

Jesus, holds the scroll. He controls salvation, judgment, all history. How does that comfort you?

The Book of Revelation God's Picture of History and Heaven

Lesson 4, Chapter 5:1-14

To Begin...

Can you walk into a bank vault by yourself and do anything you want? What would happen if you did? Who must go with you? Why can they enter the vault?

Worthy is the Lamb!

Chapter 4 of Revelation was a beautiful picture of God on His throne. Elders and the bright burning angels sang praise to God. Now in chapter 5, we see more songs of praise to the Lamb, our Savior Jesus Christ.

The Scroll of God's Word

Revelation 5:1-3

The “One who sits on the throne” is God. What is He holding in His right hand? What was on it?

The scroll had writing on both sides. It was God's word, God's plan for action to _____ His people and to _____ unbelievers.

“Opening the scroll” means doing the judging that the scroll says. Was anyone worthy (good enough, important enough) to open the scroll? Is anyone on earth good enough to save or judge all people?

What About...	<p><i>The Seven Seals?</i> <i>At that time, anything important had a seal on it. If the seal was broken, that showed someone opened it. When someone was going to die, they wrote their will and had seven witnesses for the will. The will was sealed with seven seals, one seal for each person. Only the person in charge of the will and the estate could break the seals and read the will.</i></p>
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<p><i>The Number 7?</i> <i>The number 7 often is a symbol for God. Because God created the earth in 6 days and rested on the 7th day, He made the 7th day holy. So the number 7 also means holiness, perfection, completeness, especially with God. If “7” is added to something, it can mean it is from God. For example, a horn can mean an earthly kingdom or power. But 7 horns means God’s power.</i></p>	What About...
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Revelation 5:4-5

No one anywhere was good enough to open the scroll. Why did that make John so upset? (Remember what the scroll means and what opening it means.)

One leader told John to stop crying, because someone can open the scroll. Who? Why can He open it?

The Lamb is Worthy

Revelation 5:6-7

John described Jesus as the Lion from the tribe (family) of Judah and the Root of David. Now John calls Jesus the Lamb. Why? Why is it important that Jesus is the Lamb of God? Read John 1:29 (1333).

What did the Lamb of God look like?

- Looked like He had been _____.
- He had seven _____ (that shows power).
- He had seven _____, which are the seven _____ of God.

Hymns of Praise

After Jesus took the scroll, there are three songs of praise from three different groups.

Revelation 5:8-10

Who was in the first group to praise Jesus? Why should they be the first group? Think about who they are (also see Rev. 4:8-11).

They all held harps for singing and praising God. What is the incense for? Read Psalm 141:2 (774).

They sang a new song to Jesus. They praise Jesus by singing about what He deserves and what He did. What does Jesus deserve?

What did Jesus do?

Revelation 6:9-11

Jesus opened the fifth seal. Who did John see? What happened to those people?

These martyrs (people who died for being Christians) were under the incense altar. What does the incense mean (see Rev. 5:8)? What were they praying?

Notice they didn't take revenge on their enemies. Can we get revenge against someone who hurts us? Read Romans 12:19 (1424).

These people represent everyone in the whole church who gets persecuted for believing in Jesus. What did God give each person?

Revelation 6:12-17

When Jesus opened the sixth seal, what things happened to the earth and sky?

This is the first picture in Revelation of the end of the world. Will anyone be able to hide from that judgment?

To Think About...

Jesus lets the world experience suffering because of sin. But He is also our Savior from sin and the world!

The Book of Revelation God's Picture of History and Heaven

Lesson 5, Chapter 6:1-17

To Begin...

Have you ever been in the middle of a forest fire or tornado or other natural disaster? How did that make you feel? As you read this, are you in the middle of the events in Revelation? How does that make you feel?

The Seals of God's Judgment

Chapter 6 begins the part of Revelation that everyone thinks is so interesting. Now in the book we see many strange things happening in heaven and on earth.

There are 3 different visions, each with 7 parts; the 7 seals, 7 trumpets, and 7 bowls. They are all the same in some ways. As we study each vision in detail, we will see how they are different.

The Three Visions

<i>Seven Seals</i>	<i>Seven Trumpets</i>	<i>Seven Bowls</i>
Seals 1-4: Earthly events	Trumpets 1-4: Earthly events	Bowls 1-4: Earthly events
Seal 5: Spiritual event	Trumpet 5: Spiritual event	Bowl 5: Spiritual event.
No battle picture	Trumpet 6: Great Battle	Bowl 6: Battle of Armageddon
Seal 6: End of this world.	Trumpet 7: End of this world.	Bowl 7: End of this world.
Seal 7: Introduces next vision.		

The First Four Seals, the Four Horsemen

Each horseman is not a specific person in history. Each horseman represents many people in history, or groups of people, or things that happen on earth.

Revelation 6:1-2

What does the first horseman do? What three things show that is his job?

1. Riding a _____.
2. Holding a _____.
3. He was given a _____.

“Good guys always wear white.” Is that true? Is this a good guy or a bad guy? (Hint – he’s like the other horsemen. Are they good or bad?)

Will this horseman be able to defeat Christ’s church?
Can any evil government or power stop His church?
Read Matthew 16:18 (1232).

Revelation 6:3-4

What does the second horseman do? Do we see this happening today? Read Mark 13:7-8 (1276).

The second horseman had a large sword. Jesus also has a sharp sword (Rev. 1:16). Are they the same or different? How?

Revelation 6:5-6

Black is the color of death. Long ago, this often meant death because of starvation, because of a drought. How bad was the hunger? What did food cost?

Will drought and hunger destroy everyone and everything? Or will some food always be left?

Revelation 6:7-8

What does the fourth horseman represent? What follows him?

Who sent these 4 horsemen? How does that affect how you see cruel war, killing, famine, and death? Who is really in charge?

Different Colors?

The book of Revelation is full of different sights, sounds, and colors. Colors are important. White shows victory, usually God’s victory, but sometimes means someone else’s victory. Sometimes white will mean pure. Black means death or severe hunger. Red is like blood, showing fighting or war. Pale or pale green means death, like a dead body. The normal color green reminds us of growing plants and means life. Purple or scarlet (bright red) is the color that kings wear, but gold is the color for God, the King of kings.

What About...

Revelation 7:15-17

Now we see a beautiful picture of heaven.

Where are the people? What are they always doing, day and night?

Read 1 John 1:1-3 (1534) to see how close Jesus was with the disciples. How close will God be to us in heaven? (Ruth 3:6-9)

They will never be _____ or _____ again.
Matthew 5:6 (1214), John 6:35 (1341)

The _____ will not harm them. Psalm 121:1-8 (763), Isaiah 49:10 (922)

The Lamb will be their _____. He will lead them to the water of _____. Psalm 23:1-3 (660), John 4:13-14 (1336)

God will wipe away every _____ from their eyes.
John 16:19-22 (1357)

To Think About...

If you are struggling because of sin and trouble in this world, does this chapter give you comfort and encouragement? How?

The Book of Revelation God's Picture of History and Heaven

Lesson 6, Chapter 7:1-17

To Begin...

When we are worried or upset, people often comfort us by saying, "It will be okay." Does that help you feel better? How?

The Seal of God's Promise and Comfort

Chapter 6 showed Jesus opening six seals of God's judgment against sin. There was famine, death, war, and people killing believers. That is terrible and frightening! But God tells us these things so He can also comfort us. In chapter 7, there is a different kind of seal – God's promise that we are His people. Jesus gives confidence and encouragement that His is always our true life.

The Seal of God

Revelation 7:1-3

John mentions 4 winds from the 4 corners of the earth (means north, south, east, west). What does the wind mean? Read Jeremiah 49:34-37 (1022).

Who did John see standing on the earth (vs. 1)? What were they doing?

Why did the angels wait? What had to happen first?

Revelation 7:4-8
Who did God seal?

What About...

*The Number 144,000?
This number is sometimes misunderstood, especially by JW's. This number means the whole church of God on earth. $144,000 = 12 \times 12 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10$. You remember the number 12 means all of God's people. $12 \times 12 (=144)$ emphasizes they are God's people. The number 10 means complete, full, nothing more to add or do. $10 \times 10 \times 10 (=1000)$ emphasizes that meaning. So 144,000 very strongly says that God seals all of His people on earth, both Jews and non-Jews from all time. Not one person is missing. 12,000 from each tribe also shows the church is like God's army on earth (see Numbers 31:1-6 and 1 Chronicles 27:1-15).*

Read verse 3 again. Where did the angels put the seal?

Read these verses from the Old Testament. In each one, what did God say about a person's forehead?

Exodus 13:8-9, 16 (80-81)

Exodus 28:36-38 (100)

Exodus 13 mentioned a "mark on your hand or a reminder on your forehead." Who can see a mark on your hand? Who can see a mark on your forehead? Why do you think God seals His people on the forehead?

Read Ephesians 1:13-14 (1466). What is God's seal on you? Is that seal hidden? How do other people see it?

The Large Crowd around God's Throne
Revelation 7:9-10

This is a different picture than the 144,000. That number emphasizes God's church on earth. Now we see the picture in heaven. Who did John see standing in front of the throne and the Lamb? Where were these people from?

Did they praise God for who He is, or what He does?

Revelation 7:11-12

Now the angels, leaders, and four special angels join in worshipping God. Jesus died to save us, not angels. But are the angels also excited about God's gift of salvation? Read 1 Peter 1:12 (1524)

The Great Promise of Heaven
Revelation 7:13-14

Who are those people in white robes. What are they coming out of (vs. 14)?

How did their robes (their soul, their life) become clean? Read Psalm 51:2,7 (688), Acts 22:16 (1400), Galatians 3:27 (1462).

The First Catastrophe (Terrible Destruction)

Revelation 9:1-6

When the fifth angel blew his trumpet, John saw a star fall from the sky to the earth. (We will see in a moment who the star is.) What did the star open up (see Luke 8:31)? Where did he get the key? What came out?

Who could the locusts torture? Who could they not torture?

Revelation 9:7-12

What did the locusts look like? What do all of those things mean? Don't think about the whole description. Think about the crowns by themselves, then faces, then hair, etc.

The king of the locusts is also the star. He is named Abaddon, or Apollyon, both mean "Destroyer." Who is he? Read Isaiah 14:11-15 (869) for some help.

Read Job 1:8-12 (588). When Satan comes to destroy and cause suffering, who is in control? Who limits what Satan can do?

To Think About...

Which does God want to do, not let us experience any trouble, or help us live patiently through trouble?

The Book of Revelation God's Picture of History and Heaven

Lesson 7, Revelation 8:1-9:12

To Begin...

Think about what is going wrong on the earth in the air, water, land. What is happening to the perfect world God made? Who is doing those things? Why?

The Seven Trumpets of Warning and Judgment

The vision of the seven seals is ending now, and the vision of the seven trumpets is beginning. Of the three visions (seals, trumpets, bowls), this is the longest. This study will look at the first five trumpets. Much of this vision describes what God does to the earth and to unbelievers because of sin. God's goal is for the people to repent and believe in Him. Sadly, they do not.

The Trumpet Vision Begins

Revelation 8:1-6

What happened when Jesus opened the seventh seal?

This could mean several things.

1. Silence is like the Sabbath rest for God's people.
2. There is silence before God's final judgment. Exodus 14:10-14 (82)
3. There was silence/nothing before God made the world. There will be silence before God makes everything new again.

Where did the seven angels get their trumpets?

Another angel came to the altar with a gold incense burner. He used the burner for what two things?

1. To burn _____, showing the _____ of all God's people.
2. To get _____ from the altar and throw it down on the _____.

The smoke from the incense is like prayers from God's people going up to God. The fire on earth caused thunder, noise, lightning and an earthquake. What does that show? Read Exodus 19:16-18 (88), Isaiah 29:6.

The First Four Trumpets

Revelation 8:7

When the first angel blew his trumpet, what was thrown on the earth? Does everything get destroyed?

Read Exodus 9:22-26 (76). When God sent hail on Egypt, did the hail destroy things belonging to Egyptians or Israelites?

Read Haggai 2:17 (1187). Why did God later send hail on the Jews? What was His goal?

Revelation 8:8-9

What happened when the second angel blew his trumpet? What got destroyed?

Revelation 8:10-11

The third angel blew his trumpet. What happened? What got destroyed? (wormwood is a plant that is very bitter and poisonous.)

Revelation 8:12-13

The fourth angel blew his trumpet. What happened?

Those four trumpets were bad, but there are worse things coming. "Catastrophe" means something very terrible destruction. There will be three catastrophes coming.

The Seven Trumpets?

Trumpets were used for several things in the Bible. Trumpets announced a new king (1 Kings 1:34), they declared praise for God (Psalm 150:3), and they called people to pay attention. There are several reasons why God used trumpets in this vision. Trumpets speak loud like God's voice (Exodus 19:16,19). Trumpets were very often used in war (Joshua 6:20), and this vision describes part of God's war against sin. A loud trumpet blast will announce the end of the world (Matthew 24:31, 1 Corinthians 15:52, 1 Thessalonians 4:16). A trumpet will also announce that the end of the world is coming near (Joel 2:1-13).

What About...

Revelation 10:1-4

Look at the description of this angel. Read Acts 7:53 (1376) to see what wonderful thing an angel gave God's people in the Old Testament. That is a clue why this angel is so amazing.

1. Powerful angel.
2. Dressed in a _____.
3. _____ over his head.
4. Face like the _____.
5. Feet like columns of _____.
6. Big enough to put one foot on _____ and one on _____.
7. Shouted like a _____.

Revelation 10:5-11

The sixth trumpet was blown. Is the end near? What did the angel say?

What is the mystery of God (verse 7)? Does anyone know His mystery? For help, read Colossians 2:2-3 (1479) and Col. 4:3-4 (1481).

The angel told John to eat the scroll. What did it taste like? What did it feel like in his stomach?

What did the scroll mean? What did God give John and the church to do?

To Think About...

Have you let troubles stop you from fully showing your Christian life? Does God let us stop when it gets hard?

The Book of Revelation God's Picture of History and Heaven

Lesson 8, Revelation 9:13-10:11

To Begin...

Think of a horror movie you saw or a "haunted house" you visited. Think of the most scary creature or thing you saw. What makes them frightening? Are the creatures in Revelation frightening? Why?

Troubles and Triumphs (Victories)

In this study, we see the sixth angel blow his trumpet. Terrible destruction and killing happens. But even with all of the pain and death, God makes one thing clear. His church continues to work and serve Him. Through easy times and hard times, we announce the good news of salvation through Jesus alone.

The Sixth Angel Blows His Trumpet

Revelation 9:13-16

The 6th angel blew his trumpet and a voice spoke. We saw this altar before and someone speaking there. Read Rev. 6:9-10. Who spoke then? What did they want?

In Rev. 9:14-15, God is answering their prayer. Who should be released, and what will they do?

Who are these angels and soldiers? Are they God's angels, or demons? (Hint, look at Revelation 7:1)

The Three “7” Visions?

The three “7” visions are the 7 seals, 7 trumpets, and 7 bowls. In lesson 5, we saw how each vision described earthly events, spiritual events, and the end of the world. Now we will add some new information. All three “7” visions describe God’s judgment against the world, but in different ways. In the 7 seals, God’s judgment allows people to hurt and kill each other. In the 7 trumpets, God’s judgment sends demons to torture people. In the 7 bowls, we will see God Himself judging people. The goal is always the same: make people repent and stop their terrible sins and idol worship, but they will not stop.

Revelation 9:17-21

Movies like “Ghostbusters” show people fighting and defeating evil spirits. Psychics and witches think we can control spirits and spiritual powers, or use their powers for ourselves. Can people by themselves defeat these demons (shown here as soldiers)?

How many people died?

Did the people who lived change their lives? Did they repent and believe in God?

In verse 20, John wrote, “If they had (repented), they would have stopped worshipping demons and idols made

of gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood, which cannot see, hear, or walk.” We know some people in the world worship idols. But does anyone really worship demons? Read 1 Corinthians 10:19-20, then answer these questions.

1. If you sacrifice to the idol Baal, you are really
 - A. Throwing away a good animal, nothing more.
 - B. Sacrificing to a carved piece of wood.
 - C. Sacrificing to a demon, worshipping a demon

2. If you put food in front of a Chinese Buddha, you are
 - A. Throwing away good food, nothing more.
 - B. Giving food to a fat statue that can’t eat
 - C. Worshipping a demon

3. If you rub a Buddha’s stomach for good luck, you are
 - A. Just having fun, joking around.
 - B. Hoping it will bring you good luck
 - C. Trusting a demon to do good for you

4. We trust Jesus. Believing anyone or anything else is
 - A. Foolish
 - B. Dangerous
 - C. Idol/demon worship

The Church’s Mission

The vision of the 7 trumpets continues, but there is a short break now for another topic. God shows John what work the church should be doing. This comes in the middle of the vision because the church is always doing God’s work, even through terrible times.

What will the world think when the devil defeats the church? What do they do?

Revelation 11:11-14

How long does the world celebrate? What happens to make their celebrating stop?

Where did the witnesses (the church) go? Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-14 (1450) to see how Paul describes our witness and resurrection.

As soon as the church was in heaven with God, what happened? The 2nd catastrophe is now over. The 3rd terrible happening is quickly coming.

The Kingdom of God

Revelation 11:15-19

What happens to the kingdom of the world?

What time is it now? What do the 24 leaders say?

God has begun ruling as _____.

Time has come to judge the _____.

To reward God's _____.

God's temple was opened. What was there? Why the lightning, noise, thunder, earthquake, hail?

The Book of Revelation God's Picture of History and Heaven

Lesson 9, Revelation 11:1-19

To Begin...

Think of your favorite sports team. Have you ever watched them play an important game, losing the whole time, then at the very end come back and win? How does that make you feel?

Christ's Church Suffers, but Wins in the End

The church is like that sports team that seems to be losing. The world hates the church, abuses it, and tries to stop the good news about Jesus. In the end, the church will even seem to die. But give thanks to God! In the end, He will show that we have victory with Jesus.

The Two Witnesses

Revelation 11:1-6

God gave John a measuring stick and told him to do what two things? (This is a sign that God will build up His people and protect them.)

Look at a picture of the temple. Who could enter into the temple area? Who had to stay outside in the temple courtyard?

God told John NOT to measure the temple courtyard. Why not?

What will the nations do for 42 months? Where will they not trample (run over)?

What might that say about God's people, the church? On the outside, from the world's perspective, what do they say about the church? What does God say about His church on the inside?

God will allow His two witnesses to do something for 1,260 days. What will they do?

What About...	<p><i>42 Months, 1,260 Days, 3 ½ Days?</i> 42 months and 1,260 days are the same length of time, both 3 ½ years. (People often had 30 days in each month, so 360 days in a year, so $360 \times 3 \frac{1}{2} = 1260$ days.) In some Bible verses, this is called “a time (1) and times (2) and half a time (½)” which is 3 ½, usually 3 ½ years. This is the time when the world will persecute God's people. This time started with Jesus' death, resurrection, and going up into heaven. This time of persecution will continue until Jesus comes back. See also Daniel 7:25-27 (1115), Daniel 12:6-11 (1121).</p>
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How did John describe the two witnesses? They are two _____ trees and two _____ stands.

Look up these verses to see what an olive tree means.
Psalm 52:8 (689)
Jeremiah 11:16 (969)
Romans 11:17-24 (1422)
Zechariah 4:1-14 (1191)

Read Revelation 1:20 (1544) to remember what the lamp stand means.

Who are the two witnesses (Deuteronomy 19:15)? There are different ideas about this. Some people think there will be two people who will come and speak, like Moses and Elijah, or Enoch and Elijah, or two new people. Some people think of the witness of the Old and New Testaments. These verses show that the two witnesses are the church. The church is one church, but the church's witness can be believed like two witnesses. Read John 8:17-18 (1344).

What kind of authority does the church have in witnessing about Jesus? Can anyone stop God's good news?

Revelation 11:7-10

This is a picture of the last days – one of the first detailed pictures of the end in Revelation. What happens when the church is finished witnessing? Can anyone stop us before we are finished?

Where did the devil get thrown? What was the power that threw him down? Read vs. 11 and John 12:31-33 (1352).

God Protects the Christian Church

Revelation 12:13-18

The serpent (devil) failed to destroy Jesus. What is his goal now? Who does he persecute and try to destroy?

What did God give the woman (the church) to help her in verse 14? What does that mean? Read Isaiah 40:31 (906) and Exodus 19:4 (88).

How long will the devil persecute the church? Verse 14 is saying the same thing as verse 6.

How does the devil try to destroy the woman? (Raging waters means every kind of trouble and persecution.) What does God promise? Read Isaiah 43:1-2 (910) and Luke 6:47-49 (1297).

To Think About...

The devil already lost the war, and Christ already won. That is why the devil hates Christians so much, because he knows he lost. So when the devil tries to accuse you of your sins and make you doubt Jesus, you can just remind the devil he already lost and you are a winner in Jesus.

The Book of Revelation God's Picture of History and Heaven

Lesson 10, Revelation 12:1-18

To Begin...

Think of the 1991 Gulf War and the recent war with Iraq. The U.N. and U.S. forces were more powerful and Iraq had little or no chance of winning. But how did Saddam talk? Is the devil boastful the same?

The Big Picture

Do you sometimes feel lost in details? You need to step back and look at the big picture, you need to see it all together? In the visions so far (7 seals and 7 trumpets), we have seen a big picture of God's work on earth, His work to warn people of sin and to save His church. Now we see a bigger picture. This picture includes the heaven and the earth, Jesus and the devil, and the church. But no matter what view we see, the end is always the same. Jesus wins, and He shares His victory with the church.

Two Signs

Revelation 12:1-6

What was the first spectacular (amazing) sign?

John had an interesting description for this woman. Each part of the description is like a puzzle piece. First piece: She was dressed like the sun and had the moon under her feet. What does that mean? Read Song of Songs 6:10 (847) for help.

Second piece: This woman also had a crown of 12 stars. A crown can mean a ruler or king. Here, the crown means victory. What do the 12 stars mean?

Third piece: The woman was pregnant and ready to give birth. Who is this woman? The 12 stars should give you a clue. Read Isaiah 62:3-5 (940).

Last piece: Who is the baby boy she gave birth to? Read Isaiah 7:14 (860).

Who is this woman? Three possible meanings.

Another sign appeared in heaven. Notice this is only a sign, not a “spectacular” sign, not something wonderful to look at. What was it? Look ahead to Rev. 12:9 for help.

Look at the description of the serpent (or dragon), the devil.

1. Its color is _____. Compare with Revelation 6:4.
2. Seven _____. Compare with Rev. 5:6. The devil is trying to make it look like he is like Christ.
3. _____ horns. Horn = power. This number means the devil says he has all power on earth. Read Luke 4:5-7 (1291). Is that true? Read John 8:44 (1345).

4. _____ crowns. Crown = victory.

What did the devil want to do when Jesus was born? Can you name some examples of how the devil tried this? For help, read these verses. Did the devil succeed?

Matthew 2:13-18 (1211)

Matthew 4:1-11 (1212)

Luke 4:28-30 (1292)

John 10:31-40 (1348)

What happened to Jesus (the son in verse 5)?

Jesus has been born, grew up, died, rose, and ascended into heaven again. Now the woman means His church in the New Testament and today. What did God do for the woman? How long did God take care of her?

War in Heaven

Revelation 12:7-12

There was war in heaven. Michael and the angels fought to throw the devil out. (Michael is probably the leader of God’s angel army.) This makes a very interesting picture. Where was the devil before Jesus went back into heaven?

Read Job 1:6 (588) and Zechariah 3:1-3 (1190).

When the devil talked to God, what did he do? Can he continue doing that now, or is he finished? Read Romans 8:31-34 (1419).

Examples of the Beast's Activity

Government

Rev. 13:4 says people worshiped the serpent and the beast. Roman emperors required people to worship them as gods.

The Soviet Union destroyed churches, killed Christians, and made the government the only authority.

If you become a Christian in Iran, Saudi Arabia, and several other countries, the government can kill you.

“One nation, under God” is ruled unconstitutional.

Economics

Pressure to work on Sunday instead of going to church.

Using tax money to fund anti-Christian things (abortion, pornography, atheism, etc.).

Schools

Education in the old Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, and other similar countries taught students that religion is foolish and forced students to learn the ways of the state.

Some schools teach the students must accept homosexuality and other “alternative” lifestyles.

Many schools teach science theories (ideas, not proved) like they are fact, and mock what God says.

To Think About...

The unbelieving world will always be against Christians. Jesus said in John 16:33, “In the world you’ll have trouble. But cheer up! I have overcome the world.” We don’t need to fear! Jesus shares His victory with us.

The Book of Revelation God’s Picture of History and Heaven

Lesson 11, Revelation 13:1-10

To Begin...

Think of every powerful ruler in the history of the world. Can you think of anyone who ruled alone, by themselves, with no help? Almost every powerful leader has one or two trusted people that he works through.

The Devil’s Trusted Helpers

Many people spend a lot of time studying Revelation 13. Many of them are looking for clues about the end of the world. This chapter talks about two of the devil’s helpers – the beast from the sea and the beast from the earth. We will see (1) who or what these beasts are and (2) how they work with the devil. In this lesson, we will look at the first beast. We will examine the second beast in the next lesson.

Description of the Beast from the Sea

Revelation 13:1-3

Do you remember what the sea represents (shows)? What does it mean that the first beast is from the sea?

This beast is described with heads, horns, crowns, and animals. The prophet Daniel saw a vision with things like that. Read Daniel 7:2-7, 16-18 (1114).

In Daniel, each animal means or shows a _____.
In Revelation, the beast is like 3 animals together. That means the beast is not necessarily only one kingdom. The beast shows what many nations or kingdoms will do.

Heads mean or show _____ or _____.
Horns mean or show _____ or _____.
Crowns mean or show _____.

Where did the beast get its power and authority?

What could the fatal wound mean? What does it mean that it was healed?

What the Beast Does

Revelation 13:4-10

What do people think of the beast and the serpent?

For 42 months (3 ½ years, 1,260 days), the beast is allowed to do things. What things?

Speak _____ and _____ things.

Insult God, His _____, His _____, and His _____.

War against _____ and defeat them.

Who will worship this beast? Who will not worship this beast?

Can anyone on earth stop this beast? Read verses 7 and 10.

Can or should Christians avoid persecution? Read Matthew 5:38-42 (1215), 1 Peter 2:18-23 (1526), 1 Peter 3:14-15 (1527), 1 Peter 4:12-19 (1528).

How do God's people get endurance (not give up) and confidence from these verses?

Who or What is the Beast from the Sea?

In Daniel, the beasts were kingdoms, political powers. In Revelation, it is more than a kingdom. Many people think John was first talking about Rome and how the devil used the Roman Empire to fight against Christians. That is probably true, but the beast means more than that. The beast from the sea means every human authority that the devil can use against God's people. For example, the devil can governments to persecute and oppress Christians. The devil can also use economic systems, schools, etc., to fight against Christians.

What About...

Examples of the Beast's Activity

The beast from the earth teaches false religion, especially religion that supports sinful human authority. Some people are looking for an Anti-Christ, one person who will do these things. But 1 John 4:3 (1536) says the anti-christ is already here. There are many examples of this through history.

The Roman Empire

During John's life, the Roman emperors (kings) called themselves gods and required people to offer incense to them. This was false religion. If you refused, the government could kill you.

Nazi Germany

Everyone knows Hitler killed Jews, but he also killed many Christians. Hitler brought back old pagan religions and tried to use them to support the government.

Soviet Union

In the Soviet Union, Christians were persecuted and killed. Religion was against the law. They said everyone should trust and believe the government.

China

In China today, the government allows some Christian churches. But China requires these churches to say the government is the head of the church.

To Think About...

Will this kind of persecution and false religion come to the U.S.? Is it already here? How will you respond?

The Book of Revelation God's Picture of History and Heaven

Lesson 12, Revelation 13:11-18

To Begin...

In the U.S., we have what is named "separation of church and state." Are church and government separate? Is there a way the church is for or against the government, or the government is for or against the church?

The Devil's Trusted Helpers

In Lesson 11, we saw the Beast from the Sea means the devil tries to use every human authority against Christians. Governments, economic systems, schools, etc., all can persecute Christians. In this lesson, we will see the second beast works with the first beast. This Beast from the Earth also persecutes Christians, but in a different way. Again, we will see (1) who or what this beast is and (2) how it works with the first beast and the devil. But we will also see that when we compare them to God, they are very weak. God has already guaranteed He will defeat them.

Description of the Beast From the Earth

Revelation 13:11-12

The first beast came from the sea, showing it came from the devil's wickedness to oppress people. The second beast comes from the earth. That could mean it comes from among people, from people's own sinful hearts.

Compare the serpent (devil) and the two beasts. For the serpent and two beasts, write down how many heads, horns and crowns they have.

	Heads	Horns	Crowns
Serpent (12:3)			on heads
Sea Beast (13:1)			on horns
Earth Beast (13:11)			

Which has more authority and power, the serpent, the beast from the sea, or the beast from the earth?

Where does the beast from the sea get its authority (13:2)?
Where does the beast from the earth get its authority (13:2)?

The beast from the earth is described like a lamb, but it talked like a serpent. What is the beast trying to be like? Read John 1:29 (1333) and Matthew 7:15 (1218).

What the Beast from the Earth Does

Revelation 13:12-18

The second beast makes everyone worship the first beast. (But Christians will not worship it.) How does it make everyone worship? How does it deceive (fool) people?

Should these things surprise us? Matthew 24:23-28 (1245)

The second beast, the beast from the earth, is like a false prophet that teaches a false religion. Who does the beast say people should worship? (We will see examples at the end of the lesson.)

What happens to people if they will not worship the first beast from the sea?

The “Mark of the Beast” is one thing from Revelation that people talk about the most. If you remember, we already talked about a mark in Revelation 7, where God put a mark/seal on His people. Read Ephesians 1:13-14 (1466). What is God’s seal on you? What does the seal mean?

What does the mark from the second beast show?

<p><i>Who is the Beast from the Earth?</i> The first beast from the sea is a political beast. The beast from the earth is a religious beast. The devil tries to use false religion to lead people away from God. The false religions work with the government and other authorities to persecute Christians. The number 666 means the devil and the two beasts working together against Christians. This is an “unholy trinity,” the devil trying to copy God again.</p>	What About...
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The Son of Man swings His sickle and gathers the harvest from the earth. Earlier, Jesus told a story about a harvest. Read Matthew 9:36-38 (1221). What is the Son of Man harvesting? What should we pray for?

The Bible says God is very patient. 2 Peter 3:9 (1532) says that God is patient, not ending the world right away because He wants as many people as possible to be saved. Do you see a sign of God's patience in Rev. 14:15?

Jesus Himself, in love and mercy, will harvest His own people and bring them home. Who harvests the unbelievers?

In old times (and still today in some countries), people harvest grapes, put them in a winepress, and walk on the grapes to squeeze out the juice for wine. In the Bible, this is a symbol of God's anger and judgment. Read Isaiah 63:1-6 (941). Who is the only one who judges and punishes? How severe (terrible) is His judgment?

In Rev. 14:19, where is the winepress? Who is safe inside "the city" (Jerusalem)?

To Think About...

Rev. 14:5 says God's people never lie; they are blameless (innocent). Are you? How do you become that way?

The Book of Revelation

God's Picture of History and Heaven

Lesson 13, Revelation 14:1-20

To Begin...

Through all of history, harvest time is a time of joy. A summer of hard work, rain, and God's blessings leads to a great crop to harvest. The Bible says the end of the world will be like a harvest. Will that time be full of joy, or full of sorrow?

Jesus Brings His People Home

In chapters 12 and 13, we saw Satan and the two beasts cause persecution and trouble for Christians. In chapter 14, God shows us how in the end, Jesus will bring His people home. All the trouble on earth, and Satan trying to make us think he is the ruler, none of that ruins our life in Jesus. In the end, the kingdom of the sinful world collapses, and God's people live in glory.

The Lamb and the 144,000

Revelation 14:1-5

This is the second time we see 144,000 people. The first time was in Rev. 7:4. In chapter 7, John emphasized that they were all of God's people on earth. How did John show that? What was the symbol or picture?

In chapter 13, God showed John a vision of two beasts that fool the world. These are governments and false religions that lead people to do wicked things. Do God's people do those wicked things? How does the vision tell you that? How does God describe the 144,000 believers now?

Read Leviticus 23:9-11, 15-17 (144). God told the people to give Him the first grain they harvested. People did that to show how important God was to them. In Rev. 14, how does God show His people are important?

The Three Angels

Revelation 14:6-13

In verse 6, John saw an angel flying. What did the angel have? Who was it for?

The word "Gospel" means "Good News" or "Good Message." The gospel is the good news that Jesus saves us from our sins. The word can also mean both "Good News" AND "Law." Did this angel speak only good news, or both good news and law?

The second angel talked about Babylon the Great. Babylon was a symbol for Rome, and is also a symbol for the world that rejects Jesus. Babylon is also a name for the beast from the earth, the false religions. What happened to Babylon (the unbelieving world)?

Babylon (the false religions) "made the nations drink the wine of her passionate sexual sins." "Drink the wine" means to do or experience something. Is this wine (false religion) good for people? Read Jeremiah 51:7 (1026).

Read Ezekiel 6:8-9 (1047) and James 4:4 (1522). Sexual sins doesn't only mean sex sins. The Bible uses that to mean people who ignore the true _____ and worship false _____. They are like someone who leaves their spouse for another person.

The third angel talked about a different cup of wine, the wine of God's fury (anger). In Bible times, people mixed wine and water to drink. Wine that is not mixed means it is more strong, more powerful. Who is God's anger poured out on (verse 9-10)?

Heaven is our place of rest, Rev. 14:13 and Hebrews 4:9-11 (1508). What happens to people who follow false religion and don't worship God?

Harvest of the Earth

Revelation 14:14-20

The Son of Man is riding on a cloud and wearing a gold crown. Only God rides the clouds and has a crown of gold. Compare this with Daniel 7:13-14 (1114). Who is this Son of Man?

In verse 15, Jesus said He is coming like a _____, He will surprise people. He said, “Blessed is the one who remains alert and doesn’t lose his _____.” What does that mean? Read Isaiah 61:10 (939) and Galatians 3:27 (1462).

What About...	<p><i>The Battle of Armageddon?</i> <i>Some people think that at the end of the world, there will be a huge battle in Israel. They think this will happen near a mountain named Megiddo (in Hebrew the name is Har Megiddo). They think it will be a battle between Israel and all the evil nations on earth. But as we have seen before, the battle is a spiritual battle; the devil and his servants trying to destroy God’s people. This happens all around the world all the time. But just before the end of the world, the devil will try much harder to destroy the Christian church. Thank God that the devil will never be able to steal anyone from Jesus!</i></p>
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The 7th angel poured his bowl of God’s anger into the _____. Before this, people had the chance to repent, but they refused. After the 7th bowl, can people repent, or is it too late?

To Think About...

How stubborn are unbelievers? Can anything make them change and repent? How can we live and work with people who hate God so much?

The Book of Revelation

God’s Picture of History and Heaven

Lesson 14, Revelation 15:1-16:21

To Begin...

Through all of history, harvest time is a time of joy. A summer of hard work, rain, and God’s blessings leads to a great crop to harvest. The Bible says the end of the world will be like a harvest. Will that time be full of joy, or full of sorrow?

The Final Punishments of God’s Anger

This is the third “7” vision. The first was 7 seals, where God allowed sickness and war and famine to destroy people. The second was 7 trumpets, where God destroyed parts of the world and allowed demons to torture people. His goal is to make people repent, but they refuse. In this last vision, the 7 bowls, God pours His anger at sin directly on the world and on people.

John Sees the Seven Angels and a Song of Praise
Revelation 15:1-8

In verse 1, John says the seven last plagues are signs of God’s anger. Did God use plagues (sickness and terrible happenings) earlier to show His anger? Read Psalm 78:44-51 (716).

All God’s people won the victory over the devil’s servants. What did they use to sing?



God's people sang the "song of Moses" and the "song of the Lamb." God did something now in Revelation that is like what God did for Moses and the Israelites. Read Exodus 15:1-5 (83). What did God do for the Israelite people? What did God do for His people in Rev. 15:2?

Compare Exodus 15:11 (83) and Revelation 15:3-4. What is God like? What kind of work does He do?

In the Old Testament, before Solomon built the temple, God's house was in a tent, also called a tabernacle. That tent/temple showed where God lived. What came out of the tent/temple? What did the living creature give them?

The tent or temple was where the priests could sacrifice and pray to God. In this vision, God showed He was determined to punish people for their sins. How did God show people cannot pray to God and change His mind about the punishments?

Seven Angels Pour the First Four Bowls

Revelation 16:1-9

The first angel poured the first bowl of God's anger on the _____. Painful _____ appeared on people who had the mark of the _____.

The second angel poured his bowl on the _____. It turned into _____ and everything in it _____.

The third angel poured his bowl on the _____ and _____. They turned into _____.

The fourth angel poured his bowl on the _____, and it burned people with _____.

The third angel said something interesting in verses 5-6. He said God gave them _____ to drink. Jesus also explained this in Matthew 23:33-36 (1244). Why do the people have "blood" to drink?

God is punishing sin. If people want to stop suffering, they should repent and follow God. What did they do (verse 9)?

The Last Three Bowls of God's Anger

Revelation 16:10-21

The fifth angel poured his bowl on the throne of the _____. With the 5th bowl, God is punishing the governments that hate Him. What did people do? Did they repent?

When the 6th angel poured out his bowl, the _____ River dried up. In the Old Testament, this river separated the Jews from Babylon, Assyria, and the Medes and Persians, all enemies. If those countries could cross the river, they could easily attack Israel. If God is angry against the devil and his servants, why would he open their way to attack God's people?

Babylon now means every nation and religion that is against God. What will happen to Babylon?

Revelation 18:9-10

Why will the kings cry for Babylon? (Think of what would happen if Las Vegas closed.)

Why would they be frightened (verse 10)?

Revelation 18:11-19

Why will merchants cry for Babylon? (vs. 11-17)

Why will all sailors and everyone who made their living from the sea cry for Babylon? (vs. 17-19)

Revelation 18:20-24

Will anything from this sinful world enter heaven? Read Matthew 6:19-24 (1216). What will happen to the kingdom of this world (Rev. 18)?

According to Rev. 18:24, why will God punish all nations and religions that are against Him?

To Think About...

A popular song from some years ago has the line, "I'd rather laugh with the sinners than cry with the saints, the sinners are much more fun. You know that only the good die young." How does that show the idea of Babylon that we saw in this study?

The Book of Revelation

God's Picture of History and Heaven

Lesson 15, Revelation 17 & 18

To Begin...

Think of some well-known or popular people, such as actors, athletes, or politicians. Can you name several who have reputations for being Christians who live very good lives? Can you name several who have reputations for sin, as wild partiers, adulterers, etc.? Which list is easier to make? Why?

The Woman, Babylon

We are now coming to the last parts of the book of Revelation. In chapters 17 and 18, we see a detailed picture of the political beast and religious beast as the beast and the woman, Babylon. We will see a description of what God's enemies have done, but we will also see God judge and punish His enemies. Even though evil governments and false religions seem powerful, their time is limited. Their time will end, and God will judge them.

John Sees the Woman on the Beast

Revelation 17:1-6

An angel showed John a prostitute. Look at verse 4 to see how she is dressed and described. Does this woman look like the world hates her, or honors her?

The woman is full of sin and shame. Does the world reject her actions, or copy them? (verses 2 and 5).

The prostitution and sexual sins are a picture of worshipping idols instead of the true God. Read Isaiah 1:21 (851) to see what God said about Israel when they were not faithful.

The beast from the sea is always called “the beast.” That is the beast the woman is sitting on. But the “false religion” beast has several different names in the book of Revelation. Write down all the names. They all talk about the same false religion.

Rev. 13:11 The beast from the _____.

Rev. 13:18 Has the number _____.

Rev. 16:13 The false _____.

Rev. 17:1 The _____.

Rev. 17:5 _____ the Great.

Many people today talk about “peace” and “tolerance” and “acceptance.” They say all religions should accept each other and not criticize each other. Is that a right thing to do? Will false religion ever accept Christians? Read what false religion does to God’s people (verse 6).

What Will Happen to the Woman

Revelation 17:7-18

The angel told John about the beast. The beast “was, is no longer, and will come again.” This shows that nations rise and fall. One country has power, then another country, then another. One country doesn’t rule the world forever.

The beast has seven heads. Read Rev. 17:9-10. The seven heads mean seven _____ or seven _____.

Rome is known as the city built on seven hills. Many people have tried to figure out who the seven kings are. Truly, many kings and rulers in history have been wicked and hated God’s people. The 7 kings mean all of those rulers. The beast is the 8th king, and that also means all rulers who follow Satan and try to destroy the church.

The ten horns are ten _____. These are like the seven kings, because they also rule. But we can explain this difference: The seven kings ARE the beast. The ten kings SERVE the beast. In other words, one nation is most powerful and fights against God’s church. Other nations are less powerful, but follow the one powerful nation and help them fight against the church. Who will win in the end (verse 14)?

During much of history, the prostitute (false religion) and the beast (wicked government) will work together. But they don’t always work together. What happens in the end? Who makes that happen? Read Rev. 17:16-17.

Babylon Is Destroyed

Revelation 18:1-8

Where do God’s people live until the end of the world (verse 4)? Why does God pull us out at the end?

In verse 14, what are the armies of heaven? Why are they wearing pure white linen and riding white horses?

Notice their clothes. The armies of heaven have pure, clean white clothes. How are Jesus' clothes described? Read verses 13 and 15, then read Isaiah 63:1-6 (941).

We have already said this person on the horse is Jesus. We know that the "Word of God" is Jesus, from John 1:1-14. Who is the "King of Kings and Lord of Lords"? Read Philippians 2:5-11 (1474) and 1 Timothy 6:14-15 (1494).

Revelation 19:17-21

In Rev. 19:9, the angel says that people invited to the Lamb's wedding banquet are blessed. Here in verses 17-18 and 21 we see a different kind of banquet. Who is the "Great Banquet of God" for, and what is it like?

The beast and kings of the earth gathered their armies to fight against Jesus. What happened to the beast, the false prophet, the armies, and everyone who followed them?

The Book of Revelation God's Picture of History and Heaven

Lesson 16, Revelation 19

To Begin...

The Bible uses several pictures to describe heaven. One picture is a wedding feast. Imagine you are there. What food is there? What does it look like? What are the tastes and smells? Now imagine a banquet in hell. What would that look like, taste or smell like?

Hallelujah!

Much of the book of Revelation is filled with pain and hope. Pain because of sin, God punishing sin, and unbelievers persecuting the church. But we have hope because God still rules this world, and He limits how much His church will suffer. We have hope, too, because we look forward to heaven. Now, at the end of Revelation, we see the old things ending and the new things coming. Jesus is our Victor! He won! Soon we will see that and rejoice with all of God's people and shout Hallelujah, praise to God!

Shout Hallelujah!

Revelation 19:1-5

These verses show great rejoicing, but also bring up a couple strange ideas. First the rejoicing. Who is praising God and shouting "Hallelujah"? Look at verses 1, 4, 5.

Why the praises for God? Why does He deserve our praise forever? Because... _____, _____, and _____ belong to our God. His _____ are true and fair.

That part sounds good. But what about the rest of verse 2? He has _____ the notorious (“bad reputation”) prostitute... He has taken _____ on her for the blood of His servants.

What??? I thought revenge was wrong! Understand this: God has one responsibility, we have a different responsibility. Read Romans 12:17-21 (1424). What should we do? What will God do?

Revelation 19:3 really seems strange. We know God will get revenge on His enemies and the church’s enemies. He will punish them forever. But we will praise God for that??? Read Psalm 58 (693). What does this say about wanting God to judge wicked people?

This will give us a more clear understanding. Read Isaiah 34:8 (897). Zion is another name for Jerusalem; here it means “God’s people.” Also read Isaiah 35:4 (898). Why will God get revenge?

Revelation 19:6-10

The huge crowd again praises God. Why? What is it time for?

Who is the bride? The bride’s clothes are made of what?

The angel told John that people who are invited to heaven (the Lamb’s wedding banquet) are blessed. What did John do? Why in the world would John do that? What did the angel say about it?

The Great Banquet

Revelation 19:11-16

John saw heaven open and a white horse with someone sitting on it. Verse 11 says His name is...

Verse 13 says His name is...

These verses have many descriptions for Jesus. Then we will pick some of these to see what they mean.

Riding a white horse: White means...

Eyes are:

On His head are:

Name written on Him (verse 12):

Wears clothes dipped in:

_____ of heaven follow Him.

Out of His mouth comes a...

On His clothes and thigh is this name:

What does God promise for His people in Rev. 20:6?
What will God's people do while they live?

The Final Judgment

Revelation 20:7-15

What happens at the end of the "1,000 years"? After the church's time on earth, who goes free for a while?

"Gog and Magog" are two names that mean all the countries on earth that are against God. Why does the devil bring all the nations together?

What happened to the armies? Was there even a fight?
What happened to the devil, beast, and false prophet?

Next, the Bible describes the "Great White Throne Judgment." This happens at the end of the world. The bodies of all people will rise. How will God judge them (verses 12-13)? Will Christians get judged? Look at verse 12 and John 5:24 (1339).

There is one book that decides where everyone goes. What is that book (verse 15)? What does it mean if your name is in that book? How does your name get in that book?

The Book of Revelation God's Picture of History and Heaven

Lesson 17, Revelation 20

To Begin...

Think back to when you had to read a book for school. Did you ever read the last chapter first to see what happened, then read the rest of the book? Why did you do that? How is reading Revelation like reading the last chapter first?

The Last Big Picture

All through Revelation, we have seen many pictures of world history. The 7 seals, 7 bowls, 7 trumpets, all showed a short history of the world. The main point of those visions was to show suffering from sin, people rejecting God, and God's judgment on sin. The vision of the dragon and the woman showed the constant war between the devil and God's people, but that God always saves His church. Now in chapter 20, we see the last picture of world history. This short vision shows how God is judging the devil and the devil has no chance of winning. But everyone who belongs to Jesus already wins and will share in His resurrection!

The One Thousand Years

Revelation 20:1-6

An angel came down from heaven. What two things did he have? What did he do?

How long was the devil chained up?

What About...	<p><i>The Millenium (1,000 Years)?</i> <i>The Millenium is the 1,000 years when the church rules with Christ. There are several different ideas about when this happens. Historic Premillennialism means that Jesus comes back and there is a resurrection for believers only. The believers rule with Christ for 1,000 years. The “Pre” means Christ comes back before the 1,000 years. Postmillennialism means that the world gets better and better until the church rules with Christ for a wonderful 1,000 years. Jesus comes back after (“Post”) the 1,000 years are over. Amillennialism means there is no literal 1,000 years. The 1,000 years is a symbol of the whole time the Christian church is on earth, from the time Jesus went up into heaven until He comes back again. That is what the Lutheran Church believes and teaches.</i></p>
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Verse 3 says that the devil is in the pit and can't deceive the nations any more. But read 1 Peter 5:8 (1528). What does that mean? These two verses seem to say opposite things. How can they agree?

For a while, the church will be able to tell the good news about Jesus and the devil's power to stop us is limited. But what happens after that time, before the world ends? Read 20:3.

Who will rule with Jesus during the “1,000 years”?

Next comes another confusing part: resurrection (coming back to life). Verses 5-6 talk about a “first time people come back to life.” Verses 6 and 14 talk about a “second death.” Is there a second time for people to come back to life? What is the first death? First we will look at what death is. Then that will help us understand resurrection.

The First Death:

How did death enter the world? Genesis 2:17 (2).
What kills us? Romans 7:9-11 (1417)

The Second Death:

What is the second death? Who will be thrown there? Revelation 20:14 (1561)

The First Resurrection:

When do we come back to life? Now, or in the future? John 5:24-26 (1339)
How do we become alive? Ephesians 2:4-6 (1467)

The Second Resurrection:

Is this a spiritual or physical resurrection?
1 Corinthians 15:51-53 (1445)

What does verse 11 say about us being ready for Jesus to come again? Can we hurry and clean up our lives right before He comes again?

Look at God the Father's name in Rev. 1:8 (1543). Then look at how Jesus named Himself in Rev. 22:13. Jesus said, "I am the _____ and the _____, the _____ and the _____, the _____ and the _____."

What does that say about who Jesus is?

See vs. 16-17. Why did Jesus give these words for the churches? What does Jesus and the Holy Spirit and the church encourage people to do?

Jesus is the one who gave these words. Does God want anyone changing His word? How serious is He about that?

Jesus said He is coming quickly. Do we want Him to come quickly? Why or why not? (To help you, remember that the Bible says Jesus and the church are like a groom and bride.)

The Book of Revelation

God's Picture of History and Heaven

Lesson 18, Revelation 21-22

To Begin...

What do you think heaven will be like? What will it look like and feel like? Can we really imagine what it is like?

The Holy City, Heaven

The end has come! Revelation has shown all the trouble in the world because of sin and God's judgment. Revelation also has shown the end of the world and God's judgment against all who rejected Him. Chapter 20 described God throws the devil, all his angels, and all unbelievers into the lake of fire, hell. What about believers and heaven? Chapters 21 and 22 show us the heaven that we can look forward to.

The New Sky and New Earth

Revelation 21:1-8

What new things did God make?

What happened to the first heaven (sky) and earth, and all the first things (vs. 1 and 4)?

When the first things end, what things will end (vs. 4)?

God made the first sky and earth as a place for God and His people to live together. But sin ruined everything. Is God doing that again, or doing something different?

“Jerusalem” can mean heaven or also mean God’s people. What do God’s people look like? Where did they come down from?

What blessings are for people who belong to Christ?

The New Jerusalem, Heaven

Revelation 21:9-27

Remember this description of Jerusalem is really a description of God’s people. What number means God’s people? What number do you see several times in this description of God’s people?

How big was the “city”? Notice it is the same width, length and height – a perfect cube. For the Jews, that meant perfection.

God brings people from all over the world into His church. How do the gates show you that (vs. 12-13)?

Look at the beauty of the city – all the jewels and gold. What does this say about God’s people?

Verses 22-27 describe our life with God in heaven. What will our life be like?

The Gift of Eternal Life

Revelation 22:1-6

The Bible uses many different pictures for eternal life, but two are very important. They are more than pictures. Read about the first one in Genesis 2:9 (2) and 3:22-24 (4). Can we eat from the tree now? What about in heaven?

Read about the second picture of eternal life in John 4:13-14 (1336) and 7:37-39 (1343). Will we have that water of life in heaven?

The curse in Genesis 3 is that we are separated from God and suffer because of sin. Will we be separated from God in heaven, or together? What words tell you that?

Final Words

Revelation 22:7-21

Now John tells us the final words and instructions from Jesus. How soon is Jesus coming?

The angel said something confusing in vs. 10-11. God’s word should not be hidden (sealed), and people should keep doing what they are doing. Why?