
THE BOOK OF

REVELATION

LIGHT AFTER DARKNESS

BIBLE STUDIES
WRITTEN BY CHRIS RAMSBOTTOM

Revelation

LIGHT AFTER DARKNESS

Studies by Chris Ramsbottom

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| INTRODUCTION | 3 |
| STUDY 1 | 4 |
| Revelation 1:1-20 | |
| STUDY 2 | 8 |
| Revelation 2:1-3:22 | |
| STUDY 3 | 14 |
| Revelation 4:1-5:14 | |
| STUDY 4 | 19 |
| Revelation 6:1-8:1 | |
| STUDY 5 | 24 |
| Revelation 8:2-11:18 | |
| STUDY 6 | 31 |
| Revelation 11:19-14:20 | |
| STUDY 7 | 38 |
| Revelation 15:1-16:21 | |
| STUDY 8 | 43 |
| Revelation 17:1-19:10 | |
| STUDY 9 | 51 |
| Revelation 19:11-21:8 | |
| STUDY 10 | 56 |
| Revelation 21:9-22:21 | |
| REVELATION RESOURCES | 61 |
| REVELATION SONGS | 62 |
| MAP OF THE SEVEN CHURCHES | 64 |

INTRODUCTION

No other book of the Bible has been as misunderstood, misinterpreted or mistreated as Revelation. But, as Dwight L. Moody said: *"If God did not want us to understand the book of Revelation, He would not have given it to us at all."*

Let me warn you upfront. Revelation is not going to be an easy book to study. It will require effort on your part. Sometimes you'll be frustrated. You might even want to give up. Don't. Revelation is a book that is immensely encouraging. Yes, it's filled with symbols and visions that are strange and unfamiliar to us, but it's also full of gospel truths and encouragement.

Here are some thoughts that will help you get the most out of these studies:

A part of why people find Revelation hard is because the genre is unfamiliar to us. It will help to read through parts of Ezekiel, Daniel and Zechariah¹ to familiarise yourself with this type of writing.

Another reason people struggle is because they don't know enough Old Testament background. Revelation is full of references and allusions to the Old Testament. I've pointed these out when they're significant, but there are too many to list them all. This is why reading the whole Bible is important!

Context is important in Revelation. It would help to familiarise yourself with the world of the 1st century AD, especially in Asia Minor and the Roman Empire. A knowledge of history and geography will enhance your understanding. As will an awareness of the political, social, cultural and religious forces that influenced John's day. I've included some resources on Revelation at the end of these studies to help you.

The more you put into the studies, the more you'll get out. The Bible² passage is included each week together with some questions to help stimulate your thinking. There is space for you to make notes and write down any questions you have. There is space for you to draw pictures of what you've read, which will hopefully help you understand the text better. At the end of each study you'll find two sets of questions. The first are designed to get you into the text and thinking about it. The second, on a darker background and in Roman numerals, are there for you to apply, discuss and pray about what you've learnt.

Because Revelation is difficult, we've preached through the book first. It will help to watch/listen to the sermon/s for that week. At the end of each study there's a link to the St Stephens YouTube channel.

Don't get stuck in the detail. If you try to assign a meaning to each and every single part of Revelation, you'll end up frustrated and confused. Some of these issues have been debated for centuries. Be at peace that you're not going to solve them all. Instead, try to understand the big picture of what John is saying.

May you be blessed by these studies!

Chris Ramsbottom (April 2021)

¹ As a sample, try Ezekiel 1, Daniel 7 and Zechariah 2.

² The Bible passages in these studies are taken from the English Standard Version Anglicised (ESVUK).

The Holy Bible, English Standard Version Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers.

STUDY 1 ~ REVELATION 1:1-20

1 The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, 2 who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. 3 Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.

4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, 5 and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood 6 and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. 7 Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.

8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." 9 I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. 10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet 11 saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."

12 Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash round his chest. 14 The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, 15 his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters.

What is a revelation?

Who is this John?

The first of seven blessings in Revelation. Who is blessed?

What is prophecy? 2 Peter 1:21

What is significant about the number seven in the Bible?

What do 'alpha' and 'omega' mean?

Find out what Patmos was like in the 1st century AD.

What type of literature is Revelation?

Look up 'son of man' in Daniel 7:13-14

16 In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, 18 and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. 19 Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this. 20 As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

How does this vision of Jesus compare with that of God in Daniel 7:9-10, 10:6 and Ezekiel 43:2?

There is much debate as to when *these things* in Revelation have/will take place. Find out how each of the following approaches interpret the book: Preterist, Historicist, Futurist and Idealist. (See Revelation Resources on page 61)

Summarise the various approaches to interpreting Revelation

Preterist:

Historicist:

Futurist:

Idealist:



The book of Revelation is filled with symbols and images. You may find it helpful to draw pictures of what you read. Do this when you see the icon on the left. These don't need to be masterpieces. The aim is to help you understand the text better, not win an art prize! See what you can come up with, and share your pictures with your group. This week, draw what John sees in verses 12-16.

1. Revelation is a *revelation*, a *prophecy* and a *letter*. Discuss what these terms means and how they affect how we interpret the book.

2. Who is the author of this book? Think carefully about this! (1:1-2)

3. Who are the recipients of this book? How does this help us to interpret the rest of the book? (1:4, 11)

4. Who/what is the book of Revelation all about? Look for clues in these verses!

5. Why should we study Revelation? (1:3)

6. What circumstances do John and his readers find themselves in? (1:9)

7. What is significant about the fact that there are seven churches? (1:4, 11, 20)

8. Where is Jesus in John's vision. What is significant about that? (1:13)

9. What does John's vision tell us about Jesus? What is the appropriate response? (1:12-18)

i. Discuss how you feel about studying Revelation. Why do you feel this way?

ii. Discuss the pros and cons of the preterist, historicist, futurist and idealist approaches to interpreting Revelation. What approach would you suggest?

iii. Discuss what it would have been like living in the Roman Empire as a Christian at this time. What pressures would you face? What are the similarities and differences to our own time?

iv. What is the relationship between Jesus and his church? How should this encourage us? (1:13)

v. Is your view of Jesus too small? How does John's vision help you to think about who Jesus is?

vi. Who is in control of history? What are some of the phrases that show us this?

vii. Does/should being a Christian always result in persecution?

St Stephens sermons

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UD3VrUvGMZ0>

Revelation 1:1-8

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Bn8nu7kits>

Revelation 1:9-20

STUDY 2 ~ REVELATION 2:1-3:22

2 "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: 'The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands.'

2 "I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false. 3 I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary. 4 But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. 5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. 6 Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.'

8 "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: 'The words of the first and the last, who died and came to life.'

9 "I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 10 Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. 11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.'

12 "And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: 'The words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword.'

Find out what you can about the church in Ephesus. Commentaries and Bible dictionaries will help you.

What do you know about lampstands from the Old Testament? Exodus 25:31

Where else has this tree appeared? See also Revelation 22:2

Find out what you can about the church in Smyrna. Commentaries and Bible dictionaries will help you.

Revelation 20:6

Find out what you can about the church in Pergamum. Commentaries and Bible dictionaries will help you.

13 "I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. Yet you hold fast my name, and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. 14 But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practise sexual immorality. 15 So also you have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. 16 Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth. 17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.'

18 "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: 'The words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze.

19 "I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first. 20 But I have this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants to practise sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. 21 I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality. 22 Behold, I will throw her onto a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation, unless they repent of her works, 23 and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you according to your works. 24 But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan, to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden. 25 Only hold fast what you have until I come. 26 The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, 27 and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father. 28 And I will give him the morning star. 29 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

Balaam and Balak's story is told in Numbers 22-25 and 31:16

Revelation 14:1 and 22:4

Find out what you can about the church in Thyatira. Commentaries and Bible dictionaries will help you.

1 Kings 16:30-33 and 19:1-2

Revelation 19:15 and Psalm 19

Revelation 22:16

3 “And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: ‘The words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.

“‘I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead. 2 Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God. 3 Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you. 4 Yet you have still a few names in Sardis, people who have not soiled their garments, and they will walk with me in white, for they are worthy. 5 The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels. 6 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’

7 “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: ‘The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens.

8 “‘I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. 9 Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet and they will learn that I have loved you. 10 Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth. 11 I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown. 12 The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name. 13 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’

14 “And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: ‘The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God’s creation.

Find out what you can about the church in Sardis. Commentaries and Bible dictionaries will help you.

Revelation 20:12

Find out what you can about the church in Philadelphia. Commentaries and Bible dictionaries will help you.

Revelation 21:2

Find out what you can about the church in Laodicea. Commentaries and Bible dictionaries will help you.

15 "I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! 16 So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. 17 For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. 18 I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. 19 Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. 20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. 21 The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. 22 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

Revelation 20:11 and 22:3

Where else do we find this phrase in the Bible?

1. The letters to the seven churches all follow a similar pattern. Complete the table below to see which part of John's vision of Jesus is highlighted and what each church is commended for, condemned for and commanded to do. Also note the consequences of disobedience and the promise for those who conquer.

| Church | Verses | Description of Jesus | Commended for... | Condemned for... | Commanded to... | Consequence of disobedience | Promise for conquerors |
|--------------|---------|----------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Ephesus | 2:1-7 | | | | | | |
| Smyrna | 2:8-11 | | | | | | |
| Pergamum | 2:12-17 | | | | | | |
| Thyatira | 2:18-29 | | | | | | |
| Sardis | 3:1-6 | | | | | | |
| Philadelphia | 3:7-13 | | | | | | |
| Laodicea | 3:14-22 | | | | | | |

2. The word 'angel' can also mean 'messenger'. Who/what do you think the angel of each church is?

3. Why do you think *these* seven churches were singled out? (See map on page 64)

4. Find out as much as you can about each of the cities mentioned. How is the situation of each church related to the language in each letter? (See Revelation Resources on page 61)

5. How is the description of Jesus particularly relevant to the situation each church faced?

6. What are we to understand by the phrase 'he who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches'? Why do you think this is repeated to each church?

7. Below are all the imperative verbs (the commands Jesus gives to the churches) from these verses. What are the angels to do? What are the churches (and therefore us) to do?

| | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| "write" | (2:1, 8, 12, 18 & 3:1, 7, 14) |
| "hear" | (2:7, 11, 17, 29 & 3:6, 13, 22) |
| "Remember...Repent...Do" | Ephesus (2:1-7) |
| "Do Not Fear...Be Faithful" | Smyrna (2:8-11) |
| "Repent" | Pergamum (2:12-17) |
| "Hold Fast" | Thyatira (2:18-29) |
| "Wake Up...Strengthen...Remember...Keep it...Repent" | Sardis (3:1-6) |
| "Hold Fast" | Philadelphia (3:7-13) |
| "Be zealous...Repent" | Laodicea (3:14-22) |

i. Discuss how the fact that Jesus 'knows' should encourage us.

ii. Think about some of the issues facing these churches. Discuss how we face the same issues today.

Repent/pray about how we:

- Have abandoned our first love
- Worship idols
- Practice sexual immorality
- Tolerate false teaching
- Have fallen asleep
- Are lukewarm

Rejoice/praise God for:

- Faithfulness
- Endurance
- Perseverance

iii. Discuss how wealth can be a problem for a church.

iv. How can we ensure that we conquer?

v. Spend some time praying for the persecuted church.

vi. What are some of the promises Jesus gives us in these verses? Spend some time praying over these.

St Stephens sermons

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ba4k6Utv5uY>

Revelation 2-3

STUDY 3 ~ REVELATION 4:1-5:14

4 After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven!

And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this." 2 At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. 3 And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and round the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald. 4 Round the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads. 5 From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, 6 and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal.

And round the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: 7 the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. 8 And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all round and within, and day and night they never cease to say,

"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty,

who was and is and is to come!"

9 And whenever the living creatures give glory and honour and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives for ever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

11 "Worthy are you, our Lord and God,

to receive glory and honour and power,

for you created all things,

and by your will they existed and were created."

What does this signify?

'Throne' appears 19 times in these 2 chapters. What does that tell us?

See Ezekiel 1:26-28 for a similar vision of God.

The '24' might represent the church as a whole (Revelation 21:12-14) or it might be 24 angelic counterparts to the priestly order (1 Chronicles 24:4)

Compare this with the vision in Ezekiel 1:10 and 10:14

Compare this with the vision in Isaiah 6:2-3

5 Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals. 2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" 3 And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, 4 and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. 5 And one of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals."

6 And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. 7 And he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne. 8 And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sang a new song, saying,

"Worthy are you to take the scroll

and to open its seals,

for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God

from every tribe and language and people and nation,

10 and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God,

and they shall reign on the earth."

11 Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing!"

13 And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honour and glory and might for ever and ever!" 14 And the four living creatures said, "Amen!" and the elders fell down and worshipped.

See Ezekiel 2:9 for a similar scroll.

The seven seals are the topic of the next study.

Genesis 49:9-10

Isaiah 11:1

Jesus is called 'Lamb' 28 times in Revelation!

John's readers would have been familiar with Roman acclamations. How is Jesus superior to the Roman authorities?

Exodus 19:6



Draw what John sees in chapters 4 and 5.

1. Who sits on a throne?

2. The 'one seated on the throne' is described using various images from the Old Testament.

Look up the vision in Ezekiel chapter 1. What is similar? What is different?

What is the overall picture we have of God from these visions?

3. Who are the various people and objects in the throne room?
(Don't get stuck in the detail, instead think about how they respond)

4. What two things is God praised for? (4:8, 11)

5. What do you think the scroll represents? (5:1)

6. Why does John weep? Why is this an issue? (5:4)

7. What does John *hear*? But then what does he actually *see*? (5:5-6)

8. What are the seven horns and seven eyes meant to represent? (5:6)

9. Why is the Lamb worthy to open the scroll? (5:9-10)

10. What is the overwhelming response to what the lamb has done? (5:11-14)

i. Discuss what you think heaven will be like.

ii. How does John's vision compare to your answer above?

iii. Discuss how this vision of God would have been a comfort to the churches in Revelation 2-3.

How is it a comfort to you?

iv. What do the two 'hymns' in chapter 4 tell us about God?

v. The conquering Lion is also the slain Lamb. Discuss this apparent contradiction.

vi. How could you explain the gospel to someone from these two chapters?

vii. According to 5:9-10, who is the gospel for? What is our mission as Christians?

viii. Who could you speak to about Jesus this week? Pray for them and for opportunities.

St Stephens sermons

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=774VAkWs-MI>

Revelation 4-5

STUDY 4 ~ REVELATION 6:1-8:1

6 Now I watched when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder, "Come!" 2 And I looked, and behold, a white horse! And its rider had a bow, and a crown was given to him, and he came out conquering, and to conquer.

3 When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" 4 And out came another horse, bright red. Its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that people should slay one another, and he was given a great sword.

5 When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" And I looked, and behold, a black horse! And its rider had a pair of scales in his hand. 6 And I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst of the four living creatures, saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not harm the oil and wine!"

7 When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!" 8 And I looked, and behold, a pale horse! And its rider's name was Death, and Hades followed him. And they were given authority over a quarter of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth.

9 When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. 10 They cried out with a loud voice, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" 11 Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.

12 When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, 13 and the stars of the sky fell to the

Who has authority over the four horsemen?

What does the white horse and its rider represent? How is this horse and rider different from the one in Revelation 19:11-16?

What does the red horse and its rider represent?

What does the black horse and its rider represent?

Is this cheap or expensive? See Matthew 20:2

What does the pale horse and its rider represent?

Witness has appeared a few times already in Revelation. The Greek word for 'witness' is 'martyrian'. What English word do we get from that? What does that tell you about Christian witness in Revelation?

earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. 14 The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. 15 Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, 16 calling to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, 17 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"

7 After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, that no wind might blow on earth or sea or against any tree. 2 Then I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, 3 saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads." 4 And I heard the number of the sealed, 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:

5 12,000 from the tribe of Judah were sealed,

12,000 from the tribe of Reuben,

12,000 from the tribe of Gad,

6 12,000 from the tribe of Asher,

12,000 from the tribe of Naphtali,

12,000 from the tribe of Manasseh,

7 12,000 from the tribe of Simeon,

12,000 from the tribe of Levi,

12,000 from the tribe of Issachar,

8 12,000 from the tribe of Zebulun,

12,000 from the tribe of Joseph,

12,000 from the tribe of Benjamin were sealed.

9 After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" 11 And all the angels were standing round the throne and round the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, 12 saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom

What 'day' is the opening of the sixth seal describing?

There is an interlude between the sixth and seventh seal. This is a recurring pattern in Revelation.

What do you think is the significance of this number?

There is something odd about this list. Which tribe/s are missing and included? Why?

How does what John sees differ from what he hears?

and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen."

13 Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?" 14 I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

15 "Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence.

16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat.

17 For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

8 When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

How does washing in blood make something white?

John 10:1 ff.

John 4:7 ff.



Draw what John sees in 6:1-8:1.

1. The 'Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse' are one of the more famous symbols from Revelation. What do these riders represent? How does their horse colour help us understand that?

2. Who is in control of the riders? Which words tell you that?

3. If the first four seals represent general suffering on earth, what is different about the fifth seal?

4. What event does the sixth seal describe?
(See Joel 2:30-31)

5. What is the answer to the question of 6:17?

6. John sees two visions in chapter 7.
What is happening in each of them? Where does the action take place?
 - 7:1-8
 - 7:9-17

7. Contrast the experience of those in 7:13-17 with those in 6:9.

8. Explain the significance of the seventh seal.

i. Thinking back to the four interpretations of Revelation (preterist, historicist, futurist and idealist), which approach do you think makes the most sense here? Why?

ii. Discuss how we should respond to war, disaster, famine and plague.

iii. Do you grapple with God's sovereignty over suffering, disaster and death? What makes you feel uncomfortable? What comforts you?

iv. Does the sixth seal – the great day of wrath – motivate you to tell others about Jesus?

v. How would the events described by the opening of the seals be an encouragement to Christians in John's day? How are they an encouragement to us?

vi. Should the number 144 000 found in Revelation 7 be taken literally? Why/why not?

144 000 is important in the theology of Jehovah's Witnesses. Find out what they believe and think carefully about how you would answer them.

vii. How do these verses encourage us to keep going in our Christian faith?

St Stephens sermons

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5jivRtBQbFI>

Revelation 6:1-8:1

STUDY 5 ~ REVELATION 8:2-11:18

2 Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. 3 And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer, and he was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne, 4 and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel. 5 Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth, and there were peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.

6 Now the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to blow them.

7 The first angel blew his trumpet, and there followed hail and fire, mixed with blood, and these were thrown upon the earth. And a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.

8 The second angel blew his trumpet, and something like a great mountain, burning with fire, was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. 9 A third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

10 The third angel blew his trumpet, and a great star fell from heaven, blazing like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. 11 The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many people died from the water, because it had been made bitter.

12 The fourth angel blew his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of their light might be darkened, and a third of the day might be kept from shining, and likewise a third of the night.

13 Then I looked, and I heard an eagle crying with a loud voice as it flew directly overhead, "Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, at the blasts of the other trumpets that the three angels are about to blow!" 9 And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star fallen from heaven to earth, and he was given the key to the

These were introduced in 5:8. What was the purpose of the altar? How does this relate to prayer?

Exodus 27:1-8 and 30:1-10

What does this indicate? Revelation 4:5 and Exodus 19:16

This word occurs twelve times in 8:7-12. Should we take it to be literal? Compare this to 6:8

Something John's audience could relate to. Mount Vesuvius had erupted in 79 AD and destroyed Pompeii.

A plant with a bitter-tasting and poisonous extract.

When do these woes take place?

shaft of the bottomless pit. 2 He opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and from the shaft rose smoke like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke from the shaft. 3 Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth. 4 They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any green plant or any tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. 5 They were allowed to torment them for five months, but not to kill them, and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings someone. 6 And in those days people will seek death and will not find it. They will long to die, but death will flee from them.

7 In appearance the locusts were like horses prepared for battle: on their heads were what looked like crowns of gold; their faces were like human faces, 8 their hair like women's hair, and their teeth like lions' teeth; 9 they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle. 10 They have tails and stings like scorpions, and their power to hurt people for five months is in their tails. 11 They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he is called Apollyon.

12 The first woe has passed; behold, two woes are still to come.

13 Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God, 14 saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." 15 So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour, the day, the month, and the year, were released to kill a third of mankind. 16 The number of mounted troops was twice ten thousand times ten thousand; I heard their number. 17 And this is how I saw the horses in my vision and those who rode them: they wore breastplates the colour of fire and of sapphire and of sulphur, and the heads of the horses were like lions' heads, and fire and smoke and sulphur came out of their mouths. 18 By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed, by the fire and smoke and sulphur coming out of their mouths. 19 For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails, for their tails are like serpents with heads, and by means of them they wound.

20 The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshipping demons

What are locusts a symbol of?
Joel 1:2-2:11

Who is ultimately in control?

What do these words mean?

Find out about the Parthian empire, which was located in the Euphrates region. What was the backbone of their army?

Remember not to get lost in the details!

What does this remind us of?
Genesis 19:24

and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk, 21 nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

10 Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head, and his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire. 2 He had a little scroll open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the land, 3 and called out with a loud voice, like a lion roaring. When he called out, the seven thunders sounded. 4 And when the seven thunders had sounded, I was about to write, but I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up what the seven thunders have said, and do not write it down." 5 And the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven 6 and swore by him who lives for ever and ever, who created heaven and what is in it, the earth and what is in it, and the sea and what is in it, that there would be no more delay, 7 but that in the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God would be fulfilled, just as he announced to his servants the prophets.

8 Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me again, saying, "Go, take the scroll that is open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land." 9 So I went to the angel and told him to give me the little scroll. And he said to me, "Take and eat it; it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey." 10 And I took the little scroll from the hand of the angel and ate it. It was sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it my stomach was made bitter. 11 And I was told, "You must again prophesy about many peoples and nations and languages and kings."

11 Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told, "Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there, 2 but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months. 3 And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth."

4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. 5 And if anyone would harm them, fire pours from their mouth and consumes their foes. If anyone would harm them, this is how he is doomed to be killed. 6 They have the

In Greek this is the word 'euēngelisen'. It is closely related to 'euangelion' which means 'good news' or gospel.

Ezekiel 2:9-3:3

What is God's temple in the New Testament? 1 Corinthians 3:16 and 2 Corinthians 6:16

This is equivalent to three-and-a-half years, or a time, times and half a time (Revelation 12:14). The background to these numbers is Daniel 7:25

Zechariah 3-4

power to shut the sky, that no rain may fall during the days of their prophesying, and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague, as often as they desire. 7 And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit will make war on them and conquer them and kill them, 8 and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city that symbolically is called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified. 9 For three and a half days some from the peoples and tribes and languages and nations will gaze at their dead bodies and refuse to let them be placed in a tomb, 10 and those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and make merry and exchange presents, because these two prophets had been a torment to those who dwell on the earth. 11 But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood up on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. 12 Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here!" And they went up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies watched them. 13 And at that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

14 The second woe has passed; behold, the third woe is soon to come.

15 Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." 16 And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshipped God, 17 saying,

"We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty,

who is and who was,

for you have taken your great power

and begun to reign.

18 The nations raged,

but your wrath came,

and the time for the dead to be judged,

and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints,

and those who fear your name,

both small and great,

and for destroying the destroyers of the earth."

Who does this remind us of?
1 Kings 17:1 and 2 Kings 1:10 ff.

Who does this remind us of?
Exodus 7:14-18 and 8:12

The beast is the topic of the next study.

What were these cities known for?

What is odd about this statement?

When does the third woe take place? Revelation 8:13

What is different here? Why?



Draw what John sees in 8:2-11:18.

1. The opening verses of chapter 8 recall the events of the 5th seal (6:9 ff.)
What do they teach us about prayer? (8:3-5)

2. How does the pattern of the seven trumpets follow that of the seven seals?
Do you think we're seeing two different events or the same event twice?

3. What Old Testament event do the first four trumpet blasts remind you of? How does this help us understand their purpose?

4. When the fifth trumpet blows, a star falls from heaven to earth.
Who/what does this represent? How do we know?

5. Who are the objects of torment in 9:1-11? What insight does this give us into the real nature of the tormentor and the power of deception? What does his name mean?

6. What is tragic about the response of the survivors of the sixth trumpet? (9:20)

7. What makes prophecy both bitter and sweet?

8. Who do you think the two witnesses represent? (11:4)
What happens to them?

9. What do we learn about the kingdom when the seventh trumpet blows?

- i. Do you sometimes feel that your prayers are ineffective? How do these verses challenge that idea?
- ii. Why is there suffering in the world? Is this different for Christians and non-Christians?
- iii. This year, read a biography of a Christian martyr/s. See Revelation Resources on page 61.
- iv. Who are you fearful of sharing the gospel with? What makes you hesitant?
- v. Discuss how these verses encourage us to persevere with sharing Jesus with others.
- vi. Why were the nations angry at the message (11:16-18)?
What equivalent response do we face today, individually and as a church?
- vii. Pray that God would use people's experience of suffering to lead them to repentance and faith in Jesus.
- viii. Ask God to continue the task of gospel proclamation through faithful witnesses:
your church, missionaries...and you!

St Stephens sermons

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AnnFEVwEZcQ>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSWURjja6pI>

Revelation 8:2-11:18 (part 1 & part 2)

STUDY 6 ~ REVELATION 11:19-14:20

19 Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail.

12 And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. 2 She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth. 3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. 4 His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it. 5 She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, 6 and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days.

7 Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, 8 but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. 9 And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. 10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. 11 And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. 12 Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!"

13 And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child.

For other instances of 'openings' in Revelation see 4:1, 5:5 and 19:11

Where else do we see this imagery? (Genesis 37:9-10)
How does this help us identify who the woman represents?

Who does the dragon represent? Revelation 12:9

Who does the child represent?
Psalm 2:9

What does this period of time equate to?
Revelation 11:2 and 13:5

Genesis 3:1

What is the cause of victory?

14 But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle so that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. 15 The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with a flood. 16 But the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his mouth. 17 Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And he stood on the sand of the sea.

13 And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads. 2 And the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority. 3 One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marvelled as they followed the beast. 4 And they worshipped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshipped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?"

5 And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. 6 It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. 7 Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation, 8 and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain. 9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear:

10 If anyone is to be taken captive,

to captivity he goes;

if anyone is to be slain with the sword,

with the sword must he be slain.

Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.

What is the wilderness a place of? (2 things)

Who is this?

See Daniel 7 to help understand what this beast represents.

Much has been written about what this is. Some think it's a reference to Nero's attempted suicide. Others that it's a contrast between the true Messiah (the wounded Lamb) and the false Messiah (often called the anti-Christ).

Revelation 3:5, 17:8, 20:12, 20:15 and 21:27

Jeremiah 15:2 and 43:11

11 Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. 12 It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed. 13 It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of people, 14 and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived. 15 And it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast might even speak and might cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain. 16 Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, 17 so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name. 18 This calls for wisdom: let the one who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is 666.

14 Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. 2 And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, 3 and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. 4 It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These have been redeemed from mankind as firstfruits for God and the Lamb, 5 and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are blameless.

6 Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. 7 And he said with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgement has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water."

8 Another angel, a second, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality."

What does this beast represent? Revelation 16:13 and 19:20

There are no shortages of interpretation as to what this is. Don't get stuck in the detail. Instead, think about how the 'mark of the beast' is contrasted with the 'mark of the Lamb' in Revelation 7:3 and 14:1

See note below.

Remember what this number represents from Revelation 7:4?

What is this? Look at the next verse!

Babylon will only be introduced in Revelation 16:19 and 17:1-18. What do we already find out about Babylon here?

9 And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulphur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 And the smoke of their torment goes up for ever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshippers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name."

12 Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.

13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labours, for their deeds follow them!"

14 Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand. 15 And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe." 16 So he who sat on the cloud swung his sickle across the earth, and the earth was reaped.

17 Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. 18 And another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has authority over the fire, and he called with a loud voice to the one who had the sharp sickle, "Put in your sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe." 19 So the angel swung his sickle across the earth and gathered the grape harvest of the earth and threw it into the great wine press of the wrath of God. 20 And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the wine press, as high as a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia.

A common refrain in the book so far. Revelation 1:9, 2:2-3, 2:19, 3:10 and 13:10

The second blessing.

As seen previously, a title Jesus used for himself. Daniel 7:13-14

How do these two harvests differ? Revelation 14:14-16 and 14:17-20

Isaiah 63:1-6

Roughly 296 km.

666

Of all the numbers in Revelation, this is the most famous, and the least understood! There are some widely divergent views and highly speculative solutions as to what this number means.

Some understand this number to be the number of man. If 7 is the divine number, then 6 is one short. So 666 is the number of man pretending to be God. The trinity of imperfection.

Others think that since John invites us to 'calculate' the number, he's using *gematria* - an alphanumeric code that assigns a number to a name based on its letters (A=1, B=2 etc.). Possible solutions are 'beast', 'Nero Caesar' and 'Lateinos' (Roman empire). More modern solutions include certain Popes, Adolf Hitler, Saddam Hussein and even the COVID vaccine. **Be careful, there is a lot of rubbish written on this number!**

If we don't get lost in the detail, and simply read the next verse (14:1), one thing is clear. There are only two kinds of people in the world - those who worship the Lamb and those who worship the dragon. There are people who are marked with the promised Holy Spirit and there are people who are marked with the mark of the beast. Those who have submitted to Jesus as Lord and those who haven't.



Draw what John sees in 11:19-14:20.

1. Why does the dragon seek to kill the male child? (12:4) See Genesis 3:15

2. What does the defeat of the dragon mean:

- in heaven? (12:7-12)
- on earth? (12:12-17)

3. What do you think the two beasts represent:

- in John's day?
- in our day?

4. What are the weapons used by:

- the beast from the sea? (13:4-8)
- the beast from the earth? (13:13-17)

5. What do you understand by the mark on the forehead or hand? (13:16)

6. What is the alternative to worshipping the beasts? (14:1-5)

7. What is the message of the angels? (14:6-20)

i. Do you think of Satan as active in the world? Does he have power? What is a biblical view?

ii. How do Christians endure and remain faithful in the face of persecution?

iii. Where do you see the beasts at work in the world today?

iv. What should our attitude be towards the state?
See also Romans 13:1-16, 1 Timothy 2:1-2 and 1 Peter 2:13-17

v. Thank God that we live in a democracy and for the religious freedoms we enjoy.

vi. Who/what do you worship?

vii. Does the idea of eternal punishment make you uncomfortable? Is this at odds with what Jesus taught?

viii. The image of God's wrath and the blood from the winepress is rather gruesome. Discuss how this vivid image motivates you to speak to others about Jesus.

St Stephens sermons

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YTJwczl5X58>

Revelation 11:19-14:5

STUDY 7 ~ REVELATION 15:1-16:21

15 Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and amazing, seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is finished.

2 And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire—and also those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands. 3 And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying,

"Great and amazing are your deeds,

O Lord God the Almighty!

Just and true are your ways,

O King of the nations!

4 Who will not fear, O Lord,

and glorify your name?

For you alone are holy.

All nations will come

and worship you,

for your righteous acts have been revealed."

5 After this I looked, and the sanctuary of the tent of witness in heaven was opened, 6 and out of the sanctuary came the seven angels with the seven plagues, clothed in pure, bright linen, with golden sashes round their chests. 7 And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives for ever and ever, 8 and the sanctuary was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the sanctuary until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

What do these remind us of?
See how many other references
you can find throughout these
2 chapters. Exodus 7-11

What was the original song of
Moses about? Exodus 15:1-18

What aspect of God's
character is in focus here?

Exodus 38:21 ff.

Exodus 40:35

16 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple telling the seven angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God."

2 So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth, and harmful and painful sores came upon the people who bore the mark of the beast and worshipped its image.

3 The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became like the blood of a corpse, and every living thing died that was in the sea.

4 The third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of water, and they became blood. 5 And I heard the angel in charge of the waters say,

"Just are you, O Holy One, who is and who was,
for you brought these judgements.

6 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets,
and you have given them blood to drink.

It is what they deserve!"

7 And I heard the altar saying,

"Yes, Lord God the Almighty,
true and just are your judgements!"

8 The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was allowed to scorch people with fire. 9 They were scorched by the fierce heat, and they cursed the name of God who had power over these plagues. They did not repent and give him glory.

10 The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom was plunged into darkness. People gnawed their tongues in anguish 11 and cursed the God of heaven for their pain and sores. They did not repent of their deeds.

How is this different from before? Revelation 8:8-11

What is different here from previous instances? Revelation 1:4, 8 and 4:8

What happens to those who drink blood? Genesis 9:4 and Leviticus 17:12-14

What does this represent? Revelation 6:9 and 8:3-5

12 The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, to prepare the way for the kings from the east. 13 And I saw, coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs. 14 For they are demonic spirits, performing signs, who go abroad to the kings of the whole world, to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty. 15 ("Behold, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake, keeping his garments on, that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed!") 16 And they assembled them at the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.

17 The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, "It is done!" 18 And there were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as there had never been since man was on the earth, so great was that earthquake. 19 The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered Babylon the great, to make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of his wrath. 20 And every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found. 21 And great hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, fell from heaven on people; and they cursed God for the plague of the hail, because the plague was so severe.

This was the direction Rome feared invasion from.

Who is this? Revelation 13:11-17

Matthew 24:42-43

The third blessing.

Possibly 'Mount Megiddo'. This was the site of many Old Testament battles. Judges 5:19 and 2 Kings 23:29

Babylon is the topic of the next study.



Draw what John sees in chapters 15 and 16.

1. Which Old Testament book does much of the imagery here come from? Why do you think that is?

2. What is the message of the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb? (15:3-4)

3. Who are the primary targets of God's wrath? (16:2)

4. How are the seven bowls *similar* to the seven trumpets? Use the table below to help you.
What does this tell us?

| Trumpet | | Similarities | Bowl | |
|---------|----------|--------------|------|----------|
| 1 | 8:7 | | 1 | 16:2 |
| 2 | 8:8-9 | | 2 | 16:3 |
| 3 | 8:11 | | 3 | 16:4 |
| 4 | 8:12 | | 4 | 16:8-9 |
| 5 | 9:1-11 | | 5 | 16:10-11 |
| 6 | 9:13-19 | | 6 | 16:12-16 |
| 7 | 11:15-19 | | 7 | 16:17-21 |

5. How are the seven bowls *different* from the seven trumpets and the seven seals?

6. What parallel can we draw between Pharaoh and the unrepentant? (16:9, 11)

7. Why do Christians have nothing to fear from Armageddon? (16:15)

i. Revelation is filled with songs of praise. Spend time praying to God using 15:2-4 as a starting point.

(See a list of songs from Revelation on page 62)

ii. When God's final judgment falls, repentance will no longer be an option. How do these verses motivate your efforts to share Jesus with others?

iii. Think of your family and friends who don't know Jesus. This is what awaits them. Sobering? What will you do about it?

iv. Do you think God is concerned with your holiness? Is there any area of your life you need to change?

v. Should we be concerned about environmental issues if God is one day going to destroy the world?

vi. Is God's judgment fair or unfair? Why/why not?

vii. How do these verses help us to live with injustice in our world?

viii. Jesus will return 'like a thief'. Are you ready? How should you be living?

St Stephens sermons

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i1_T-vu003Y

Revelation 14-16

STUDY 8 ~ REVELATION 17:1-19:10

17 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the judgement of the great prostitute who is seated on many waters, 2 with whom the kings of the earth have committed sexual immorality, and with the wine of whose sexual immorality the dwellers on earth have become drunk." 3 And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns. 4 The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her sexual immorality. 5 And on her forehead was written a name of mystery: "Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations." 6 And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

When I saw her, I marvelled greatly. 7 But the angel said to me, "Why do you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast with seven heads and ten horns that carries her. 8 The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to rise from the bottomless pit and go to destruction. And the dwellers on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world will marvel to see the beast, because it was and is not and is to come. 9 This calls for a mind with wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; 10 they are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and when he does come he must remain only a little while. 11 As for the beast that was and is not, it is an eighth but it belongs to the seven, and it goes to destruction. 12 And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received royal power, but they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast. 13 These are of one mind, and they hand over their power and authority to the beast. 14 They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful."

Explained in Revelation 17:15

What does 'in the Spirit' mean?

Contrast this woman in the wilderness to the one in Revelation 12:1, 6

What are these the colour of?

Sexual immorality appears throughout these verses. In the Old Testament, what is this a sign of?

How does the beast compare with God? Revelation 1:4, 8

Is this a long or a short period of time?

Who wins in the end?

15 And the angel said to me, "The waters that you saw, where the prostitute is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages. 16 And the ten horns that you saw, they and the beast will hate the prostitute. They will make her desolate and naked, and devour her flesh and burn her up with fire, 17 for God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by being of one mind and handing over their royal power to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. 18 And the woman that you saw is the great city that has dominion over the kings of the earth."

18 After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was made bright with his glory. 2 And he called out with a mighty voice,

"Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!

She has become a dwelling place for demons,
a haunt for every unclean spirit,
a haunt for every unclean bird,
a haunt for every unclean and detestable beast.

3 For all nations have drunk

the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality,
and the kings of the earth have committed immorality with her,
and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the power of her luxurious living."

4 Then I heard another voice from heaven saying,

"Come out of her, my people,

lest you take part in her sins,
lest you share in her plagues;

5 for her sins are heaped high as heaven,
and God has remembered her iniquities.

6 Pay her back as she herself has paid back others,
and repay her double for her deeds;
mix a double portion for her in the cup she mixed.

Who is responsible for her ultimate downfall?

What does this represent? How is this an archetype? See Genesis 11:1-9 and 1 Peter 5:13

What does this look like practically?

7 As she glorified herself and lived in luxury,
so give her a like measure of torment and mourning,
since in her heart she says,

'I sit as a queen,

I am no widow,

and mourning I shall never see.'

8 For this reason her plagues will come in a single day,

death and mourning and famine,

and she will be burned up with fire;

for mighty is the Lord God who has judged her."

9 And the kings of the earth, who committed sexual immorality and lived in luxury with her, will weep and wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning. 10 They will stand far off, in fear of her torment, and say,

"Alas! Alas! You great city,

you mighty city, Babylon!

For in a single hour your judgement has come."

11 And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her, since no one buys their cargo any more, 12 cargo of gold, silver, jewels, pearls, fine linen, purple cloth, silk, scarlet cloth, all kinds of scented wood, all kinds of articles of ivory, all kinds of articles of costly wood, bronze, iron and marble, 13 cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and slaves, that is, human souls.

14 "The fruit for which your soul longed

has gone from you,

and all your delicacies and your splendours

are lost to you,

never to be found again!"

Isaiah 47:8

Revelation 18:17

Does this speak into the practice of slavery at all? What is this a list of? Is there an order to the list? If so, what does it mean that humans come last?

15 The merchants of these wares, who gained wealth from her, will stand far off, in fear of her torment, weeping and mourning aloud,

16 "Alas, alas, for the great city

that was clothed in fine linen,

in purple and scarlet,

adorned with gold,

with jewels, and with pearls!

17 For in a single hour all this wealth has been laid waste."

And all shipmasters and seafaring men, sailors and all whose trade is on the sea, stood far off 18 and cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning,

"What city was like the great city?"

19 And they threw dust on their heads as they wept and mourned, crying out,

"Alas, alas, for the great city

where all who had ships at sea

grew rich by her wealth!

For in a single hour she has been laid waste.

20 Rejoice over her, O heaven,

and you saints and apostles and prophets,

for God has given judgement for you against her!"

21 Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying,

"So will Babylon the great city be thrown down with violence,

and will be found no more;

22 and the sound of harpists and musicians, of flute players and trumpeters,

will be heard in you no more,

Will Babylon's fall be quick or slow?

What is the meaning behind this?

Much of the imagery and language here is drawn from Jeremiah's prophecy against Babylon in his own day.
Jeremiah 50-51

and a craftsman of any craft

will be found in you no more,

and the sound of the mill

will be heard in you no more,

23 and the light of a lamp

will shine in you no more,

and the voice of bridegroom and bride

will be heard in you no more,

for your merchants were the great ones of the earth,

and all nations were deceived by your sorcery.

24 And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints,

and of all who have been slain on earth."

19 After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, crying out,

"Hallelujah!

Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,

2 for his judgements are true and just;

for he has judged the great prostitute

who corrupted the earth with her immorality,

and has avenged on her the blood of his servants."

3 Once more they cried out,

"Hallelujah!

The smoke from her goes up for ever and ever."

4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God who was seated on the throne, saying,

"Amen. Hallelujah!" 5 And from the throne came a voice saying,

"Praise our God,

all you his servants,

What does this remind you of?
Genesis 4:10

What does this word mean?

An answer to the cry for justice
in Revelation 6:10

Where does this suggest we are
again?

you who fear him,
small and great."

6 Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude,
like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of
thunder, crying out,

"Hallelujah!

For the Lord our God

the Almighty reigns.

7 Let us rejoice and exult

and give him the glory,

for the marriage of the Lamb has come,

and his Bride has made herself ready;

8 it was granted her to clothe herself

with fine linen, bright and pure"—

for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

9 And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are
invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me,
"These are the true words of God." 10 Then I fell down at his feet to
worship him, but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow
servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of
Jesus. Worship God." For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of
prophecy.

Who is this? Isaiah 54:5,
Jeremiah 31:32 and Ephesians
5:25-32

The fourth blessing.

What is this?



Draw what John sees in 17:1-19:10.

1. How does John respond to the woman and the beast?
How do those whose names have not been written in the book of life respond? (17:6-8)

2. What is meant by the phrase 'was and is not and is to come'? (17:7, 8)

3. What is the ultimate fate of the woman and the beast? (17:10-12, 16)

4. Who was Babylon in John's day? Who is Babylon in our day?

5. What are some of the wicked practices Babylon is accused of?

6. What is Babylon's fate? Why would this seem so remarkable to John's original audience?

7. What 2 responses are possible to Babylon's destruction? (18:19, 19:5)

8. What is the testimony of Jesus? (19:10)

9. What is the spirit of prophecy? (19:10)

i. How do you view human 'progress'?

ii. Discuss what it would look like to 'come out' of Babylon. How have some Christians sought to do this in the past?

iii. How are your hopes and dreams shaped by Babylon's vision of 'the good life'.

iv. Google 'Monte Testaccio'. Discuss the benefits/drawbacks of consumerism.

v. Discuss what you understand to be the meaning of the words 'demonic' and 'satanic'.

vi. How does the desire for the 'good life' hinder your efforts at sharing Jesus with others?

vii. Is God against human culture?

viii. Do you find it difficult to believe in the judgment of God? Is judgment part of the gospel?

ix. Have you accepted the invitation to the marriage supper of the lamb?

St Stephens sermons

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OUb8K0A7Fqs>

Revelation 17:1-19:10

STUDY 9 ~ REVELATION 19:11-21:8

11 Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. 12 His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. 13 He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. 14 And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. 15 From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the wine press of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. 16 On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly directly overhead, "Come, gather for the great supper of God, 18 to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great."

19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army. 20 And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshipped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulphur. 21 And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.

20 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. 2 And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, 3 and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

A repeated phrase throughout this section. How many times does it appear?

What do we learn about Jesus from his three names?

How does this supper contrast with that in 19:9?
Ezekiel 39:17-20

Known as the 'millennium'. Find out how these thousand years have been interpreted. (See Revelation Resources on page 61)

4 Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshipped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

7 And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. 9 And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, 10 and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulphur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. 13 And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. 14 Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be

The same period of time that Satan is bound.

The fifth blessing.

Israel's great enemy in Ezekiel 38-39

How does this compare to popular thinking?

What is the content of these books?

What is this? Matthew 10:28

Much of the imagery here comes from Isaiah 65:17-25

What is this?

The goal of redemption. Genesis 3:10 and Exodus 25:8

his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. 4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away."

5 And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." 6 And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. 7 The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. 8 But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur, which is the second death."

Look back to the seven churches to see what is promised to those who conquer. Revelation 2:7, 2:11, 2:17, 2:26, 3:5, 3:12 and 3:21



Draw what John sees in 19:11-21:8.

1. Summarise each of the sections that begins with: 'Then I saw...'

- 19:11-16
- 19:17-18
- 19:19-21
- 20:1-3
- 20:4-10
- 20:11-15
- 21:1-8

2. What is the sword that comes from the mouth of Jesus? (19:15)

3. What is the outcome of the 'battle'?

4. What does it mean that Satan is 'bound'? (20:2-3)

5. Do you think the 1000 years in 20:3 is literal? Why/Why not?

6. When does the 1000 years *begin* and *end*? How does that help you answer question 5? (20:5-6)

7. What is the final basis of our judgment and our salvation? (20:11-15)

8. Is this a new creation or a renewed creation? (21:1) See also Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22

i. What weapons does Jesus use to make war? As his followers, what weapons do Christians use?

ii. Discuss the pros and cons of premillennialism, postmillennialism and amillennialism. Which view of the millennium makes the most sense based on the biblical evidence?

iii. What is the rapture? How does it relate to the millennium?

iv. What does it mean for our gospel witness if Satan is *presently* bound?

v. Discuss what you understand by the terms:

- first and second death
- first and second resurrection

vi. Do Christians 'go to heaven' or does heaven 'come to us'? What's the difference?

vii. The Bible doesn't give us many details about heaven. What *are* we told here?

St Stephens sermons

<https://youtu.be/3xtibkxGdsk>

Revelation 19:11-21:8

STUDY 10 ~ REVELATION 21:9-22:21

9 Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, "Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb." 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. 12 It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed— 13 on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15 And the one who spoke with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls. 16 The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width. And he measured the city with his rod, 12,000 stadia. Its length and width and height are equal. 17 He also measured its wall, 144 cubits by human measurement, which is also an angel's measurement. 18 The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, clear as glass. 19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel. The first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, 20 the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. 21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, transparent as glass.

22 And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. 23 And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. 24 By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, 25 and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. 26 They will bring into it the glory and the honour of the nations. 27 But nothing unclean will ever enter

Remember who this is?
Revelation 21:2

What then is this?

John had previously measured
the temple. Revelation 11:1-2

What else is a cube in the
Bible? 1 Kings 6:20

Note the similarities to the
priest's breastplate. Why do
you think that is?
Exodus 28:15-21

Isaiah 60:19-20

it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

22 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb 2 through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. 4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. 5 And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign for ever and ever.

6 And he said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place."

7 "And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

8 I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me, 9 but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God."

10 And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. 11 Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy."

12 "Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay everyone for what he has done. 13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

14 Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. 15 Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practises falsehood.

16 "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star."

Note the parallels to Genesis.
Genesis 2:10-14 and Ezekiel
47:1-11

Genesis 2:9

Genesis 3:14, 17

Genesis 1:26

The sixth blessing.

Note how often these words
are repeated in the following
verses. Why?

Note the contrast with Daniel.
Daniel 12:4

The seventh (and final) blessing.

Numbers 24:17

17 The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.

18 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.

Compare this with John 7:37-38

How should we respond?



Draw what John sees in 21:9-22:21.

1. Read Revelation 17:1-3 and 21:9-10. Note the similarities. Now complete the table below:

| | Babylon the Prostitute | Jerusalem the Bride |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Description | 17:2 | 21:9 |
| Source of splendour | 17:4, 18:12-13, 16 | 21:22-23 |
| Relationship with the nations | 17:2, 18:3, 23, 19:2 | 21:24 |
| Contains or excludes | 17:4-5 | 21:27 |
| Relationship with the nations | 14:8, 17:2, 18:3 | 21:6, 22:1-2 |
| Relationship with God's people | 18:4 | 22:14 |

2. Why is there no temple in the city? (21:22)

3. How does 22:1-5 take us back to the garden of Eden and the temple? Note some of the similarities.

4. What do we learn about 'the words of the prophecy of this book'?

22:6

22:7

22:9

22:10

22:18-19

5. Summarise the message of Revelation in a sentence or two.

i. What is the resurrection life like for Christians?

ii. Is your home Babylon or the Bride? What evidence in your life shows that?

iii. What does it mean that Jesus is coming 'soon'?

iv. Do you long and pray for Jesus to come soon? (22:7, 10-12, 20)

v. Who do you need to tell about Jesus before he returns?

vi. Go over the seven blessings in Revelation (1:3, 14:13, 16:15, 19:9, 20:6, 22:7 and 22:14). Spend some time in prayer reflecting on God's amazing promises.

vii. Perhaps you've never taken the water that Jesus offers. If you'd like to do that now, pray this prayer:
Lord Jesus, I know that you are coming soon. I know that when you do, it will be to judge the world, and I know that on my own merits I cannot stand before you as my judge in that day. I recognise now that you died for my sins so that I could be made clean. I open my life to you and ask you to be my Lord and Saviour from this time on, even though serving you may bring persecution and make my life more difficult. Thank you for giving me new life and your Holy Spirit. Grant that I may endure to the end. Amen.

St Stephens sermons

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UClA-3jZXWzR-RC3_OGKavWg

Revelation 21:1-22:21

REVELATION RESOURCES

Recommended Commentaries

Gregory K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: New International Greek Testament Commentary (NIGTC)*, Eerdmans, 1999, 1309 pp.

Level: Advanced Type: Technical

Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation: New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT)*, Eerdmans, 1997, 475 pp.

Level: Advanced Type: Expository

Craig S. Keener, *Revelation: NIV Application Commentary (NIVAC)*, Zondervan, 2000, 576 pp.

Level: Intermediate Type: Devotional

Paul Barnett, *Revelation: Apocalypse Now and Then*, 2004, 158 pp.

Level: Easy Type: Expository

Tim Chester, *Revelation for you*, Good Book Company, 2019, 187 pp.

Level: Easy Type: Expository

John Richardson, *Revelation unwrapped*, MPA Books, 1996, 84 pp.

Level: Easy Type: Expository

Recommended Biographies

dc Talk, *Jesus Freaks*. (Stories of martyred Christians past and present)

Elisabeth Elliot, *Through Gates of Splendour*. (Story of Jim Elliot and the Ecuador martyrs)

John Foxe, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*. (Compilation of Christian martyrs originally written in 1570)

Roberts Liardon, *God's Generals*. (Multi-volume series of Christian biographies)

Corrie Ten Boom, *A Prisoner and yet... & The Hiding Place*. (Corrie and her family hide Jews during WW2)

Recommended Websites

<https://bibleproject.com/learn/revelation/> (overview of Revelation)

<https://www.esv.org/> (click on the Global study Bible for free access to commentary, maps and charts)

<https://www.gotquestions.org/> (searchable answers to more than half-a-million questions – not only Revelation)

<https://thirdmill.org/seminary/lesson.asp/vid/133/version/> (historical, theological and literary background)

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UClA-3jZXWzR-RC3_OGKavWg (St Stephens YouTube channel)

REVELATION SONGS

Songs in Revelation

4:8; 4:9–11; 5:9–10; 5:12; 5:13; 7:10; 7:11–12; 11:15; 11:16–18; 12:10–12; 15:2–4; 16:5–7; 19:1–4; 19:5; 19:6–8

Recommended Website

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/themelios/article/songs-of-the-seer-the-purpose-of-revelations-hymns/>

(Some great insights into the purpose of songs in Revelation)

Songs based on Revelation

4:2 *“Behold our God”* by Sovereign Grace Music

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqrlI3Lkf58&list=PLym4IIdftYr1w6v6ywETU856iIOfqNPKo&index=2>

4:8 *“Holy, Holy, Holy”* by Reginald Heber

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JwuDSw-9cUQ>

4:8 *“Revelation Song”* by Jennie Lee Riddle

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UxuGeJQBXXA>

4-5 *“How great Is our God”* by Chris Tomlin, Ed Cash & Jesse Reeves

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WgDdg-eijlw>

5:5 *“It's rising up”* by Martin Smith & Matt Redman

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6C5en86OF2c>

5:11 *“O, for a thousand tongues to sing”* by Charles Wesley

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4O9kw3cILpg>

5:12 *“Worthy Is the Lamb”* by Darlene Zschech

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1gKsPMR00_Y

5:12 *"Agnus Dei"* by Michael W. Smith

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DdchuOhKGps>

6:14 *"It is well with my soul"* by Horatio Spafford

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AHe_qmo3gX4

7:10 *"Salvation belongs to our God"* by Adrian Howard & Pat Turner

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XZcG8cSxDiU>

7:11 *"There Is a higher throne"* by Keith Getty & Kristyn Lennox

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvDSG4s5FJw>

11:15 *"Hallelujah Chorus"* by George Frederick Handel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SoPCdfMDUs0>

14:19 *"Battle hymn of the Republic"* by Julia Ward Howe

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NEkgCT_Y8OA

19:12 *"Crown Him with many crowns"* by Matthew Bridges & Godfrey Thring

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YuMh_ept-Js

21:2 *"When the saints go marching in"* African American spiritual, made popular by Louis Armstrong

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BC7GaAIBMww>

21:6 *"Alpha and Omega"* by Erasmus Mutanbira

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YubEa-b-d0Q>

21:18 *"Christ is mine forevermore"* by CityAlight

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=roQovDZeAWE>

22:13 *"You are holy"* by Marc Imboden & Tammi Rhoton

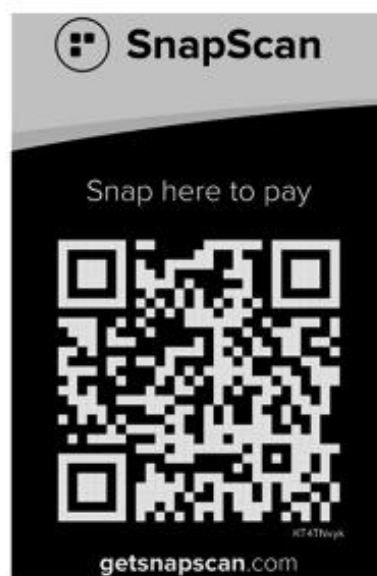
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KYkq2uhspVw>

MAP OF THE SEVEN CHURCHES



Taken from the ESV® Study Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright ©2008 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.

We want you to be blessed by these studies.
If you can't afford them, they are free.
If you would like to help us to bless others please
make a donation. Thank you.



ST STEPHENS BIBLE CHURCH RESOURCES
WWW.STSTEPHENS.ORG.ZA