



COMPLETE STUDY GUIDE · PROPHECY · 22 CHAPTERS · 8 SESSIONS

The Book of Revelation

The Lamb · The Throne · The Victory

“Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written in it, for the time is near.”

REVELATION 1:3



Eight sessions

Leader's guide

Answer guide

Full text of Revelation (WEB)

SIMPLE. ACCESSIBLE. TRANSFORMATIONAL.



CLEAR PATH BIBLE STUDIES

The Book of Revelation

Complete Study Guide

The Lamb · The Throne · The Victory

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

- 1** Eight sessions with every discussion, reflection, and recall question from the online study, and room to write.
- 2** Reference pages: the seven churches, major themes, key passages, key people, and all twenty-two chapters at a glance.
- 3** Leader's guide with the group leader notes, a timed plan, an answer guide for every discussion question, and the recall answer key.
- 4** The full text of Revelation in the World English Bible, so nothing else is needed to do the study.

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The online study, free and with no sign-in: clearpathbiblestudies.com/studies/revelation

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

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START HERE

How to use this guide

A complete, eight-session walk through the Book of Revelation, built for small groups, Sunday school and personal study. Read together, observe, interpret, and leave each session with one clear thing to live out. One session a week takes about eight weeks.

EVERY SESSION FOLLOWS ONE RHYTHM

1

Read together

The session's chapters and key passages. The text is in Part Four.

2

Observe

What does the passage say? Who is there, and what happens?

3

Interpret

What does it show about Jesus? What did the author want us to see?

4

Apply this week

What will I do with it this week? One thing, lived out.

On your own

Each session gives you a five-day reading plan, reflection questions, a memory verse, and one action step to live out.

- Write your answers. Thinking on paper is slower, and it lasts.
- Finish with the recall page: answer from memory first, then check the text.
- Spend about 20 minutes a day on the day's passage. If you miss a day, pick up where you stopped and do not double up.
- If a passage troubles you, stop and read 1:17–18 aloud, and talk with a pastor or trusted friend. You can take a session in two sittings.
- For the memory verse, say it aloud once each morning and once at night.

In a group

Each session has a 60-minute leader's plan for 5–12 people: read together, discuss, and apply, with leader notes built in, and a full answer guide in Part Three.

- The leader uses Part Three: leader notes, an answer guide, and the recall answer key.
- Participants need Parts One, Two, and Four. Before each meeting they read the session's chapters once; if they could not, the key verses are read aloud.

Of Part Five, pages 113 and 118–124 are for everyone, and pages 114–117 are for leaders.

PRINTING FOR A GROUP

Participant pages (sessions and reference): pages 8–49. Leader's guide: pages 50–93. The text of Revelation: pages 94–110. Page 111, Eight verses to carry, is for everyone. Part Five: pages 112–124.

My progress

☐ 1 Jesus Unveiled

☐ 3 The Throne and the Lamb

☐ 5 Warnings and Witness

☐ 7 Babylon Falls, the King Returns

☐ 2 Jesus Speaks to His Churches

☐ 4 Who Can Stand?

☐ 6 The Conflict Behind the Conflict

☐ 8 Judgment and All Things New

WHY REVELATION

Why read Revelation

No book of the Bible is more feared or more misunderstood. Revelation was written to steady the church, not to frighten it: an unveiling of the risen Jesus, given to believers under pressure.

01 Meet the risen Jesus

Revelation opens with the risen Christ among the lampstands, and His first words to a frightened John are 'Don't be afraid.'

02 Rooted in the Old Testament

More than any other New Testament book, Revelation speaks the language of Israel's Scriptures, with echoes of Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Zechariah, Exodus and the Psalms.

03 Letters from the risen Jesus

Seven messages to seven real churches: commendation, correction, and a promise to everyone who overcomes.

04 The Lamb wins

Revelation ends not with a battle report but with a wedding and a city, and an invitation that still stands open: 'Come!'

"Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written in it, for the time is near."

REVELATION 1:3 • WEB

ORIENTATION

Before you begin

A quick orientation to the book: who wrote it, when, for whom, and the threads to watch for as you read.

AUTHOR	Background Written by John from the island of Patmos, ‘your brother and partner with you in the oppression, Kingdom, and perseverance in Christ Jesus’ (Rev 1:9), to be read aloud in the churches.
DATE	When It Was Written Many scholars today, following Irenaeus, place the book around AD 95, late in the reign of Domitian; a minority argue for the late 60s. The message stands on either dating.
AUDIENCE	Who It Was Written For Seven real congregations in the Roman province of Asia, under pressure from hostility, false teaching and the daily temptation to compromise.
PURPOSE	Why John Wrote To unveil Jesus Christ: to steady believers with the certainty that the Lamb has already won, and to call every reader to patient endurance and fresh worship.
STYLE	How Revelation Speaks In pictures and numbers: prophecy wrapped inside a letter. Its pictures are drawn largely from the Old Testament, and faithful readers differ on how literally to take them.
KEY PHRASE	The Words That Echo ‘Overcome.’ To each of the seven churches, and again near the end: ‘He who overcomes, I will give him these things’ (Rev 21:7). Listen too for Lamb, throne, endure and new.
JESUS	Jesus in Revelation The faithful witness, the Lamb who was slain, the First and the Last, the Word of God, the King of kings and the bright Morning Star.
READINGS	Four Ways of Reading Faithful readers approach the book as preterist (mostly the first century), historicist (the church’s history), futurist (much still to come) or idealist (patterns that recur). Many blend them. This study notes the main readings where they divide and does not choose for you.

STRUCTURE

How the Eight Sessions Walk It

The vision of Christ (1), the seven churches (2–3), the throne and the Lamb (4–5), the seals (6–7), the trumpets and witnesses (8–11), the dragon and beasts (12–14), Babylon and the King (15–19), and the final judgment and new creation (20–22).

1		2		3		4		5				6			7					8		
1		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
S1		S2		S3		S4		S5				S6			S7					S8		
1	Jesus Unveiled			Revelation 1							5	Warnings and Witness			Revelation 8–11							
2	Jesus Speaks to His Churches			Revelation 2–3							6	The Conflict Behind the Conflict			Revelation 12–14							
3	The Throne and the Lamb			Revelation 4–5							7	Babylon Falls, the King Returns			Revelation 15–19							
4	Who Can Stand?			Revelation 6–7							8	Judgment and All Things New			Revelation 20–22							

THE EIGHT SESSIONS

Your study plan

EITHER WAY

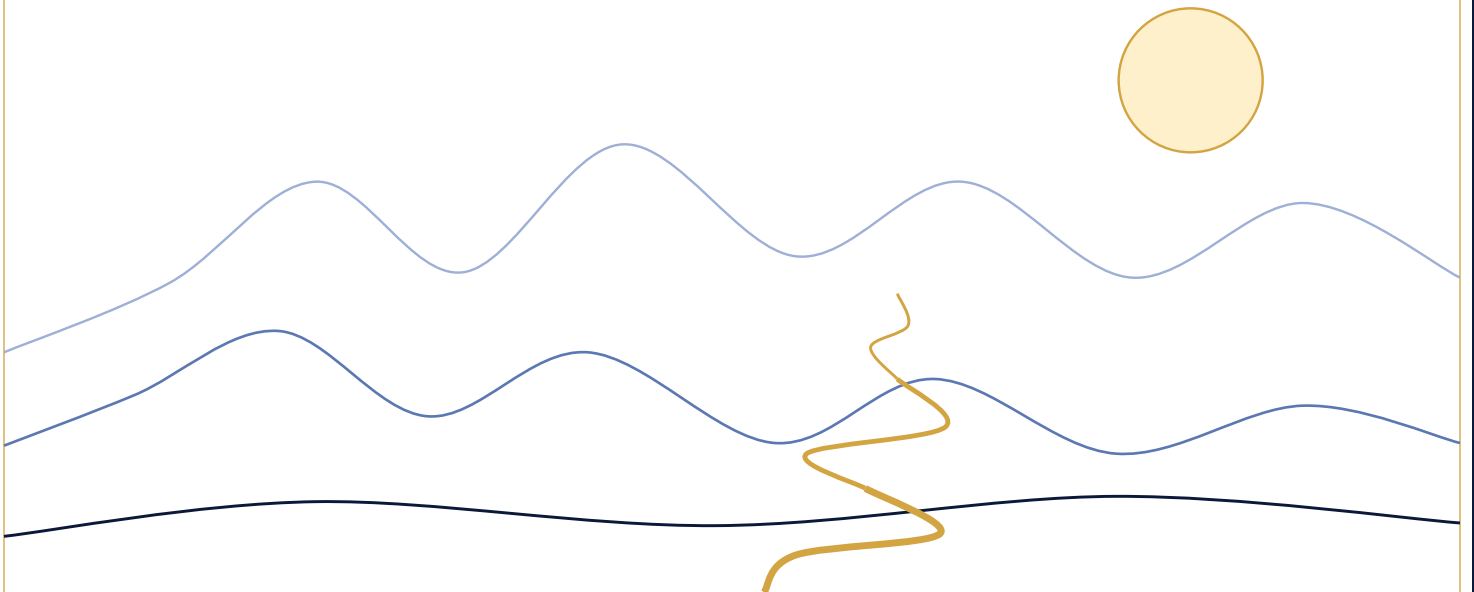
Eight sessions carry you through all twenty-two chapters of Revelation, from the vision of the risen Christ to the new heaven and the new earth.

	SESSION	READ	MEMORY VERSE	SESSION PAGE	LEADER PAGE	TEXT PAGE
1	Jesus Unveiled Revelation opens by telling you what it is: the unveiling of Jesus Christ, sent to steady His people.	Rev 1	Revelation 1:17–18	9	53	95
2	Jesus Speaks to His Churches The risen Jesus knows each of His churches as it is, praises what is faithful, names what is wrong, and calls the straying to come back.	Rev 2–3	Revelation 3:20	13	58	96
3	The Throne and the Lamb Heaven's throne room: God sits on the throne, and the Lamb who was slain is the only one found worthy to open the sealed scroll.	Rev 4–5	Revelation 5:12	17	63	98
4	Who Can Stand? The seals are opened by the Lamb, trouble comes, and the question 'who is able to stand?' is answered with a crowd no one can count.	Rev 6–7	Revelation 7:17	21	68	99
5	Warnings and Witness The trumpets sound over a world that will not repent, while God's people keep bearing witness.	Rev 8–11	Revelation 11:15	25	73	100
6	The Conflict Behind the Conflict Behind the pressure on God's people stands a dragon the book shows thrown down, and the Lamb's followers overcome by trusting His blood and keeping faith to the end.	Rev 12–14	Revelation 12:11	29	78	102
7	Babylon Falls, the King Returns Judgment is poured out in justice, the city that seduced the world falls, and heaven celebrates as the faithful and true King comes.	Rev 15–19	Revelation 19:6	33	83	105
8	Judgment and All Things New Evil is judged, death dies, and God makes all things new and dwells with His people forever.	Rev 20–22	Revelation 21:3–4	37	88	108

PART ONE

The Eight Sessions

Read, discuss, reflect, and recall. One session a week carries you through all twenty-two chapters.



SESSION 1 OF 8

Jesus Unveiled

Read Rev 1 · text on page 95

1

Revelation opens by announcing what it is: the unveiling of Jesus Christ, written to steady His people before any beast or bowl appears.

Before any dragon, plague or throne, John tells us what kind of book this is. He calls it a revelation, a prophecy and a letter to seven real churches. Then he shows us the One it is about: the risen Jesus among the lampstands, alive forever, holding the keys of Death and Hades, the realm of the dead. His first words to a frightened John are ‘Don’t be afraid.’ That is how the whole book is meant to be read.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ☐ Say what the book calls itself and what it promises its readers (1:1–3)
- ☐ Describe the risen Jesus in 1:13–16 and name two things the chapter says about who He is (1:17–18)
- ☐ Say what the book’s three labels (revelation, prophecy, letter) tell us about how to read it (1:1–4)

MEMORY VERSE

Don’t be afraid. I am the first and the last, and the Living one. I was dead, and behold, I am alive forever and ever. Amen.

REVELATION 1:17–18 · WEB

THIS SESSION’S READING PLAN

- ☐ Day 1 **Revelation 1:1–8** — A book with a blessing. Note what it calls itself and how it greets its readers.
- ☐ Day 2 **Revelation 1:9–11** — Patmos and the seven assemblies. Find the seven cities on a map.
- ☐ Day 3 **Revelation 1:12–16** — The one among the lampstands. List every detail, then ask what each could mean.
- ☐ Day 4 **Revelation 1:17–20** — Fear and the answer to fear. What does John do, and what does Jesus say and do?
- ☐ Day 5 **Revelation 1:17–18** — Memorize it. Say it aloud as a prayer.

DISCUSS

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

- 1** Read Revelation 1:1–8 aloud, then 1:9–20. What does John say this book is, who is it from, and who is it for?

OBSERVE

- 2** What does 1:1–3 call this book, and what does it promise to the one who reads, hears and keeps its words?

- 3** Where is John, why is he there, and what does he hear and see first (1:9–12)?

- 4** What details does John give about the one among the lampstands (1:13–16)?

INTERPRET

- 5** John calls this book a revelation, a prophecy and a letter (1:1, 3, 4). How should each word change the way we read it?

- 6** John's greeting names Jesus as 'the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth' (1:5). Why would believers under pressure need to hear these three titles first?

- 7** Verse 20 explains the stars and the lampstands, and other images in 1:13–16 echo the Old Testament. What does the book explain for itself, and where else could a reader look?

- 8** When John falls like a dead man, Jesus says 'Don't be afraid' and gives reasons (1:17–18). Which reason speaks most directly to the fear of death, and why?

REFLECT

Reflection questions

APPLY THIS WEEK · WITH THE GROUP

- 9 Which title or image of Jesus in this chapter do you most need right now: the first and the last, the Living one, or the one who holds the keys of Death and Hades? Why?

- 10 What fear about this book, or about life, would you like Jesus' words in 1:17–18 to speak to?

REFLECT · ON YOUR OWN

- 1 Write three words that describe the Jesus you met in this chapter. Which one surprised you?

- 2 Where have you heard 'Don't be afraid' in your own life? What did it change?

- 3 What would it look like this week to 'keep' what you read (1:3), not only to read it?

ONE THING TO LIVE OUT

Read 1:17–18 aloud each morning this week, and name one fear you are handing to the living Jesus.

PRAYER

Jesus, first and last, living one, thank You that You hold the keys. Calm what I fear, and teach me to read this book as Your friend. Amen.

RECALL

Recall practice

Answer from memory first, then check the text. Pulling an answer out of memory is what makes it stay.

- 1** Memory verse 1:17–18: “Don’t be afraid. I am the first and the last, and the Living one. I was dead, and behold, I am ____ forever and ever. Amen.” — the missing word?

☐ (A) silent	☐ (B) Amen
☐ (C) alive	☐ (D) hidden
- 2** Where is John when he receives the vision (1:9)?

☐ (A) On the road to Damascus	☐ (B) In a prison in Rome
☐ (C) On the island of Patmos	☐ (D) By the river Chebar
- 3** In 1:18, what does Jesus say He has?

☐ (A) The plough and the yoke of oxen	☐ (B) The seven bowls and the trumpets
☐ (C) The anchor and the ship’s sail	☐ (D) The keys of Death and of Hades
- 4** What blessing does 1:3 promise?

☐ (A) To those who read, hear and keep its words	☐ (B) To those who decode its numbers
☐ (C) To those who predict the date of the end	☐ (D) To those who memorize its chapters
- 5** Without looking back, write Revelation 1:17–18.

Answers are in the leader’s guide, page 57.

SESSION 2 OF 8

Jesus Speaks to His Churches

Read Rev 2–3 · text on pages 96–97

2

The risen Jesus knows each of His churches as it is, praises what is faithful, names what is wrong, calls the straying to come back, and calls every one to overcome.

Jesus dictates seven letters to seven real churches in Asia: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea. He sees each exactly as it is. Some are faithful under pressure, some have lost their first love, some tolerate what they should not, and one is lukewarm and sure it needs nothing. Each letter ends with a promise to ‘him who overcomes.’ These letters are the book’s first picture of what Jesus wants from His people: to be known, corrected and held.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ☐ Recognize the pattern that repeats in the seven letters
- ☐ Contrast what Jesus commends and corrects in Ephesus, Smyrna and Laodicea
- ☐ Say what the promises to ‘him who overcomes’ offer

MEMORY VERSE

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with me.

REVELATION 3:20 · WEB

THIS SESSION’S READING PLAN

- ☐ Day 1 **Revelation 2:1–11** — Ephesus and Smyrna. Contrast the church that lost its love with the church that is poor and faithful.
- ☐ Day 2 **Revelation 2:12–29** — Pergamum and Thyatira. Notice what each does well and what it tolerates.
- ☐ Day 3 **Revelation 3:1–13** — Sardis and Philadelphia. Reputation against reality; little power against an open door.
- ☐ Day 4 **Revelation 3:14–22** — Laodicea. Ask where you feel ‘rich’ and in need of nothing.
- ☐ Day 5 **Revelation 3:20** — Memorize it. Open the door to Jesus in prayer.

DISCUSS

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

- 1 Read 2:1–7 (Ephesus) and 3:14–22 (Laodicea). What does Jesus say He knows about each church?
-

OBSERVE

- 2 Which lines repeat in each of the seven letters? Compare the openings, the middles and the endings of all seven letters.
-
- 3 What does Jesus praise in Smyrna and in Philadelphia, and what does He not correct in them (2:8–11; 3:7–13)?
-
- 4 What does Jesus say He is doing in 3:20, and what does He ask of the person who hears?
-

INTERPRET

- 5 Ephesus did a great deal right (2:2–3), yet Jesus says ‘you left your first love’ (2:4). How can sound work and a cooling heart exist together, and what does Jesus ask them to do (2:5)?
-
- 6 Jesus introduces Himself to each church with a title, and most of them echo the vision in chapter 1. Choose two letters and say why the title fits that church.
-
- 7 Sardis has ‘a reputation of being alive’ but is dead (3:1), and Laodicea says ‘I am rich’ (3:17). What do they share, and how does Jesus try to wake them (3:2–3; 3:18–19)?
-
- 8 Jesus tells Smyrna ‘Don’t be afraid’ (2:10) and promises ‘the crown of life.’ How does the promise to the one who overcomes (2:11) speak to a church that may suffer? (if time)
-

REFLECT

Reflection questions

APPLY THIS WEEK · WITH THE GROUP

- 9 Which of the seven letters sounds most like it was written to you? What might Jesus commend in you, and what might He ask you to remember?
-
- 10 Jesus stands at the door and knocks (3:20). What door might He be asking you to open this week?
-

REFLECT · ON YOUR OWN

- 1 Which line from the seven letters do you most want to carry this week, and why?
-
- 2 Have you ever kept right beliefs while your love grew cold? What helped, or might help, to rekindle it?
-
- 3 Where might comfort or self-sufficiency be dulling your hunger for Jesus?
-

ONE THING TO LIVE OUT

Choose the one letter that fits you most, write down its call, and take one concrete step toward it this week.

PRAYER

*Lord, You know me completely and still knock.
I open the door. Rekindle my first love and help
me overcome. Amen.*

RECALL

Recall practice

Answer from memory first, then check the text. Pulling an answer out of memory is what makes it stay.

- 1** Memory verse 3:20: “Behold, I stand at the door and _____. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with me.” — the missing word?

☐ (A) shout	☐ (B) sleep
☐ (C) hide	☐ (D) knock
- 2** Which two of the seven churches receive no correction from Jesus?

☐ (A) Ephesus and Sardis	☐ (B) Pergamum and Thyatira
☐ (C) Thyatira and Laodicea	☐ (D) Smyrna and Philadelphia
- 3** Which church is told ‘you left your first love’ (2:4)?

☐ (A) Ephesus	☐ (B) Smyrna
☐ (C) Sardis	☐ (D) Laodicea
- 4** What call appears in every one of the seven letters?

☐ (A) Rebuild the city walls before the winter	☐ (B) Let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies
☐ (C) Sell your fields and give to the temple	☐ (D) Build a new altar and bring an offering to it
- 5** Without looking back, write Revelation 3:20.

Answers are in the leader’s guide, page 62.

SESSION 3 OF 8

The Throne and the Lamb

Read Rev 4–5 · text on pages 98–99

3

God reigns on His throne, and the Lamb who was slain is the one worthy to open the scroll.

John is invited through an open door into heaven. Before any seal is broken, he sees a throne, a circle of worshipers and a sealed scroll that no one can open. He weeps. Then he hears of a Lion and sees a Lamb ‘standing, as though it had been slain.’ All creation sings to the One on the throne and to the Lamb. This scene is the foundation for everything that follows.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ☐ Describe what John sees around the throne in chapter 4
- ☐ Explain why the Lamb alone can open the scroll (5:1–7)
- ☐ Compare the two songs of worship and what each praises

MEMORY VERSE

Worthy is the Lamb who has been killed to receive the power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing!

REVELATION 5:12 · WEB

THIS SESSION'S READING PLAN

- ☐ Day 1 **Revelation 4:1–11** — The throne. List what John sees and who is worshiped.
- ☐ Day 2 **Revelation 5:1–7** — The scroll and the Lamb. Notice what John hears and what he sees.
- ☐ Day 3 **Revelation 5:8–14** — The new song. Count who joins the worship.
- ☐ Day 4 **Revelation 4–5** — Read both chapters aloud as a prayer of praise.
- ☐ Day 5 **Revelation 5:12** — Memorize it. Say it aloud.

DISCUSS

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

- 1 Read 4:1–11 and 5:1–14 aloud, with one reader for the narration and the whole group for the songs. What does John see, and what does everyone do?
-

OBSERVE

- 2 What does John see around the throne in 4:2–8, and what do the living creatures say day and night?
-

- 3 What problem does John face in 5:1–4, and what does he hear in 5:5 and then see in 5:6?
-

- 4 What does each song praise: the first song (4:11) and the new song (5:9–10)? What does the crowd sing in 5:12–13?
-

INTERPRET

- 5 In 5:5 John hears ‘the Lion’ and in 5:6 he sees ‘a Lamb.’ What does the pairing tell us about how Jesus overcomes?
-

- 6 What reason does each song give for worship (4:11; 5:9)? What would be missing if we had only one?
-

- 7 The sealed scroll is in the right hand of the One on the throne (5:1), and the Lamb takes it (5:7). No one else is found worthy (5:4). What does this show about how the Lamb and the One on the throne relate?
-

- 8 Every creature in heaven, on earth, under the earth and in the sea joins the worship (5:13). Why might the book show this scene before the seals are opened?
-

REFLECT

Reflection questions

APPLY THIS WEEK · WITH THE GROUP

- 9 What worry would you like to bring into this throne room? What would you say to Him from 4:11 or 5:12?
-
- 10 What would it look like to begin a hard week by picturing the throne first?
-

REFLECT · ON YOUR OWN

- 1 Which part of the throne room do you find easiest to picture, and which hardest?
-
- 2 What does it mean to you that the one who holds history looks like a lamb that was slain?
-
- 3 Write your own short song of praise using words from 4:11 or 5:12.
-

ONE THING TO LIVE OUT

Begin each morning this week by reading 5:12 aloud before you check your phone or the news.

PRAYER

Worthy Lamb, You were killed and You rose, and You hold what I cannot. Teach me to bow first. Amen.

RECALL

Recall practice

Answer from memory first, then check the text. Pulling an answer out of memory is what makes it stay.

- 1** Memory verse 5:12: “___ is the Lamb who has been killed to receive the power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing!” — the missing word?

☐ (A) Worthy	☐ (B) Strong
☐ (C) Faithful	☐ (D) Holy
- 2** What do the elders do with their crowns (4:10)?

☐ (A) Throw them before the throne	☐ (B) Place them on the Lamb
☐ (C) Hold them toward the sun	☐ (D) Hide them in their robes
- 3** John hears of a Lion of the tribe of Judah. What does he see in 5:6?

☐ (A) A bronze mountain with a door in its side	☐ (B) A Lamb standing, as though it had been slain
☐ (C) A stone tower with a single wooden gate	☐ (D) A lion crowned and roaring on the throne
- 4** Why is the Lamb worthy to open the scroll (5:9)?

☐ (A) He is the strongest of all the creatures	☐ (B) He is the eldest of the twenty-four elders
☐ (C) He was killed and bought people for God	☐ (D) He was chosen by the angels in heaven
- 5** Without looking back, write Revelation 5:12.

Answers are in the leader's guide, page 67.

SESSION 4 OF 8

Who Can Stand?

Read Rev 6–7 · text on pages 99–100

4

God's people are sealed before the storm, and the answer to 'who is able to stand?' is a crowd no one can count, washed in the Lamb's blood.

The Lamb opens the first six seals. Riders go out, the martyrs cry 'How long?', and the world shakes. The kings of the earth ask, 'Who is able to stand?' Chapter 7 answers. God's servants are sealed, and John sees a great multitude from every nation standing before the throne and the Lamb. Revelation does not hide suffering. It shows that the Lamb is present in it, and that the story ends with tears wiped away.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ☐ List what happens as each of the first six seals is opened (6:1–17)
- ☐ Say what the sealing and the great multitude promise (7:1–17)
- ☐ Explain how chapter 7 answers the question in 6:17

MEMORY VERSE

The Lamb who is in the middle of the throne shepherds them and leads them to springs of life-giving waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

REVELATION 7:17 · WEB

THIS SESSION'S READING PLAN

- ☐ Day 1 **Revelation 6:1–8** — The first four seals. Note each time the word 'given' appears. Does the text say who gives it?
- ☐ Day 2 **Revelation 6:9–17** — The fifth and sixth seals. Listen to the cry and the answer.
- ☐ Day 3 **Revelation 7:1–8** — The sealing. Notice what the sealing is for.
- ☐ Day 4 **Revelation 7:9–17** — The great multitude. Read it as the answer to 6:17.
- ☐ Day 5 **Revelation 7:17** — Memorize it. Pray it over someone.

DISCUSS

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

- 1 Read 6:1–17 and 7:9–17. What happens as each seal is opened, and where does the story go in chapter 7?

OBSERVE

- 2 Who opens each seal, and what do the four living creatures say (6:1, 3, 5, 7)? What words repeat about what the riders were 'given'?

- 3 What do the souls under the altar ask, and what are they told (6:9–11)?

- 4 What is the sealing in 7:1–4 for, and who is standing before the throne in 7:9–10?

INTERPRET

- 5 The cry in 6:17 is 'who is able to stand?' How does chapter 7 answer it?

- 6 'Given' appears in 6:2, 4 and 8, and the Lamb opens each seal. What does that tell us about who is in charge, and what does it leave unexplained?

- 7 The 144,000 are heard (7:4) and the great multitude is seen (7:9). Some readers take them as two groups and some as one people of God. What in the text supports each view?

- 8 In 7:15–17, what changes for those who came out of the great suffering? Which promises answer something from chapter 6?

REFLECT

Reflection questions

APPLY THIS WEEK · WITH THE GROUP

- 9 What difficulty in your life or the world do you need to place under the Lamb's care in prayer this week? Name it aloud or silently.
-
- 10 7:15–17 promises shelter, water, shepherding and no more tears. Which promise do you most need to hear, and who else might need it?
-

REFLECT · ON YOUR OWN

- 1 What does it mean to you that the Lamb is present in suffering, not absent from it?
-
- 2 Where are you tempted to ask 'How long?' Write your own short prayer in that voice.
-
- 3 Who is a person you know who has come through great suffering and kept going? What did you learn from them?
-

ONE THING TO LIVE OUT

Choose one person who is suffering, and do one practical thing for them this week (a call, a meal, a prayer).

PRAYER

Lamb on the throne, shepherd me, and shepherd those I love. Wipe away what I cannot. I trust You to be present in every hard thing. Amen.

RECALL

Recall practice

Answer from memory first, then check the text. Pulling an answer out of memory is what makes it stay.

- 1** Memory verse 7:17: “The Lamb who is in the middle of the throne _ _ _ _ them and leads them to springs of life-giving waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.” — the missing word?

☐ (A) judges	☐ (B) shepherds
☐ (C) teaches	☐ (D) hides
- 2** What do the souls under the altar ask (6:10)?

☐ (A) Where is the city?	☐ (B) How long?
☐ (C) Who sent the riders?	☐ (D) When is the feast?
- 3** Before the winds are released, what is done to God’s servants (7:3)?

☐ (A) They are counted in a census	☐ (B) They are sent across the sea
☐ (C) They are sealed on their foreheads	☐ (D) They are given swords
- 4** In 7:9, what are the great multitude holding?

☐ (A) Clay jars	☐ (B) Shields
☐ (C) Torches	☐ (D) Palm branches
- 5** Without looking back, write Revelation 7:17.

Answers are in the leader’s guide, page 72.

SESSION 5 OF 8

Warnings and Witness

Read Rev 8–11 • text on pages 100–102

5

The trumpets echo the plagues of Egypt, and while the world hardens, God's witnesses keep speaking until the kingdom of the world becomes the Kingdom of our Lord.

After the seventh seal there is silence, and then the prayers of the saints rise with incense before God. Then the angel throws fire from the altar onto the earth, and seven trumpets follow. Their images echo the plagues of Egypt and they strike one third at a time, which many readers take as a warning rather than final destruction. Most people still refuse to repent. Between the sixth and seventh trumpets John eats a little scroll and watches two witnesses prophesy, die and be raised. Then the seventh trumpet announces what the whole book has been heading toward: the kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ☐ Explain how the trumpets echo the plagues of Egypt and what it means that they strike only a third
- ☐ Describe the response of the world in 9:20–21 and 11:13 and what it shows about repentance
- ☐ Say what the two witnesses and the seventh trumpet tell us about faithful witness

MEMORY VERSE

The kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. He will reign forever and ever!

REVELATION 11:15 • WEB

THIS SESSION'S READING PLAN

- ☐ Day 1 **Revelation 8:1–6** — Silence and incense. Notice where the prayers of the saints go.
- ☐ Day 2 **Revelation 8:7–13** — The first four trumpets. List the echoes of Egypt you can spot.
- ☐ Day 3 **Revelation 9:1–21** — The fifth and sixth trumpets. End on 9:20–21 and ask what the warnings are for.
- ☐ Day 4 **Revelation 10:1–11:6** — The little scroll, and the two witnesses begin. Note what God asks of His witnesses.
- ☐ Day 5 **Revelation 11:7–19** — The witnesses are raised, and the seventh trumpet sounds. Memorize 11:15 and say it aloud.

DISCUSS

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

- 1** Read Revelation 8:1–5 aloud, then 11:15–19. What happens before the first trumpet, and what do the voices in heaven announce at the last?
-

OBSERVE

- 2** What does 8:3–5 say happens to the prayers of the saints, and what follows?
-
- 3** How do the first four trumpets (8:7–12) affect creation, and what limit do they share?
-
- 4** What does 9:20–21 say about how the rest of mankind responded, and what does 11:13 say about how some responded?
-

INTERPRET

- 5** Read 8:7–8 beside Exodus 9:22–25 and 7:20–21. What do the scenes share, and what does that suggest about the trumpets and about God's character?
-
- 6** The trumpets strike one third, and the locusts may torment for five months but not kill (9:5). What do these limits suggest, and what do they leave unexplained, given 9:15? (if time)
-
- 7** The two witnesses prophesy, are killed, and are raised (11:3–13). Whatever readers think they represent, what does the passage say about faithful witness and about how the world may respond?
-
- 8** The seventh trumpet announces that the 'kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ' (11:15). What does the voice announce in 11:15–18, and how does it answer the prayers in 8:3–4?
-

REFLECT

Reflection questions

APPLY THIS WEEK · WITH THE GROUP

- 9 The witnesses in chapter 11 keep speaking while the world opposes them. What would it look like to speak about your faith with patience and kindness, including to people who disagree with you? (if time)
-
- 10 Faithful witnesses in this passage look defeated before God shows they were right. Where do you need to keep speaking or serving without seeing results yet?
-

REFLECT · ON YOUR OWN

- 1 Write the prayers you are praying right now. How does 8:3–4 change how you think about them?
-
- 2 Is there one gentle nudge from God, in Scripture or life, that you have been slow to follow? You can bring it to Him.
-
- 3 Read 11:15 aloud. What would it mean to live this week as if it were already true?
-

ONE THING TO LIVE OUT

Choose one person who does not follow Jesus, pray for them by name each day, and look for one honest, kind way to bear witness this week.

PRAYER

Lord God, the Almighty, You have taken Your great power and reigned. Hear the prayers of Your people, soften what is hard in me, and make me a faithful witness. Amen.

RECALL

Recall practice

Answer from memory first, then check the text. Pulling an answer out of memory is what makes it stay.

- 1** Memory verse 11:15: “The kingdom of the world has become the ____ of our Lord and of his Christ. He will reign forever and ever!” — the missing word?

☐ (A) Throne	☐ (B) Temple
☐ (C) Kingdom	☐ (D) Trumpet
- 2** How did the rest of mankind respond to the plagues in 9:20–21?

☐ (A) They moved to a new city	☐ (B) They worshiped the Lamb
☐ (C) They did not repent	☐ (D) They fought the angels
- 3** How much of the earth, the trees, the sea and the waters do the first trumpets strike (8:7–12)?

☐ (A) One fourth	☐ (B) One half
☐ (C) One tenth	☐ (D) One third
- 4** What did the rest do after the earthquake in 11:13?

☐ (A) Gave glory to the God of heaven	☐ (B) Fled the city for the hills nearby
☐ (C) Rebuilt the wall that had fallen	☐ (D) Sold their houses and moved away
- 5** Without looking back, write Revelation 11:15.

Answers are in the leader’s guide, page 77.

SESSION 6 OF 8

The Conflict Behind the Conflict

Read Rev 12–14 · text on pages 102–104

6

Behind the pressure on God's people stands a dragon the book shows thrown down, and the saints overcome him by the Lamb's blood, their testimony, and faithful endurance.

John shows us the conflict behind the conflict. A dragon opposes the woman and her child, is thrown down from heaven, and turns his anger on those who keep God's commandments and hold Jesus' testimony. He gives his power and authority to a beast from the sea, and a second beast from the earth enforces worship of the first, including economic loyalty. Against them John sets the Lamb on Mount Zion with His people sealed with His name, three angels announcing the hour of judgment, and a harvest. The call in the middle is clear: here is the endurance and the faith of the saints. Many readers take the mark as a picture of allegiance, and the Lamb marks His own people with His name (14:1). A reader who is afraid of it can bring that fear to Jesus, who says 'Don't be afraid.'

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ☐ Trace the dragon's fall in 12:7–12 and say how the saints overcome him
- ☐ Contrast the beast's mark with the Lamb's name on His people
- ☐ Say what 13:10 and 14:12 ask of the saints, and name one thing the text says plainly about 666 or the 144,000

MEMORY VERSE

They overcame him because of the Lamb's blood, and because of the word of their testimony. They didn't love their life, even to death.

REVELATION 12:11 · WEB

THIS SESSION'S READING PLAN

- ☐ Day 1 **Revelation 12:1–6** — The woman, the child and the dragon. Note what the dragon wants and what God does.
- ☐ Day 2 **Revelation 12:7–17** — War in heaven. Underline how the saints overcome in 12:11.
- ☐ Day 3 **Revelation 13:1–10** — The beast from the sea. Compare what he claims with what Jesus has.
- ☐ Day 4 **Revelation 13:11–18** — The beast from the earth and the mark. Pray for people who face pressure to compromise.
- ☐ Day 5 **Revelation 14:1–20** — The Lamb and His people, then the harvest. 14:19–20 is stark; read it slowly. Then say your memory verse, 12:11, aloud.

DISCUSS

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

- 1 Read Revelation 12:7–12 aloud, then 14:1–5. Who is thrown down, who wins, and how do the winners overcome?
-

OBSERVE

- 2 Who is thrown down in 12:7–9, and what titles does the passage give him?
-
- 3 What does the sea beast receive from the dragon (13:1–4), and what does the earth beast make people do (13:11–17)?
-
- 4 What is written on the foreheads of those with the Lamb in 14:1, and what mark do the beast's followers carry in 13:16–17?
-

INTERPRET

- 5 12:11 names the Lamb's blood, their testimony, and not loving their life even to death. What kind of victory is this, and how does it differ from winning a fight?
-
- 6 Chapter 13 describes a beast that demands worship and economic loyalty. What does this teach about the pressures the first readers faced, and about any system that claims what belongs to God?
-
- 7 13:10 says 'Here is the endurance and the faith of the saints,' and 14:12 says 'Here is the perseverance of the saints.' What do these verses ask of the saints while the beast is strong, and why might that count as victory?
-
- 8 Look only at what 13:18 and 14:1 say. What is plain, and what is left unexplained? (if time)
-

REFLECT

Reflection questions

APPLY THIS WEEK · WITH THE GROUP

- 9 What is a modern counterpart to the pressure to give your loyalty to something other than God (power, money, status, approval)? How would you recognize it?
-

- 10 12:11 says the saints 'didn't love their life, even to death.' What is one thing you are tempted to hold on to too tightly, and what would it look like to trust the Lamb with it?
-

REFLECT · ON YOUR OWN

- 1 Whatever one makes of the 144,000, the Lamb's people belong to Him (14:1; 7:3). Write a sentence describing what it means to belong to the Lamb.
-

- 2 Where are you tempted to endure by willpower alone? What would it look like to endure by trusting the Lamb's blood?
-

- 3 How can you hold the debated parts of these chapters with humility, while holding the clear parts with confidence?
-

ONE THING TO LIVE OUT

Name one area of pressure, at work, online or in your family, and write one specific way to stay faithful there this week. Share it with a friend.

PRAYER

Lamb of God, You have defeated the accuser by Your blood. Seal me as Yours, give me endurance and faith, and let nothing take Your first place in my heart. Amen.

RECALL

Recall practice

Answer from memory first, then check the text. Pulling an answer out of memory is what makes it stay.

- 1** Memory verse 12:11: “They overcame him because of the Lamb’s blood, and because of the word of their _____. They didn’t love their life, even to death.” — the missing word?

☐ (A) sword	☐ (B) faith
☐ (C) power	☐ (D) testimony
- 2** What does 12:10 call the one who has been thrown down?

☐ (A) The watchman of the walls	☐ (B) The guard of the harbor
☐ (C) The keeper of the gates	☐ (D) The accuser of our brothers
- 3** Where is the dragon thrown down in 12:9?

☐ (A) To the earth	☐ (B) Onto a mountain
☐ (C) Into the sea	☐ (D) To the wilderness
- 4** What is written on the foreheads of those standing with the Lamb (14:1)?

☐ (A) The names of the twelve tribes of Israel	☐ (B) His name and the name of His Father
☐ (C) The seven names of the seven churches	☐ (D) The number of the beast and his name
- 5** Without looking back, write Revelation 12:11.

Answers are in the leader’s guide, page 82.

SESSION 7 OF 8

Babylon Falls, the King Returns

Read Rev 15–19 · text on pages 105–108

7

God's judgments are just, the city that seduced and exploited the nations falls, and heaven answers with Hallelujahs for the wedding of the Lamb and the coming of the King of kings.

The bowls of God's wrath are poured out after a song of victory sung by those who overcame the beast. Then comes Babylon, a woman on a beast and a great city that seduces the nations, grows rich on their trade and drinks the blood of the saints. Heaven's voice commands God's people to come out of her. When she falls, kings and merchants mourn while heaven shouts Hallelujah. The wedding supper of the Lamb is announced, and then heaven opens and the Rider called Faithful and True comes to judge. The story moves from judgment, to mourning, to praise, to the arrival of the King.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ☐ Describe the two songs and the Hallelujahs and what they teach about worship in the face of judgment
- ☐ Describe what the text says Babylon does (17:1–6; 18:2–3, 13) and the reason given for 'come out' (18:4)
- ☐ Say who the Rider of 19:11–16 is and how His victory is won

MEMORY VERSE

Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns!

REVELATION 19:6 · WEB

THIS SESSION'S READING PLAN

- ☐ Day 1 **Revelation 15:1–16:11** — The song of Moses and the first bowls. Note what the world does in response to judgment.
- ☐ Day 2 **Revelation 16:12–21** — The sixth and seventh bowls. Read 16:15 and 16:17 slowly.
- ☐ Day 3 **Revelation 17:1–18** — The woman on the beast. List what the text says she does.
- ☐ Day 4 **Revelation 18:1–24** — The fall of Babylon. Mark the three groups who mourn and the one that rejoices.
- ☐ Day 5 **Revelation 19:1–21** — Hallelujah and the Rider; 19:17–21 is stark, so go slowly. Memorize 19:6 and say it aloud.

DISCUSS

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

- 1 Read Revelation 15:1–4 aloud, then 18:1–5 and 19:1–10. How does heaven respond to judgment, and what does God ask His people to do about Babylon?

OBSERVE

- 2 What two songs do the victors sing in 15:3, and what do they say about God?

- 3 How is Babylon described in 17:1–6 and 18:2–3 (what she does, what she wears, and who profits)?

- 4 What do the Hallelujahs of 19:1–8 praise, and what is announced in 19:7–9?

INTERPRET

- 5 Heaven calls God's judgments 'true and righteous' (16:7, the altar; 19:2, the great multitude). Why is it good news for the oppressed, and for those who love justice, that God judges?

- 6 Babylon is read as Rome, as every proud power that uses people for gain, or as a final system. What does the text itself say she does, and what does that teach regardless of which reading we choose?

- 7 What does 'no participation in her sins' (18:4) ask of God's people? How might that look for the first readers, and for us?

- 8 The Rider of 19:11–16 is called Faithful and True and the Word of God, and His garment is sprinkled with blood before the battle. Who is He, and how does His victory differ from the empires' victories?

REFLECT

Reflection questions

APPLY THIS WEEK · WITH THE GROUP

- 9 Whatever Babylon is taken to be, the text calls God's people away from sharing in her sins (18:4). Where do you feel her pull (comfort, status, luxury, going along with unfair systems)? What is one small step away from it?
-
- 10 The Lamb's wife has made herself ready, and fine linen was given to her; those invited to the wedding supper are called blessed (19:7–9). What does it mean for you that readiness is both given and lived? (if time)
-

REFLECT · ON YOUR OWN

- 1 Write your own Hallelujah. What would you praise God for today (19:1–6)?
-
- 2 Where are you tempted to envy the people who profit from Babylon? What does 18:17 say about their riches?
-
- 3 How does the picture of the Rider shape what you expect from Jesus when He comes?
-

ONE THING TO LIVE OUT

Choose one practice that resists the pull of Babylon (a gift to someone in need, a purchase you decline, or a day of rest) and do it this week.

PRAYER

Lord God Almighty, Your judgments are true and righteous. Free me from what holds my loyalty that is not You, and bring me to the wedding supper of the Lamb. Amen.

RECALL

Recall practice

Answer from memory first, then check the text. Pulling an answer out of memory is what makes it stay.

1 Memory verse 19:6: “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, ____!” — the missing word?

- ☐ (A) reigns
- ☐ (C) speaks

- ☐ (B) waits
- ☐ (D) returns

2 What is said of God’s judgments in 16:7?

- ☐ (A) True and righteous
- ☐ (C) Slow and gentle

- ☐ (B) Hidden and strange
- ☐ (D) Unfair but necessary

3 What does a voice from heaven tell God’s people about Babylon (18:4)?

- ☐ (A) Fight against her
- ☐ (C) Pray for her walls

- ☐ (B) Come out of her
- ☐ (D) Sell her goods

4 Which name is on the Rider’s garment and thigh (19:16)?

- ☐ (A) GUARDIAN OF THE GATES OF THE CITY
- ☐ (C) KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS

- ☐ (B) RULER OF THE SEA AND THE DRY LAND
- ☐ (D) HEIR OF THE EAST AND OF THE WEST

5 Without looking back, write Revelation 19:6.

Answers are in the leader’s guide, page 87.

SESSION 8 OF 8

Judgment and All Things New

Read Rev 20–22 · text on pages 108–110



Evil is judged for good, those written in the Lamb's book of life are welcomed, and God makes all things new and dwells with His people, with Jesus coming soon.

The last three chapters bring the story to rest. Satan is bound and then finally judged, death and Hades are thrown into the lake of fire, and the dead stand before a great white throne. Then John sees a new heaven and a new earth and the holy city coming down from God. God dwells with people, wipes away every tear, and makes all things new. The river of life flows from the throne, with the tree of life beside it. The book closes with an invitation, 'Come,' a promise, 'I am coming soon,' and a prayer, 'Come, Lord Jesus.' If you fear you are not saved, hear the invitation: 'He who is thirsty, let him come' (22:17).

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ☐ Describe the judgments of chapter 20 and say whose names are in the book of life and whose book it is (13:8; 21:27)
- ☐ Say what 20:1–6 states plainly and what it leaves open
- ☐ Describe the new heaven, new earth and new Jerusalem, and say one way you could pass on the invitation of 22:17

MEMORY VERSE

Behold, God's dwelling is with people; and he will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

REVELATION 21:3–4 · WEB

THIS SESSION'S READING PLAN

- ☐ Day 1 **Revelation 20:1–6** — The thousand years. Note what is certain and what is debated.
- ☐ Day 2 **Revelation 20:7–15** — The last battle and the great white throne. Find the book of life.
- ☐ Day 3 **Revelation 21:1–8** — A new heaven and new earth. List what God promises to remove and to give.
- ☐ Day 4 **Revelation 21:9–22:5** — The new Jerusalem. Notice what flows from the throne.
- ☐ Day 5 **Revelation 22:6–21** — The closing invitation. Then say your memory verse, 21:3–4, aloud as a prayer.

DISCUSS

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

- 1 Read Revelation 21:1–8 aloud, then 22:1–5 and 22:17–21. What does God do for His people, and how does the book end?
-

OBSERVE

- 2 What happens to Satan, to death and Hades, and to those not written in the book of life in 20:7–15?
-
- 3 What does God promise in 21:3–5, and what does the new Jerusalem lack (21:22–25) and contain (22:1–5)?
-
- 4 What invitations and promises appear in 21:6–7 and 22:16–21?
-

INTERPRET

- 5 Read 20:1–6. What does the text say plainly (who is bound, who reigns, what has no power over them), and what does it leave open (when, where, what the thousand years means)?
-
- 6 People are judged ‘according to their works’ (20:12), yet only those written in the book of life are saved (20:15). How do 13:8, 21:27 and 12:11 help us hold these together?
-
- 7 The new Jerusalem is a city and a bride, with a river and the tree of life (21:1–22:5). What do these images say about what God finally intends, and how does this answer the troubles of the whole book?
-
- 8 Jesus says ‘I am coming soon’ (22:7, 12, 20). What does the book tell the reader to do while waiting? Look at 22:7, 17 and 20. (if time)
-

REFLECT

Reflection questions

APPLY THIS WEEK · WITH THE GROUP

- 9 Which promise of 21:3–5 do you most need to hear today, and why?
-
- 10 In 22:17 the thirsty are told, 'let him come.' Who in your life could use that invitation, and how could you extend it this week? (if time)
-

REFLECT · ON YOUR OWN

- 1 What are you most looking forward to in the new heaven and new earth?
-
- 2 How has your picture of this book changed since the first session? What fear has been replaced by what hope?
-
- 3 Write a short prayer that begins with 'Come, Lord Jesus' and ends with how you want to live, trusting Him.
-

ONE THING TO LIVE OUT

Write the closing promise or invitation that means the most to you on a card. Keep it, or share it with someone if it feels right.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, You make all things new. Wipe away every tear, keep me faithful until You come, and teach me to say 'Come' to the thirsty. Yes, come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

RECALL

Recall practice

Answer from memory first, then check the text. Pulling an answer out of memory is what makes it stay.

- 1** Memory verse 21:3–4: “Behold, God’s dwelling is with people; and he will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every _ _ _ _ from their eyes.” — the missing word?

☐ (A) war	☐ (B) tear
☐ (C) night	☐ (D) sea
- 2** What does John not see in the new Jerusalem (21:22)?

☐ (A) A river	☐ (B) A temple
☐ (C) A throne	☐ (D) A tree
- 3** According to 21:27, whose book of life is it?

☐ (A) The angels’	☐ (B) The elders’
☐ (C) The Lamb’s	☐ (D) The prophets’
- 4** Who may take the water of life freely (22:17)?

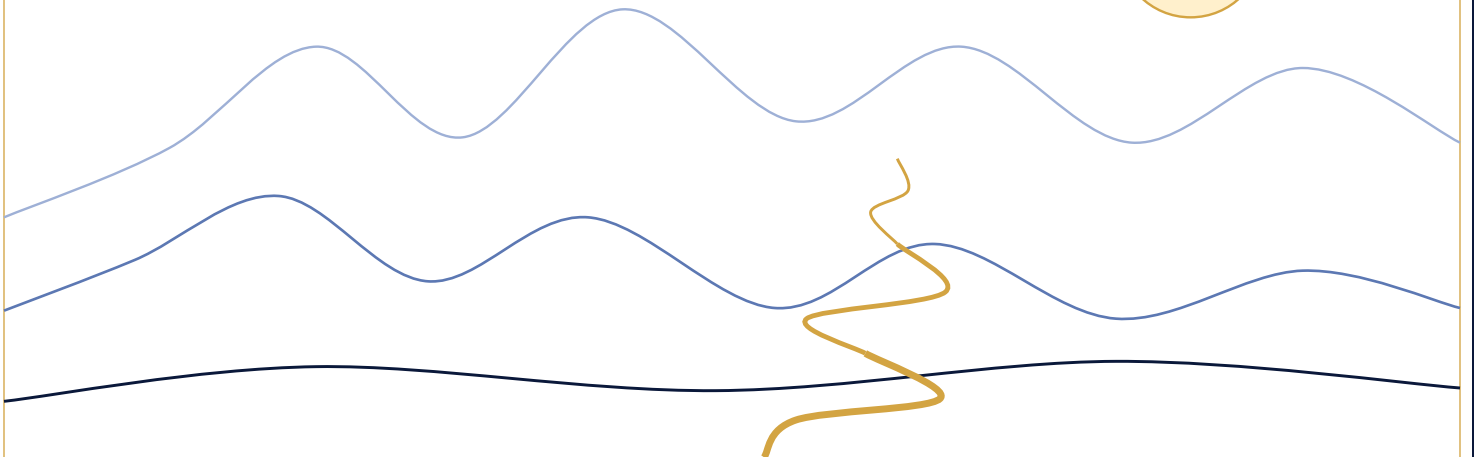
☐ (A) Only the apostles	☐ (B) Only those who have finished the book
☐ (C) Only the martyrs	☐ (D) Whoever is thirsty and desires it
- 5** Without looking back, write Revelation 21:3–4.

Answers are in the leader’s guide, page 93.

PART TWO

Reference

The seven churches, the themes, the passages, the people,
and every chapter at a glance.



THE SEVEN CHURCHES · REVELATION 2–3

The Seven Churches

Jesus sends seven letters to seven real churches along a circular road in the Roman province of Asia (western Turkey today). He knows each one exactly as it is and calls every one to overcome. These letters are studied in session 2.

1	Ephesus Revelation 2:1–7	IN THE LETTER	orthodox and hardworking, but it left its first love (2:1–7)
		WHAT IT REVEALS	Sound doctrine is not enough — Jesus misses the love this church had at first, and calls it back to the works it did at the beginning.
		FOR YOU	Ask not only ‘Is my doctrine sound?’ but ‘Where did my first love go, and what did I do back then that I could do again this week?’
2	Smyrna Revelation 2:8–11	IN THE LETTER	poor yet rich, faithful through suffering (2:8–11)
		WHAT IT REVEALS	A suffering church can be rich. Jesus, “who was dead, and has come to life,” promises the crown of life to the faithful.
		FOR YOU	Measure wealth the way Jesus does. If faithfulness is costing you something right now, hear Him: ‘Don’t be afraid ... I will give you the crown of life.’
3	Pergamum Revelation 2:12–17	IN THE LETTER	faithful under pressure, yet tolerating false teaching (2:12–17)
		WHAT IT REVEALS	Compromise creeps in by table and teaching. The One with the sharp two-edged sword calls His people to repent, and promises hidden manna and a new name.
		FOR YOU	If you notice a place where compromise has become normal, bring it to Jesus, and remember that He feeds His people better: hidden manna, and a name known only to you.
4	Thyatira Revelation 2:18–29	IN THE LETTER	loving and growing, yet compromising with immorality (2:18–29)
		WHAT IT REVEALS	Love and service are growing here — yet tolerated false teaching corrupts. Jesus, whose eyes are like a flame of fire, searches minds and hearts.
		FOR YOU	Growth in love does not excuse drift in truth. Hold fast what you have until He comes.

5

Sardis

Revelation 3:1–6

IN THE LETTER

WHAT IT REVEALS

FOR YOU

a reputation for being alive, but dead (3:1–6)

A reputation for life can hide death. “Wake up and strengthen the things that remain” — a few have not soiled their garments.

Reputation is what others see; wakefulness is what Jesus sees. Ask Him which one thing that remains He would have you strengthen, and take one small step.

6

Philadelphia

Revelation 3:7–13

IN THE LETTER

WHAT IT REVEALS

FOR YOU

little strength, yet faithful; an open door set before it (3:7-13)

Little strength, an open door. Because this church kept His word, Jesus sets before it a door that no one can shut.

You do not need great strength for the door Jesus opens.
Keep His word, and let Him hold it open.

7

Laodicea

Revelation 3:14–22

IN THE LETTER

WHAT IT REVEALS

FOR YOU

lukewarm and self-satisfied, urged to let Christ in (3:14–22)

Lukewarm self-sufficiency shuts Jesus outside His own church, yet He stands at the door and knocks, ready to come in and eat with anyone who opens.

Comfort can quietly dull our hunger. Listen for the knock: Jesus is not shutting the door on you. He stands there, wanting to come in and eat with you.

‘He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies.’ – Revelation 2:7

NOTES

MAJOR THEMES

The threads running through Revelation

The ideas Revelation returns to again and again, each one a window on who Jesus is. Each thread lists the sessions where it appears.

01 Worship

Revelation 4:11

From the throne room to the final Hallelujah, heaven answers who God is with worship. Sessions 3 and 7.

03 God's Sovereignty

Revelation 4:2

Whatever unfolds on earth happens beneath an occupied throne. Sessions 3, 4 and 5.

05 Endurance

Revelation 14:12

Again and again the call to the saints is faithful endurance under pressure. Sessions 2 and 6.

07 New Creation

Revelation 21:5

The book moves from fear to hope, ending with all things new and God dwelling with His people. Session 8.

02 The Lamb

Revelation 5:6

Jesus, slain yet living, is the center of the book: worthy, shepherding, and conquering by sacrifice. Sessions 3, 4, 6 and 8.

04 Judgment & Justice

Revelation 16:7

God ends evil in justice, and heaven calls His judgments 'true and righteous.' The same book offers the water of life freely to all who are thirsty (22:17). Sessions 5, 7 and 8.

06 Faithful Witness

Revelation 1:5

Jesus is the faithful witness, and His people testify to Him even at great cost. Sessions 1, 5 and 6.

08 The Return of Christ

Revelation 22:20

'Yes, I am coming soon.' The certain hope of the King's return anchors every faithful reading. Sessions 1, 7 and 8.

KEY PASSAGES

Passages worth knowing well

Ten passages that carry the main lines of Revelation. Read them, mark them, return to them. The full text is in Part Four, pages 95–110.

Revelation 2:4	Left your first love Jesus praises what is good in Ephesus and then names what He holds against it: the love it had at the start. Session 2.
Revelation 4:11	Worthy to create The elders cast their crowns before the throne and say God is worthy because He made all things. Session 3.
Revelation 5:9	The new song The Lamb is worthy because He was killed and bought people for God out of every tribe, language, people and nation. Session 3.
Revelation 7:9	A crowd no one could count The answer to 'who is able to stand?' is a multitude from every nation, in white robes, before the throne. Session 4.
Revelation 13:10	The endurance and the faith In the face of the beast the call is to endure and keep faith. Session 6.
Revelation 14:13	Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord A voice from heaven says their works follow with them and that they will rest. Session 6.
Revelation 18:4	Come out of her God's people are called out of the city whose luxury and pride will fall. Session 7.
Revelation 19:11	Faithful and True Heaven opens and the King appears, and He judges and makes war in righteousness. Session 7.
Revelation 21:5	All things new The One on the throne says He is making all things new, and that His words are faithful and true. Session 8.
Revelation 22:17	The open invitation The Spirit and the bride say 'Come,' and whoever is thirsty may take the water of life freely. Session 8.

KEY PEOPLE

The faces of Revelation

Revelation's stage is crowded — the risen Christ and His angels, a dragon and his beasts, elders, martyrs, and the people of God under pressure. Here are the figures worth knowing.

The Risen Son of Man

John's first vision of Jesus: the glorified Lord with hair white as wool, eyes like fire, a voice like many waters, holding seven stars, with a sharp sword from His mouth. He is the One who was dead, is alive forever, and holds the keys of Death and Hades. Session 1.

The Lamb

Announced as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, Jesus appears as a Lamb standing as though slain, who alone is worthy to open the scroll. He is worshiped, shepherds the redeemed, and is the lamp of the New Jerusalem. Sessions 3, 4, 6 and 8.

God on the Throne

At the center of every vision is a throne, circled by a rainbow and radiant as jewels. God is worshiped as holy and as the Creator by whose will all things exist. Whatever happens on earth happens beneath this occupied throne. Session 3.

The Four Living Creatures

Four creatures, like a lion, a calf, a man and an eagle, full of eyes and never resting from praise. They draw on Isaiah 6 and Ezekiel 1 and lead heaven's worship. Session 3.

The Twenty-Four Elders

Twenty-four elders on thrones around the throne, in white with golden crowns, who cast their crowns before God. Readers differ: some see the whole people of God, others a heavenly order of beings. Session 3.

The Seven Spirits of God

Seven lamps of fire before the throne and the seven eyes of the Lamb, sent out into all the earth. Many readers take this as the Holy Spirit in His fullness; others take them as angelic beings. Session 3.

The Woman Clothed with the Sun

A woman who gives birth to a son destined to rule the nations while a dragon waits to devour him. Readers differ: Israel, Mary, the church, or the people of God across both covenants. Session 6.

The Dragon

The great red dragon, 'the old serpent, he who is called the devil and Satan.' He is thrown down from heaven, makes war on the saints, and is finally thrown into the lake of fire. Sessions 6 and 8.

The Beast from the Sea

A beast with ten horns and seven heads that receives the dragon's power and demands worship. Readers see Rome, oppressive power in every age, or a final figure, and many note that it parodies the Lamb. Session 6.

The Beast from the Earth

A second beast, later called the false prophet, who performs signs and pressures the world to worship the first beast. Readers differ: some take it to picture deceptive religion and propaganda serving beastly power, others a coming individual false prophet. It is not a label for any living person or church. Sessions 6 and 7.

The Two Witnesses

Two prophets who testify for 1,260 days, are killed, lie exposed, and are raised. Readers differ: two individuals, the church bearing witness, or Moses and Elijah figures. Each reading sees witness, opposition and vindication. Session 5.

The 144,000 and the Great Multitude

The 144,000 sealed from the tribes of Israel, and a multitude no one could count from every nation. Some read the number literally, others as a picture of the whole people of God. Sessions 4 and 6.

Babylon the Great

A woman on a scarlet beast and a great city that seduces the nations, grows rich on their trade and drinks the blood of the saints. Readers see Rome, every proud power, or a final system. She falls in one hour. Session 7.

The Rider Faithful and True

Heaven opens and Christ rides out on a white horse, with eyes like fire, a garment sprinkled with blood, and the name Word of God. He is called King of kings and Lord of lords and wins by the sword of His mouth. Session 7.

The Bride and the New Jerusalem

The holy city coming down from God, 'prepared like a bride adorned for her husband.' God dwells with His people, every tear is wiped away, and the river of life flows from the throne, with the tree of life beside it. Session 8.

John the Seer

'Your brother and partner with you in the oppression, Kingdom, and perseverance.' He writes from Patmos for seven struggling churches, falls in worship twice and is told 'Worship God.' Sessions 1, 7 and 8.

ALL TWENTY-TWO CHAPTERS · AT A GLANCE

The Library

All twenty-two chapter titles at a glance, grouped by session. The full WEB text is in Part Four, pages 95–110.

JESUS UNVEILED

1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ

JESUS SPEAKS TO HIS CHURCHES

2 Letters to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, and Thyatira

3 Letters to Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea

THE THRONE AND THE LAMB

4 The Throne Room of God

5 The Lamb and the Scroll

WHO CAN STAND?

6 The Seven Seals and the Four Horsemen

7 Who Can Stand? The Sealed and the Great Multitude

WARNINGS AND WITNESS

8 The Seventh Seal and the First Trumpets

9 The Trumpet Woes and Hardened Hearts

10 The Mighty Angel and the Little Scroll

11 The Two Witnesses and the Seventh Trumpet

THE CONFLICT BEHIND THE CONFLICT

12 The Woman, the Dragon, and the War in Heaven

13 The Two Beasts and the Mark

14 The Lamb and the 144,000

BABYLON FALLS, THE KING RETURNS

15 Preparing the Seven Last Plagues

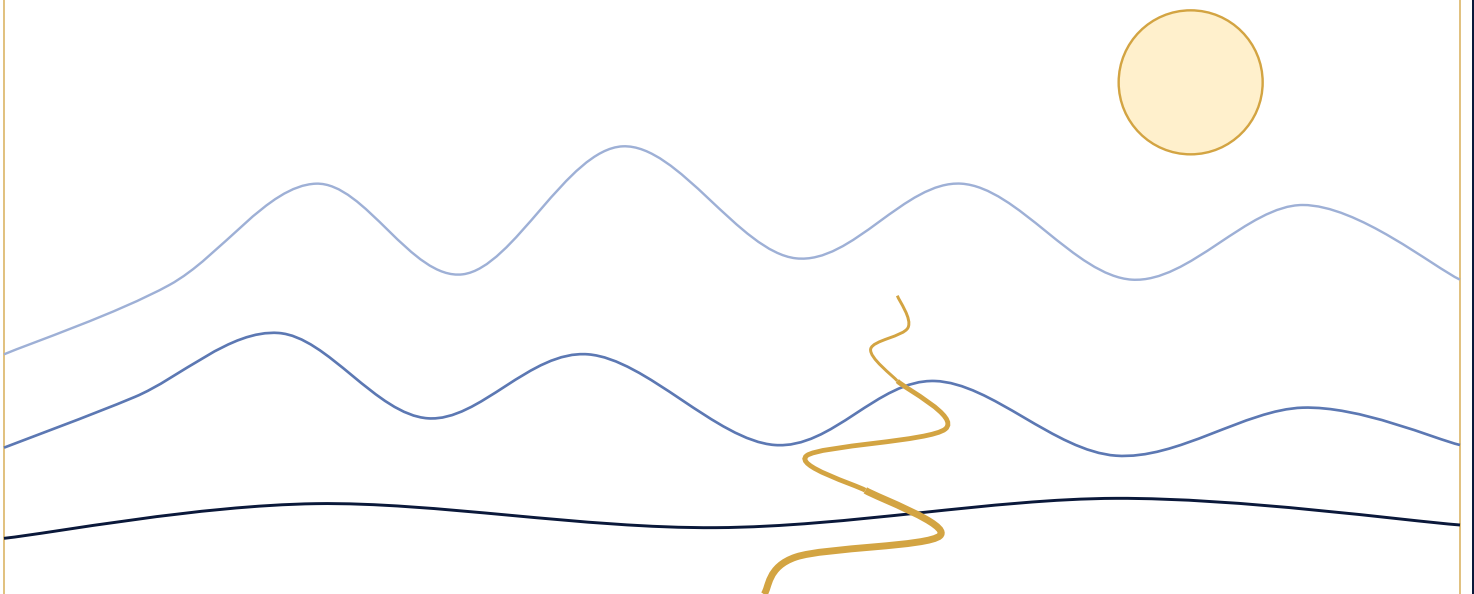
- ## JUDGMENT AND ALL THINGS NEW

- ## NOTES

PART THREE

Leader's Guide and Answer Guide

Group leader notes, a timed plan, an answer guide, and the recall answer key for every session.



LEADER'S GUIDE

Leading this study

You do not need to be a Bible teacher to lead this study. You need to have read the passage, to ask the questions, and to leave room for people to answer them.

Before you meet

- Read the session's chapters twice, once straight through and once slowly.
- Read that session's leader page: what to say first and where to be careful.
- Decide which questions matter most for your group. You will rarely finish all of them, and that is fine.
- Pray for the people who will be in the room, by name.

In the room

- Read Scripture aloud before discussing it. Let the text speak first.
- Ask the question, then wait. Silence usually means people are thinking.
- When an answer drifts, ask, "Where do you see that in the passage?"
- Keep to the time plan loosely. Protect the closing minutes for reflection and prayer.
- Anyone may pass. If a picture frightens someone, pause, read 1:17–18 aloud, and offer to talk afterward.
- If time runs short, skip questions marked (if time). In groups of eight or more, share in pairs, then take one sentence from volunteers.

How to read a leader page

Group leader notes	What to say first (Gather), cautions on disputed points, Old Testament echoes, and history.
Timed plan	A suggested use of the hour, drawn to scale.
Answer guide	What the passage supports for each discussion question, with verse references, and a follow-up question to use if the group stalls.
Reflection notes	Reflection questions are personal and have no answer to check. Each has a short note on what it is for and how to lead it.
Recall answer key	The recall practice answers. Online, option order may differ: match by answer.

The answer guide is there so you can lead with confidence. It is not a script to read aloud. Let the group do the finding; use the guide to confirm, to fill a gap, or to bring the conversation back to the text. Questions marked **PERSONAL** have no single right answer. For those, the guide gives what the passage offers and what a good answer tends to include.

LEADER'S GUIDE · SESSION 1 OF 8

Jesus Unveiled

Rev 1 · 60 minutes · 5–12 people · participant pages 9–12 · memory verse Revelation 1:17–18

GROUP LEADER NOTES

Gather: What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear 'the book of Revelation'? Where do you think that picture came from?

Open: Spend the first minutes on what kind of book this is: John calls it a 'revelation' (1:1), a 'prophecy' (1:3) and, by its greeting and its last verse (1:4; 22:21), a letter to seven churches.

Write four reading habits where everyone can see them: read it as the first readers did, let the pictures point past themselves, listen for the Old Testament, and keep Jesus at the center.

Name the four main approaches in one sentence each and then set them aside: preterist (most of it concerns the first century), historicist (it sketches the history of the church), futurist (much of it is still to come) and idealist (it shows patterns that recur through history). Many readers blend them. Tell the group that this study will report the main readings where a passage divides faithful readers, and will not choose for them.

If someone is anxious about the book, say that its first scene answers fear.

Set the tone before you begin: every question is an invitation, and anyone may pass, write privately or stay silent. What is shared stays in the room. Nobody has to share a fear, a story or a loss, and no one should be pressed to explain what they believe about the end times. Some people arrive hurt by teaching or leaders connected to this book; let that be said without debate. No person, party or government is to be labeled the beast, Babylon or the antichrist. If someone seems overwhelmed, pause, read 1:17–18 aloud and pray with them, then connect them with a pastor or trusted counselor after the session. If the room goes quiet, wait ten slow seconds, then ask people to turn to a neighbor for a minute. If one voice dominates, thank them and ask to hear from someone who has not spoken yet. If readings differ, ask each person to point to the verse behind their view, thank both, and return to what the text says plainly.

Old Testament echoes: 'coming with the clouds' (1:7) joins Daniel 7:13 and Zechariah 12:10; the figure in 1:13–16 draws on Daniel 7:9 and 10:5–6; 'a Kingdom, priests' (1:6) echoes Exodus 19:6; 'firstborn' (1:5) echoes Psalm 89:27; 'the first and the last' (1:17) echoes Isaiah 44:6 and 48:12.

History: The seven assemblies were real congregations in the Roman province of Asia (western Turkey), named in an order that follows a circular road a messenger could travel: Ephesus first, then north and around to Laodicea (1:11). Many scholars date the book to the 90s AD, and some argue for the late 60s.

Close in prayer: Thank Jesus that He is alive forever, and ask Him to say 'Don't be afraid' over whatever each person is carrying into this study.

SIXTY MINUTES drawn to scale

5	10	10	15	12	8
Gather	Read together	Observe	Interpret	Apply	Close in prayer

ANSWER GUIDE

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

- 1** Read Revelation 1:1–8 aloud, then 1:9–20. What does John say this book is, who is it from, and who is it for?

John calls the book “the Revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:1) and “the prophecy” (1:3), and he addresses it to “the seven assemblies that are in Asia” (1:4). It comes from God, who gave it to Jesus Christ to show to His servants, and it reached John by an angel. Grace and peace come from God, from the seven Spirits, and from Jesus Christ. Its center is Jesus, who appears in 1:9–20 and tells John to write what he sees.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 1:4–5. Who is the letter addressed to, and who sends grace and peace?

OBSERVE

- 2** What does 1:1–3 call this book, and what does it promise to the one who reads, hears and keeps its words?

The book calls itself “the Revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:1) and “the prophecy.” The blessing in 1:3 falls on “he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written in it.” Reading, hearing and keeping belong together in that sentence. The verse gives a reason: “the time is near.”

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 1:3. Who is called blessed, and what are they to do with the words?

- 3** Where is John, why is he there, and what does he hear and see first (1:9–12)?

John is on “the isle that is called Patmos” (1:9). He is there “because of God’s Word and the testimony of Jesus Christ,” and he calls himself a partner in “the oppression, Kingdom, and perseverance in Christ Jesus.” He is “in the Spirit on the Lord’s day” (1:10) when he hears “a loud voice, like a trumpet” telling him to write to seven assemblies. When he turns, he sees seven golden lampstands.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 1:10–12. What does John hear, and what does he see when he turns?

- 4** What details does John give about the one among the lampstands (1:13–16)?

John sees “one like a son of man” (1:13) among the lampstands, in a robe reaching to His feet with a golden sash around His chest. His head and hair are “white as white wool, like snow” (1:14), and His eyes are “like a flame of fire.” His feet are like burnished brass, and His voice is like “the voice of many waters” (1:15). He holds seven stars in His right hand, a sharp two-edged sword comes out of His mouth, and His face is “like the sun shining at its brightest” (1:16).

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 1:14–16. What does John say about His eyes, His feet and His voice?

INTERPRET

- 5 John calls this book a revelation, a prophecy and a letter (1:1, 3, 4). How should each word change the way we read it?**

The three words are “the Revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:1), “the prophecy,” and a letter to “the seven assemblies that are in Asia” (1:4). A revelation unveils, and what is unveiled is Jesus Christ, so a reader can ask of each later picture what it shows about Him. A prophecy calls for hearing and keeping, as 1:3 says. A letter was written to real people in a real place, so the situation of the first readers matters. Readers in different traditions understand many of the later pictures differently, and the text supports more than one reading there.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 1:1, 1:3 and 1:4. What three words does John use for the book?

- 6 John's greeting names Jesus as 'the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth' (1:5). Why would believers under pressure need to hear these three titles first?**

Each title speaks to pressure. The title “the faithful witness” (1:5) points to One who told the truth and held to it. The title “the firstborn of the dead” points to One who has already come through death. The title “the ruler of the kings of the earth” places Him above the powers that press on His people. John adds that He “loves us, and washed us from our sins by his blood.”

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 1:5. Which three titles does John give Jesus, and what has He done for us?

- 7 Verse 20 explains the stars and the lampstands, and other images in 1:13–16 echo the Old Testament. What does the book explain for itself, and where else could a reader look?**

Verse 20 gives its own key: “The seven stars are the angels of the seven assemblies” (1:20) and “The seven lamp stands are seven assemblies.” It calls these a mystery and then explains them. Other images in 1:13–16 echo Daniel 7:9 and Daniel 10:5–6. The sword from His mouth is not explained in chapter 1, and the book returns to it in “the sharp two-edged sword” (2:12). A reader can look to the Old Testament and to later chapters for what the text leaves open.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 1:20. What does Jesus say the stars are, and what are the lampstands?

- 8 When John falls like a dead man, Jesus says 'Don't be afraid' and gives reasons (1:17–18). Which reason speaks most directly to the fear of death, and why?**

Jesus lays “his right hand” (1:17) on John and gives reasons. He is “the first and the last” and “the Living one” (1:18). He says “I was dead, and behold, I am alive forever and ever.” He also has “the keys of Death and of Hades.” The reason that speaks most directly to the fear of death is that He holds the keys of Death and of Hades. The things people fear most, death and what lies beyond it, are under His hand.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 1:18. What does Jesus say He holds?

APPLY (PRINTED ON THE REFLECTION PAGE)

- 9** Which title or image of Jesus in this chapter do you most need right now: the first and the last, the Living one, or the one who holds the keys of Death and Hades? Why? **PERSONAL**

There is no single right answer. The chapter gives Jesus as “the first and the last” (1:17), as “the Living one” (1:18), and as the One who has “the keys of Death and of Hades.” Each can meet a different need, such as a worry about endings or a loss. Nobody has to share more than they choose, and a short answer is enough.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 1:17–18. What does Jesus say He is, and what does He say He has?

- 10** What fear about this book, or about life, would you like Jesus’ words in 1:17–18 to speak to? **PERSONAL**

There is no single right answer. John fell “like a dead man” (1:17), and Jesus laid His hand on him and spoke. His reasons are that He is alive forever and holds the keys of Death and Hades. A person may name a fear aloud or hold it silently while the verses are read again. Nobody has to share more than they choose.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 1:17. What does John do when he sees Jesus, and what does Jesus do next?

NOTES

Reflection questions

- 1** Write three words that describe the Jesus you met in this chapter. Which one surprised you?
This question asks each person to put the Jesus of chapter 1 into three plain words. Invite people to write them down first and share only if they wish. The surprise is the point, so welcome any answer without comment. Nobody has to read their words aloud.
- 2** Where have you heard ‘Don’t be afraid’ in your own life? What did it change?
This question asks people to connect Jesus’ words to their own history with fear. Invite a short memory and let anyone keep theirs private. Do not push for detail. A single sentence is enough, and silence is fine.
- 3** What would it look like this week to ‘keep’ what you read (1:3), not only to read it?
This question asks for one small, concrete way to act on the book this week, since 1:3 pairs reading with keeping. Invite practical answers, such as a time to read or a person to tell. Let each person decide what to share. Keep it light and doable.

ANSWER KEY

Recall practice

- 1** Memory verse 1:17–18: “Don’t be afraid. I am the first and the last, and the Living one. I was dead, and behold, I am ____ forever and ever. Amen.” — the missing word?
- c** alive
- Revelation 1:17–18: Don’t be afraid. I am the first and the last, and the Living one. I was dead, and behold, I am alive forever and ever. Amen.

- 3** In 1:18, what does Jesus say He has?
- D** The keys of Death and of Hades
- Revelation 1:18: I have the keys of Death and of Hades.

- 5 Memory verse**
Revelation 1:17–18, printed on page 9.

- 2** Where is John when he receives the vision (1:9)?
- C** On the island of Patmos
- Revelation 1:9: I John, ... was on the isle that is called Patmos because of God's Word and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

- 4** What blessing does 1:3 promise?
- A** To those who read, hear and keep its words
- Revelation 1:3: Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written in it.

LEADER'S NOTES

Care note · 1:17. If anyone is frightened by the book or by talk of the end, begin with “Don’t be afraid” (1:17). No one has to decode the future to be safe. If anyone says they want to die, stay with them and see the help lines on page 123.

LEADER'S GUIDE · SESSION 2 OF 8

Jesus Speaks to His Churches

Rev 2–3 · 60 minutes · 5–12 people · participant pages 13–16 · memory verse Revelation 3:20

GROUP LEADER NOTES

Gather: Think of someone who knew you well enough to praise you and correct you in the same conversation. What made their words easy or hard to hear? Pass if this is a hard memory.

Open: Give a one-line profile of each church so the group hears all seven: Ephesus (hard-working and sound, but it left its first love), Smyrna (poor, suffering, and called rich), Pergamum (faithful where it is hard, but tolerating false teaching), Thyatira (growing in love and service, but tolerating Jezebel), Sardis (a reputation for life, but dead), Philadelphia (little power, but it kept His word and has an open door) and Laodicea (lukewarm and sure it needs nothing).

Show the repeating shape: a title of Jesus, 'I know', praise or correction, the call to hear what the Spirit says, and a promise to 'him who overcomes.' Two letters, Smyrna and Philadelphia, contain no correction.

Handle 2:9 and 3:9 with care: they speak into a first-century dispute and are never a license for contempt toward Jewish people, and Jesus and John were Jewish themselves. If someone asks what 'Satan's throne' (2:13) means, say that the text does not explain it and that readers differ.

Old Testament echoes: The promises reopen Old Testament scenes: the tree of life (Genesis 2:9; Rev 2:7), hidden manna (Exodus 16; Rev 2:17), the rod-of-iron rule of Psalm 2:8–9 (Rev 2:26–27), the key of David from Isaiah 22:22 (Rev 3:7); the warnings recall Balaam (Numbers 22–25; Rev 2:14) and Jezebel (1 Kings 16–21; Rev 2:20).

History: Local color often explains the images. Laodicea is commonly noted for its banking, its wool and a reputed eye salve, which sit behind 3:17–18, and for lukewarm water piped in from a distance, which may sit behind 3:15–16.

Close in prayer: Ask the risen Jesus to search each heart honestly, and thank Him that He knocks, longing to come in, not only to correct.

SIXTY MINUTES drawn to scale

5	10	10	15	12	8
Gather	Read together	Observe	Interpret	Apply	Close in prayer

ANSWER GUIDE

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

- 1** Read 2:1–7 (Ephesus) and 3:14–22 (Laodicea). What does Jesus say He knows about each church?

Both letters begin with “I know your works” (2:2). In Ephesus Jesus knows their “toil and perseverance” and that they tested false apostles, yet He says “you left your first love” (2:4). In Laodicea He knows they are “neither cold nor hot” (3:15) and that they say “I am rich” (3:17). He calls them wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. Jesus sees both churches exactly as they are.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 2:4 and 3:17. What does Jesus say is wrong in Ephesus, and what does Laodicea say about itself?

OBSERVE

- 2** Which lines repeat in each of the seven letters? Compare the openings, the middles and the endings of all seven letters.

Each letter opens with the same address, as in “To the angel of the assembly in Ephesus write” (2:1), with the city changed, and then a title of Jesus. All seven letters then say I know, as in “I know your works” (2:2). Each ends with “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies” (2:7) and a promise to the one who overcomes, worded a little differently each time, as in “He who overcomes won’t be harmed by the second death” (2:11). In the first three letters the call to hear comes first and the promise follows. In the last four the promise comes first and the call to hear follows.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 2:7, 2:11 and 2:17. What call to hear appears in each, and what follows it?

- 3** What does Jesus praise in Smyrna and in Philadelphia, and what does He not correct in them (2:8–11; 3:7–13)?

Jesus knows Smyrna’s “oppression, and your poverty” (2:9) and says “but you are rich.” In Philadelphia He knows they have “a little power, and kept my word, and didn’t deny my name” (3:8). In both letters Jesus names no fault. He gives each a charge to hold on: “Be faithful to death” (2:10) to Smyrna and “Hold firmly that which you have” (3:11) to Philadelphia.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 2:8–10. What does Jesus say He knows about Smyrna, and what does He tell them to do?

4 What does Jesus say He is doing in 3:20, and what does He ask of the person who hears?

Jesus says “I stand at the door and knock” (3:20). He takes the first step and waits. The person who hears is asked to listen and open: “If anyone hears my voice and opens the door.” The promise is “I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with me.” The offer is to anyone who hears.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 3:20. What does Jesus do at the door, and what happens if someone opens it?

INTERPRET

5 Ephesus did a great deal right (2:2–3), yet Jesus says ‘you left your first love’ (2:4). How can sound work and a cooling heart exist together, and what does Jesus ask them to do (2:5)?

In 2:2–3 Jesus names their “toil and perseverance,” their testing of false apostles and their endurance “for my name’s sake.” He then says “you left your first love” (2:4). The text shows that both can sit in one church, and Jesus names both without cancelling either. He asks them to “Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent and do the first works” (2:5). He adds a warning that He will “move your lamp stand out of its place” unless they repent.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 2:4–5. What does Jesus hold against Ephesus, and what does He tell them to do?

6 Jesus introduces Himself to each church with a title, and most of them echo the vision in chapter 1. Choose two letters and say why the title fits that church.

Ephesus hears “He who holds the seven stars in his right hand” (2:1), which matches 1:16, and “he who walks among the seven golden lamp stands,” which matches 1:13. That title fits a church whose lampstand is under warning, since He is already among them. Smyrna hears “The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life” (2:8), from 1:17–18. That fits a church facing prison and death, because He has been through death and lives. Not every title comes from chapter 1, since Philadelphia’s “the key of David” (3:7) comes from Isaiah 22:22. Other pairings work too, and the group may choose its own.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 2:1 and 2:8. Which part of chapter 1’s vision does each title come from?

7 Sardis has ‘a reputation of being alive’ but is dead (3:1), and Laodicea says ‘I am rich’ (3:17). What do they share, and how does Jesus try to wake them (3:2–3; 3:18–19)?

Both churches have a picture of themselves that Jesus says is wrong. Sardis has “a reputation of being alive” (3:1) and is dead, and Laodicea says “I am rich” (3:17) while Jesus calls it “the wretched one, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.” He wakes Sardis with commands: “Wake up and strengthen the things that remain” (3:2) and “Remember therefore how you have received and heard” (3:3). He warns that He will come “as a thief.” He counsels Laodicea to buy “gold refined by fire” (3:18) and says “As many as I love, I reprove and chasten” (3:19).

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 3:2–3 and 3:18–19. What does Jesus tell Sardis to do, and what does He offer Laodicea?

- 8 Jesus tells Smyrna 'Don't be afraid' (2:10) and promises 'the crown of life.' How does the promise to the one who overcomes (2:11) speak to a church that may suffer? (if time)**

Jesus tells Smyrna plainly that suffering is coming: "the devil is about to throw some of you into prison" (2:10). He says "Don't be afraid of the things which you are about to suffer" and promises "the crown of life" to those who are "faithful to death." In 2:11 the one who overcomes "won't be harmed by the second death." The text says the church may suffer now and still be kept from the harm that lasts.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 2:10–11. What is Smyrna told about the coming suffering, and what is promised?

APPLY (PRINTED ON THE REFLECTION PAGE)

- 9 Which of the seven letters sounds most like it was written to you? What might Jesus commend in you, and what might He ask you to remember? PERSONAL**

There is no single right answer. Each letter gives Jesus' view of one church, with something He sees and something He asks, and I know opens all seven, as in "I know your works" (2:2). A person can read more than one letter and find a line in each. The commendations count as much as the corrections. Nobody has to share more than they choose.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 2:2–5 and 3:1–3. What does Jesus commend in Ephesus, and what does He tell Sardis to remember?

- 10 Jesus stands at the door and knocks (3:20). What door might He be asking you to open this week? PERSONAL**

There is no single right answer. In 3:20 Jesus is described as waiting and speaking: "If anyone hears my voice and opens the door." The promise is a shared meal, "I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with me." A door can mean a habit or a conversation, and each person decides what it means for them. Nobody has to share more than they choose.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 3:20. What does Jesus promise to do if someone opens the door?

NOTES

Reflection questions

- 1 Which line from the seven letters do you most want to carry this week, and why?**

This question asks each person to choose one line from the letters to carry through the week and to say why. Invite, and let anyone pass. Do not assign lines to people. A short reason is enough, and private answers are welcome.

- 2 Have you ever kept right beliefs while your love grew cold? What helped, or might help, to rekindle it?**

This question asks about a time when sound belief and warm love drifted apart, as in Ephesus. Invite honest stories without requiring them, and keep any detail private if the person prefers. Point back to the way the letter names real strengths before it names the loss. Let the group hear that returning is possible.

3 Where might comfort or self-sufficiency be dulling your hunger for Jesus?

This question asks people to look at comfort and self-sufficiency, the matter behind Laodicea. Invite quiet thought first, then offer a chance to share. Keep the tone gentle, since Jesus speaks to that church with counsel and love. Nobody has to say more than they choose.

ANSWER KEY

Recall practice

- 1** Memory verse 3:20: "Behold, I stand at the door and _____. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with me." — the missing word?

D knock

Revelation 3:20: Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with me.

- 3** Which church is told 'you left your first love' (2:4)?

A Ephesus

Revelation 2:4: But I have this against you, that you left your first love.

- 5** Memory verse

Revelation 3:20, printed on page 13.

- 2** Which two of the seven churches receive no correction from Jesus?

D Smyrna and Philadelphia

In the letters to Smyrna (2:8–11) and Philadelphia (3:7–13), Jesus names no fault.

- 4** What call appears in every one of the seven letters?

B Let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies

Revelation 2:7: He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies.

LEADER'S NOTES

Care note · 2:20–23. The rebuke to "Jezebel" concerns false teaching in one church. Never use the name to shame a woman in the room, and never read 2:22–23 as God's verdict on anyone's illness or loss.

LEADER'S GUIDE · SESSION 3 OF 8

The Throne and the Lamb

Rev 4–5 · 60 minutes · 5–12 people · participant pages 17–20 · memory verse Revelation 5:12

GROUP LEADER NOTES

Gather: Think of a time you felt small in a good way: a mountain, a night sky, a great crowd singing. What happened to your worries in that moment?

Open: Read the chapters aloud with different voices if you can: one reader for the narration and the whole group for the songs. Point out the shift in 5:5–6: John hears of a Lion and sees a Lamb. The book does not replace one picture with the other; it shows how Jesus overcomes.

Keep the identity of the twenty-four elders open: readers have taken them as angels, as representatives of the whole people of God, or as a heavenly council. The text does not say.

Note that the scroll's contents are not stated in chapter 5. Readers differ on what it is (a record of God's plan, a covenant document or a title deed), and the group does not need to decide. What matters here is who may open it.

Old Testament echoes: The throne scene gathers Isaiah 6:1–3 ('Holy, holy, holy'), Ezekiel 1 and 10 (the four living creatures) and Daniel 7:9–10 (the throne and the books); the scroll 'written inside and outside' echoes Ezekiel 2:9–10; the Lion of Judah is Genesis 49:9–10; the Root of David is Isaiah 11:1, 10; the Lamb recalls the Passover lamb of Exodus 12 and Isaiah 53:7.

History: Roman rulers were hailed with titles of divinity and worship. Some scholars see the elders' casting down of crowns and the cry 'Worthy are you, our Lord and God' (4:11) as set against that background.

Close in prayer: Sing or read 5:12 together as a prayer, and give the Lamb the glory the group has been reading about.

SIXTY MINUTES drawn to scale

5	10	10	15	12	8
Gather	Read together	Observe	Interpret	Apply	Close in prayer

ANSWER GUIDE

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

- 1** Read 4:1–11 and 5:1–14 aloud, with one reader for the narration and the whole group for the songs. What does John see, and what does everyone do?

John sees “a door opened in heaven” (4:1) and then “a throne set in heaven” (4:2) with One sitting on it. In chapter 5 he sees a sealed book and a Lamb “standing, as though it had been slain” (5:6). The response is worship. The elders “fall down before him who sits on the throne” (4:10) and “throw their crowns before the throne,” and in 5:8 they fall down before the Lamb. In 5:13 “every created thing” joins in.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 4:10. What do the elders do with their crowns?

OBSERVE

- 2** What does John see around the throne in 4:2–8, and what do the living creatures say day and night?

In 4:3 there is “a rainbow around the throne.” In 4:4 there are “twenty-four elders sitting” on twenty-four thrones, dressed in white with golden crowns. In 4:5 “lightnings, sounds, and thunders” come out of the throne, and seven lamps of fire burn before it. In 4:6 there is “a sea of glass,” and four living creatures full of eyes. The creatures have “no rest day and night” (4:8). They say, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come.”

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 4:8. What do the four living creatures say, and how long do they go without rest?

- 3** What problem does John face in 5:1–4, and what does he hear in 5:5 and then see in 5:6?

The book in 5:1 is “sealed shut with seven seals.” The angel asks “Who is worthy to open the book” (5:2), and in 5:3 “No one in heaven above, or on the earth, or under the earth” is able to open it. John says, “I wept much” (5:4). In 5:5 an elder tells him, “Don’t weep,” and names “the Lion who is of the tribe of Judah.” In 5:6 John sees “a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain.”

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 5:4–5. What does John do, and what does the elder tell him?

4 What does each song praise: the first song (4:11) and the new song (5:9–10)? What does the crowd sing in 5:12–13?

The first song says “Worthy are you, our Lord and God” (4:11) and gives the reason: “you created all things.” The new song says “You are worthy to take the book and to open its seals” (5:9), because “you were killed, and bought us for God with your blood.” It adds that they were made “kings and priests to our God” (5:10). In 5:12 the crowd sings “Worthy is the Lamb who has been killed” and names seven things the Lamb receives, from power to blessing. In 5:13 every creature sings to “him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb” together.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 5:12. How many things does the crowd say the Lamb is worthy to receive?

INTERPRET

5 In 5:5 John hears ‘the Lion’ and in 5:6 he sees ‘a Lamb.’ What does the pairing tell us about how Jesus overcomes?

In 5:5 the elder says the Lion “has overcome.” In 5:6 John sees “a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain.” The book gives a title of strength and then a picture of sacrifice, and the two pictures stand together. The song in 5:9 gives the link: “you were killed, and bought us for God with your blood.” The text shows the one who overcomes as the Lamb who was slain. Readers describe the details in different ways, and the group can hold them loosely.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 5:5–6. What does John hear, and what does he see?

6 What reason does each song give for worship (4:11; 5:9)? What would be missing if we had only one?

In 4:11 the reason for worship is “you created all things.” In 5:9 the reason is “you were killed, and bought us for God.” The first song says who has the right to rule all things. The second says what has been done for a people “out of every tribe, language, people, and nation.” The scene needs both: a God over all things, and a Lamb who opens the book. In 5:13 the one song goes to “him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb” together.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Compare 4:11 and 5:9. What reason does each song give for being worthy?

7 The sealed scroll is in the right hand of the One on the throne (5:1), and the Lamb takes it (5:7). No one else is found worthy (5:4). What does this show about how the Lamb and the One on the throne relate?

In 5:1 the book is “in the right hand of him who sat on the throne.” In 5:7 the Lamb “took it out of the right hand” of that One. Because no one else was “found worthy” (5:4), the opening belongs to Him alone. The Lamb stands “in the middle of the throne” (5:6), and the elders fall down before Him (5:8; 5:14), worship an angel refuses in 19:10 and 22:9. He shares God’s throne and God’s worship.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 5:7. Whose hand does the book leave, and who takes it?

8 Every creature in heaven, on earth, under the earth and in the sea joins the worship (5:13). Why might the book show this scene before the seals are opened?

In 5:13 “every created thing” speaks, in heaven, on the earth, under the earth and on the sea. The scene comes before any seal is broken, so the reader sees who is on the throne first. Everything that follows is read in the light of the One who is worshiped here. Readers take the order of later events in different ways, and the text leaves room for that. The scene gives people under pressure a place to stand before the trouble is described.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 5:13. Where do the voices come from, and whom do they praise?

APPLY (PRINTED ON THE REFLECTION PAGE)

9 What worry would you like to bring into this throne room? What would you say to Him from 4:11 or 5:12? PERSONAL

There is no single right answer. The words of 4:11 give a place to begin: “Worthy are you, our Lord and God,” “for you created all things.” The words of 5:12 give another: “Worthy is the Lamb who has been killed.” Nobody has to share more than they choose, and a silent prayer is welcome.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 4:11. What reason do the elders give for God being worthy?

10 What would it look like to begin a hard week by picturing the throne first? PERSONAL

There is no single right answer. The throne in 4:2 is already “set in heaven” before John does anything. Chapter 4 gives much to picture: “lightnings, sounds, and thunders” (4:5) and worship that goes on “day and night” (4:8). A person may picture a single image or a few words. Nobody has to share more than they choose.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 4:2. What does John see as soon as he is in the Spirit?

NOTES

Reflection questions

1 Which part of the throne room do you find easiest to picture, and which hardest?

This question asks people to say which part of the scene is easiest and which is hardest to picture. Invite a short answer and let the group enjoy the strange creatures if they like. Nobody has to describe more than they choose. Hearing different answers shows that the scene is meant to be felt as well as pictured.

2 What does it mean to you that the one who holds history looks like a lamb that was slain?

This question asks each person to sit with the picture of a Lamb that was slain at the center of the throne room. Invite a few words, and let a person keep their thoughts private if they wish. Leave a quiet pause before anyone speaks. No answer needs to be settled.

3

Write your own short song of praise using words from 4:11 or 5:12.

This question asks each person to write a short line of praise using the words of chapter 4 or 5. Offer it as an invitation. One sentence is enough, and a person may keep it private or read it aloud. If time is short, suggest finishing it at home.

ANSWER KEY

Recall practice

1

Memory verse 5:12: "_____ is the Lamb who has been killed to receive the power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing!" — the missing word?

A Worthy

Revelation 5:12: Worthy is the Lamb who has been killed to receive the power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing!

2

What do the elders do with their crowns (4:10)?

A Throw them before the throne

Revelation 4:10: throw their crowns before the throne.

3

John hears of a Lion of the tribe of Judah. What does he see in 5:6?

B A Lamb standing, as though it had been slain

Revelation 5:6: a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain.

4

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

C He was killed and bought people for God

Revelation 5:9: you were killed, and bought us for God with your blood out of every tribe, language, people, and nation.

5

Memory verse

Revelation 5:12, printed on page 17.

LEADER'S NOTES

LEADER'S GUIDE · SESSION 4 OF 8

Who Can Stand?

Rev 6–7 · 60 minutes · 5–12 people · participant pages 21–24 · memory verse Revelation 7:17

**GROUP LEADER
NOTES**

Gather: What do you do when the news gets heavy? Who or what do you turn to first?

Open: Notice that the Lamb opens each seal (6:1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12) and that power is 'given' to the riders (6:2, 4, 8): what happens is permitted and limited. Notice too the voice in 6:6, 'Don't damage the oil and the wine.'

Readers differ on the white horse (6:2): some see Christ or the spread of the gospel, others see conquest or the spirit of war. Whatever one makes of the white horse, the red, black and pale riders are widely read as violence, hunger and death.

The 144,000 and the great multitude (7:4, 9) raise a real question. Some readers take them as two groups (ethnic Israel and the church), others as one people of God heard and then seen, as the Lion is heard and the Lamb is seen in chapter 5. The text gives the numbers and then the crowd; do not press the group to choose.

Say plainly that the word in 7:14 is 'great suffering' in this translation, and that other translations read 'great tribulation.'

Old Testament echoes: The horses recall Zechariah 1:8 and 6:1–8; the four judgments of 6:8 recall Ezekiel 14:21; the sky 'removed like a scroll when it is rolled up' (6:14) echoes Isaiah 34:4; the cry to the mountains is Hosea 10:8; the sealing of foreheads recalls Ezekiel 9:4; 'Who is able to stand?' echoes Malachi 3:2 and Nahum 1:6; the closing promises echo Isaiah 49:10 and 25:8 and Psalm 23.

History: Many readers hear first-century echoes in the riders: conquest by Rome, civil war, grain shortages and plague. Futurist readers hear a still-future sequence. Readers across these approaches affirm that the Lamb is in charge of what is permitted.

Close in prayer: Pray 7:15–17 over the people in the room and over anyone each person is worried about.

SIXTY MINUTES drawn to scale

5	10	10	15	12	8
Gather	Read together	Observe	Interpret	Apply	Close in prayer

ANSWER GUIDE

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

- 1** Read 6:1–17 and 7:9–17. What happens as each seal is opened, and where does the story go in chapter 7?

The Lamb opens seal after seal. The call “Come and see” (6:1) comes before the first rider, and horses appear: white, red, black and pale. At the fifth seal John sees souls under the altar, and at the sixth there is a “great earthquake” (6:12), the sun goes dark and the stars fall, and everyone from kings to slaves hides and asks “who is able to stand” (6:17). Then chapter 7 turns to “a great multitude which no man could count” (7:9) standing “before the throne and before the Lamb.” The story goes from the shaking of the earth to worship and shelter.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 6:1–8. What color is each of the four horses?

OBSERVE

- 2** Who opens each seal, and what do the four living creatures say (6:1, 3, 5, 7)? What words repeat about what the riders were ‘given’?

In 6:1 “the Lamb opened one of the seven seals,” and the same One opens each seal after it. The first, third and fourth creatures say “Come and see,” and the second says “Come” (6:3). The word that repeats is given. In 6:2 “A crown was given to him,” in 6:4 “There was given to him a great sword,” and in 6:8 authority “was given to him.” Each rider acts within what is given.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 6:2 and 6:4. What word is used for how each rider received his crown and his sword?

- 3** What do the souls under the altar ask, and what are they told (6:9–11)?

The souls under the altar are “those who had been killed for the Word of God” (6:9). They cry, “How long, Master, the holy and true” (6:10), asking when He will “judge and avenge our blood.” In 6:11 each receives “A long white robe.” They are told to “rest yet for a while” until their fellow servants “complete their course.” The answer gives them a robe and a wait. It gives no date.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 6:11. What is given to each of them, and what are they told to do?

4 What is the sealing in 7:1–4 for, and who is standing before the throne in 7:9–10?

In 7:3 the angel says the harm to the earth, the sea and the trees must wait “until we have sealed the bondservants of our God on their foreheads.” The seal is “the seal of the living God” (7:2), so the servants are marked as His before the winds are released. Readers differ on how far the sealing shields from suffering, and the text itself gives only the order: first the sealing, then the harm. In 7:4 the number is “one hundred forty-four thousand.” In 7:9 John sees “a great multitude which no man could count,” from every nation, “dressed in white robes” with palm branches. They cry, “Salvation be to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb” (7:10).

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 7:9–10. Where are they standing, and what do they cry out?

INTERPRET

5 The cry in 6:17 is ‘who is able to stand?’ How does chapter 7 answer it?

In 6:17 the question is “who is able to stand.” In 6:15–16 the kings and the strong hide in the rocks of the mountains. Chapter 7 shows a great multitude “standing before the throne and before the Lamb” (7:9). The elder says they “came out of the great suffering” (7:14) and “washed their robes and made them white in the Lamb’s blood.” Their standing rests on the Lamb.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 7:13–14. Who are the ones in white robes, and where did they come from?

6 ‘Given’ appears in 6:2, 4 and 8, and the Lamb opens each seal. What does that tell us about who is in charge, and what does it leave unexplained?

In 6:1 “the Lamb opened one of the seven seals,” and the opening is repeated at each seal. The riders act only as power is given to them. The souls in 6:11 are told to rest under that same order. The book presents troubling events as happening under the hand of the One who was slain and now stands. A believer can hear bad news knowing the Lamb is present. The text does not explain each event, and it does not call hard things good.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 6:1 and 6:3. Who opens the seal each time?

7 The 144,000 are heard (7:4) and the great multitude is seen (7:9). Some readers take them as two groups and some as one people of God. What in the text supports each view?

In 7:4 John hears “one hundred forty-four thousand” sealed “out of every tribe of the children of Israel.” In 7:9 he sees “a great multitude which no man could count” “out of every nation and of all tribes, peoples, and languages.” For two groups: 7:4 counts the sealed by tribe of Israel, while 7:9 sees a crowd no one could count from every nation. For one people: John hears the number (7:4) and then looks and sees the crowd (7:9), as he heard the Lion and saw the Lamb in 5:5–6, and both belong to God, sealed in 7:3 and standing before the throne in 7:9. The text does not say which, and the group can hold both.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 7:4 and 7:9. What does each verse say about where the people come from?

- 8** In 7:15–17, what changes for those who came out of the great suffering? Which promises answer something from chapter 6?

In 7:15 they are “before the throne of God,” and He “will spread his tabernacle over them.” In 7:16 they “will never be hungry or thirsty any more,” and in 7:17 the Lamb “shepherds them” and God “will wipe away every tear from their eyes.” Chapter 6 had hunger in the black horse, death in the pale horse and kings hiding from the throne in 6:15–16. The promises answer these. Hunger is gone, the Lamb shepherds, and the people no longer hide from the throne but stand before it.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 7:15–17. What changes for the people who came out of the great suffering?

APPLY (PRINTED ON THE REFLECTION PAGE)

- 9** What difficulty in your life or the world do you need to place under the Lamb's care in prayer this week? Name it aloud or silently. **PERSONAL**

There is no single right answer. Chapter 6 gives the souls a prayer to borrow: “How long” (6:10). Chapter 7 gives the Lamb who “shepherds them” (7:17). A person may name a difficulty aloud or hold it silently. Nobody has to share more than they choose.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 6:10. What do the souls say to the Master?

- 10** 7:15–17 promises shelter, water, shepherding and no more tears. Which promise do you most need to hear, and who else might need it? **PERSONAL**

There is no single right answer. Verses 7:15–17 give promises: God “will spread his tabernacle over them,” they “will never be hungry or thirsty any more,” the Lamb “shepherds them,” and God “will wipe away every tear.” A person may choose one and think of someone else who needs it. Nobody has to share more than they choose, and naming no one is fine.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 7:15–17. What does the Lamb do for them?

NOTES

Reflection questions

- 1** What does it mean to you that the Lamb is present in suffering, not absent from it?
This question asks people to say what it means that the Lamb is present in suffering. Invite honest answers, including quiet ones. Nobody has to share a personal story, and a general thought is welcome. Let silence stand without filling it.
- 2** Where are you tempted to ask ‘How long?’ Write your own short prayer in that voice.
This question asks people to write a short prayer in the voice of How long. Invite, and do not require. A person may write it privately and keep it, or read it aloud. Honest lament is part of the text, so no prayer needs to be tidied.

- 3** Who is a person you know who has come through great suffering and kept going? What did you learn from them?

This question asks people to remember someone who has come through great suffering and kept going. Invite a short story or a single lesson. Nobody needs to name the person or give details. Keep the focus on what was learned and let private details stay private.

ANSWER KEY

Recall practice

- 1** Memory verse 7:17: "The Lamb who is in the middle of the throne ____ them and leads them to springs of life-giving waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." — the missing word?

B shepherds

Revelation 7:17: The Lamb who is in the middle of the throne shepherds them and leads them to springs of life-giving waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

- 3** Before the winds are released, what is done to God's servants (7:3)?

C They are sealed on their foreheads

Revelation 7:3: until we have sealed the bondservants of our God on their foreheads.

- 5** Memory verse

Revelation 7:17, printed on page 21.

- 2** What do the souls under the altar ask (6:10)?

B How long?

Revelation 6:10: How long, Master, the holy and true, until you judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?

- 4** In 7:9, what are the great multitude holding?

D Palm branches

Revelation 7:9: dressed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands.

LEADER'S NOTES

Care note · 6:9–11. "How long?" is a prayer the text honors. Someone carrying injustice may be in the room; let them pray it, and do not hurry them toward resolution.

LEADER'S GUIDE · SESSION 5 OF 8

Warnings and Witness

Rev 8–11 · 60 minutes · 5–12 people · participant pages 25–28 · memory verse Revelation 11:15

GROUP LEADER NOTES

Gather: Think of a warning you ignored, such as a storm alert, a doctor's advice or a friend's concern. What made it easy to ignore, and what happened? Keep it light. Pass if you prefer.

Open: Keep the trumpets in their setting: they begin with the prayers of the saints (8:3–5) and end with the Kingdom announced (11:15). They strike only a third, and the text itself shows what is left unanswered, which is repentance (9:20–21). Many readers hear the trumpets as warnings and others stress judgment; both can ask what the survivors failed to do. Do not let the group spend the hour decoding the locusts or the two hundred million horsemen. Ask what the images do rather than only what they are.

Sessions 4, 5 and 7 cover the seals, trumpets and bowls, which are often taught as three cycles. Some readers see them as consecutive and some as parallel retellings of the same period with growing intensity. Name both and move on; the questions here work with either.

The two witnesses (11:3–13) are read in several ways: two individuals, the church as a whole bearing witness, or Moses and Elijah figures. Report these without choosing. Readers across these views agree that the passage shows faithful witness, opposition, apparent defeat and vindication.

Chapter 10 has no question. Summarize it in one sentence: John eats a scroll that is sweet, then bitter, and is told to prophesy again (10:9–11).

Old Testament echoes: Hail and fire (8:7), water to blood (8:8) and darkness (8:12) echo Exodus 7–10; the locusts (9:3) echo Exodus 10 and Joel 1–2; eating the scroll (10:9–10) echoes Ezekiel 2:8–3:3; measuring the temple (11:1) echoes Ezekiel 40–42; the two olive trees and lampstands (11:4) echo Zechariah 4; shutting the sky (11:6) echoes Elijah, and water to blood echoes Moses.

History: The first readers lived in cities where honoring the emperor, along with the gods, was woven into civic life, and where refusing could bring social and economic cost. Hearing that God's witnesses are killed and then raised, and that the idol-worshipping world still will not repent, spoke honestly to people who expected to be treated unjustly and needed to know that faithfulness is not wasted.

Close in prayer: Ask God to make you a faithful witness, to give you courage where results are slow, and to keep your heart soft toward His warnings.

SIXTY MINUTES drawn to scale

5	10	10	15	12	8
Gather	Read together	Observe	Interpret	Apply	Close in prayer

ANSWER GUIDE

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

- 1** Read Revelation 8:1–5 aloud, then 11:15–19. What happens before the first trumpet, and what do the voices in heaven announce at the last?

Before the first trumpet, 8:1 says “there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.” Seven angels are given seven trumpets, and the prayers of the saints go up with incense before God. At the last trumpet, great voices announce that “The kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ” (11:15). The same voices say that He will reign forever and ever. The passage runs from prayer to the announcement of the Kingdom.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 8:1–2 and 11:15. What happens in heaven first, and what do the voices say at the end?

OBSERVE

- 2** What does 8:3–5 say happens to the prayers of the saints, and what follows?

In 8:3–4 an angel adds incense to “the prayers of all the saints” on the golden altar. The smoke goes up before God out of the angel’s hand. In 8:5 the angel fills the censer with fire from the altar and throws it on the earth. Thunders, lightnings and an earthquake follow. The text places the saints’ prayers just before the trumpets begin.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 8:3–5. Where does the smoke go, and what does the angel do with the censer?

- 3** How do the first four trumpets (8:7–12) affect creation, and what limit do they share?

The first four trumpets strike the earth, trees, sea, ships, rivers, springs, sun, moon and stars. Hail and fire burn the earth and trees, a burning mountain turns the sea to blood, a star called Wormwood makes waters bitter, and the sun, moon and stars are darkened. Each strike is measured in thirds, as in “one third.” The text also says all the green grass burned in 8:7 and many people died in 8:11, so the limit is partial and not absolute. The shared pattern is the third.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Look at 8:7–12. What fraction appears again and again?

- 4** What does 9:20–21 say about how the rest of mankind responded, and what does 11:13 say about how some responded?

In 9:20 the rest of mankind “didn’t repent of the works of their hands.” They kept worshiping demons and idols, and 9:21 adds murders, sorceries, sexual immorality and thefts. In 11:13, after the earthquake, the rest were terrified and “gave glory to the God of heaven.” The text records refusal in one place and fear and glory given to God in the other, which readers take as repentance or as awed acknowledgment. It does not say how many were in either group.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 9:20–21 and 11:13. What does the rest of mankind do in each place?

INTERPRET

- 5 Read 8:7–8 beside Exodus 9:22–25 and 7:20–21. What do the scenes share, and what does that suggest about the trumpets and about God's character?**

The trumpets recall the plagues that fell on Egypt. Hail and fire in 8:7 echo Exodus 9:22–25, and the sea turned to blood in 8:8 echoes Exodus 7:20–21. Readers who hear that echo often take the trumpets as acts of God against a hardened world, as in Egypt, where the God who judged also freed His people. Many see a way out still open. The text shows that offer refused in 9:20–21, where the survivors of the plagues still do not repent. Readers differ on whether the trumpets are mainly warning or mainly judgment, and the group can hold both.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 8:7–8 and 9:20–21. What happens to the earth and sea, and what do the survivors fail to do?

- 6 The trumpets strike one third, and the locusts may torment for five months but not kill (9:5). What do these limits suggest, and what do they leave unexplained, given 9:15? (if time)**

In 8:7–12 each trumpet reaches “one third,” and in 9:5 the locusts were given power “to torment them for five months.” The text says the power was not given to kill. The limits suggest restraint: harm is measured and survivors are left time to turn. Yet 9:15 says a third of mankind is killed, so the text does not say that no one dies, and it leaves unexplained how restraint and judgment fit together. The following verses, 9:20–21, name repentance as what the survivors withheld. Many readers take that as a call to turn, and readers differ on how to place these events.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 9:5 and 9:20. What is the locusts' power limited to, and what do the survivors still not do?

- 7 The two witnesses prophesy, are killed, and are raised (11:3–13). Whatever readers think they represent, what does the passage say about faithful witness and about how the world may respond?**

The witnesses prophesy in sackcloth. They are killed by the beast, and the people of the earth “will rejoice over them” (11:10). After three and a half days “the breath of life from God entered into them” (11:11), and they go up to heaven. Readers differ on who they are (two individuals, the church as a whole, or figures like Moses and Elijah), and the text supports more than one reading. Readers across these views agree it shows faithful witness, opposition, apparent defeat and vindication by God. The witnesses testify until they have finished in 11:7. In 11:13 the rest are terrified and give glory to the God of heaven.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 11:7–12. What happens to the witnesses, and what does God do after three and a half days?

- 8** The seventh trumpet announces that the 'kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ' (11:15). What does the voice announce in 11:15–18, and how does it answer the prayers in 8:3–4?

The verse announces that “The kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.” The elders worship in 11:17 because God has “taken your great power and reigned.” In 11:18 the nations were angry, God’s wrath came, and the time came to judge the dead, to reward His servants, and to destroy those who destroy the earth. Many readers hear this as the answer to the prayers that rose in 8:3–4, though 8:3–4 does not state their words. Everything before it, the prayers, the warnings and the witness, leads toward this announcement. The trumpets and the witnesses show a world still resisting, and 11:15 says whose Kingdom it finally is. Readers differ on how the sequence of seals, trumpets and bowls fits together, and the verse stands under any of those readings.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 11:15–17. Whose Kingdom does the voice announce, and how long will He reign?

APPLY (PRINTED ON THE REFLECTION PAGE)

- 9** The witnesses in chapter 11 keep speaking while the world opposes them. What would it look like to speak about your faith with patience and kindness, including to people who disagree with you? (if time) **PERSONAL**

There is no single right answer. The passage gives you a picture of people who heard a warning and did not turn, and of witnesses who kept speaking while the world opposed them. Faithful witness here includes speaking, waiting and trusting God with the outcome. Some people will have a name or a situation in mind, and nobody has to share more than they choose.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 11:3–7. What do the witnesses do until they have finished their testimony?

- 10** Faithful witnesses in this passage look defeated before God shows they were right. Where do you need to keep speaking or serving without seeing results yet? **PERSONAL**

There is no single right answer. The witnesses in 11:7–9 are killed and left in the street, and only afterward does the text say God raised them. The passage gives you that order to hold onto: faithfulness first, vindication from God later. Some in the group may be waiting on something now, and nobody has to share more than they choose.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 11:7–11. What happens to the witnesses first, and what happens after three and a half days?

NOTES

Reflection questions

- 1** Write the prayers you are praying right now. How does 8:3–4 change how you think about them? This question asks each person to write out their current prayers and then read 8:3–4 beside them. The point is to see that the text pictures the prayers of the saints rising with incense before God. Invite people to write privately and share only what they wish. Allow a few quiet minutes.

- 2** Is there one gentle nudge from God, in Scripture or life, that you have been slow to follow? You can bring it to Him.

This question asks each person to name one nudge from God that they have been slow to follow, from Scripture or from life. It is a private question, so invite people to write and keep it to themselves if they prefer. Keep the tone steady and unhurried, and never press anyone to name a nudge.

- 3** Read 11:15 aloud. What would it mean to live this week as if it were already true?

This question asks the group to say 11:15 aloud and then think about the week ahead. It ties the memory verse to ordinary days. Invite one or two short answers and let the others keep theirs private.

ANSWER KEY

Recall practice

- 1** Memory verse 11:15: "The kingdom of the world has become the ____ of our Lord and of his Christ. He will reign forever and ever!" — the missing word?

C Kingdom

Revelation 11:15: The kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. He will reign forever and ever!

- 3** How much of the earth, the trees, the sea and the waters do the first trumpets strike (8:7–12)?

D One third

Each of the first four trumpets strikes a third part (8:7, 8:8, 8:10, 8:12).

- 5** Memory verse

Revelation 11:15, printed on page 25.

- 2** How did the rest of mankind respond to the plagues in 9:20–21?

C They did not repent

Revelation 9:20: The rest of mankind ... didn't repent of the works of their hands.

- 4** What did the rest do after the earthquake in 11:13?

A Gave glory to the God of heaven

Revelation 11:13: the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

LEADER'S NOTES

Care note · 8–11. The trumpets are pictures of judgment, not a key to today's disasters. Never tie anyone's suffering, illness, or loss to God's judgment on them.

LEADER'S GUIDE · SESSION 6 OF 8

The Conflict Behind the Conflict

Rev 12–14 · 60 minutes · 5–12 people · participant pages 29–32 · memory verse Revelation 12:11

GROUP LEADER NOTES

Gather: When you face pressure to go along with the crowd, what makes it hard to stand apart? What helps you stay steady?

Open: This is a dense stretch, so keep returning to the shape: a dragon thrown down (12), two beasts who serve him (13), and a Lamb with a people who belong to Him (14). Read the symbols for what they do to the reader, which is to show what many readers describe as an imitation of God's own reign (dragon, beast and false prophet set against the Father, the Lamb and the Spirit) and to call God's people to endurance.

Be careful with two topics. First, 666 (13:18): the text says it is a number of a man and calls for wisdom, and readers have proposed many solutions, including Nero, other emperors and a symbol of human power that falls short of seven. State that faithful readers differ and that no living person today should be labeled with it. Second, the 144,000 (14:1–5): some read a literal number, others a symbol for the whole people of God, and the group does not need to settle it to hear that they belong to the Lamb.

The woman of chapter 12 is also read in more than one way: Israel, Mary, the church, or the people of God across both covenants. Report the readings without choosing.

If someone is frightened by the mark or by 14:9–11, remind them that the passage warns against worshipping the beast, calls the saints to endure, and marks the Lamb's people with His name (14:1); traditions explain assurance and perseverance differently, and the group does not need to settle that.

If anyone is struggling with thoughts of ending their life, 12:11 is about loyalty to the Lamb under persecution and is never a call to give up on life; follow up privately and connect them with help (page 123). If the beast turns into a current politician, party or nation, say that Revelation names none of them, stay with what the text says, and repeat the question.

Old Testament echoes: The woman and child (12:1–5) echo Genesis 3:15, Isaiah 66:7 and Psalm 2:9; the dragon and the sea beast echo Daniel 7 (the four beasts) and Daniel 7:25 for 'a time, times, and half a time' (12:14); the earth that swallows the river (12:16) echoes Exodus 15:12; the fallen Babylon (14:8) echoes Isaiah 21:9; the harvest and the winepress (14:14–20) echo Joel 3:13 and Isaiah 63:1–6.

History: In the cities of Asia, public life, trade guilds and civic feasts were tied to the worship of gods and of the emperor, so refusing to take part could cost a believer their income and their place in society. That is why 13:17, no buying or selling, would have sounded real to the first readers.

Close in prayer: Thank Jesus that the Lamb's blood has overcome the accuser, and ask for endurance and faith for anyone in your group who is under pressure.

SIXTY MINUTES drawn to scale

5	10	10	15	12	8
Gather	Read together	Observe	Interpret	Apply	Close in prayer

ANSWER GUIDE

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

- 1 Read Revelation 12:7–12 aloud, then 14:1–5. Who is thrown down, who wins, and how do the winners overcome?**

In 12:9 the great dragon, the old serpent called the devil and Satan, is thrown down to the earth. A voice in heaven says “They overcame him because of the Lamb’s blood” (12:11), and adds “and because of the word of their testimony.” In 14:1 the Lamb stands on Mount Zion with 144,000 who have His name and His Father’s name written on their foreheads. The dragon is thrown down and the Lamb’s people are with Him. The text says the winners overcame by the blood and by their testimony.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 12:9–11. Who is thrown down, and what two things does the voice name as the way the saints overcame?

OBSERVE

- 2 Who is thrown down in 12:7–9, and what titles does the passage give him?**

In 12:7–9 the dragon is thrown down after a war in the sky in which Michael and his angels fight him. The passage calls him “The great dragon,” “the old serpent,” “the devil and Satan” and “the deceiver of the whole world.” His angels are thrown down with him. In 12:10 he is called the accuser of the brothers, who accuses them before God day and night.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 12:9–10. What names does the passage give him, and where is he thrown?

- 3 What does the sea beast receive from the dragon (13:1–4), and what does the earth beast make people do (13:11–17)?**

The sea beast has ten horns and seven heads, receives power, throne and authority from the dragon, and speaks blasphemy against God. He is given authority to make war with the saints and over every tribe, people, language and nation. The earth beast speaks like a dragon, makes the earth worship the first beast, performs great signs and has an image of the beast made. He causes those who will not worship the image to be killed. He also causes all to receive a mark, and no one can buy or sell without it.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 13:11–17. What does the second beast make people do, and what happens to those who refuse?

4 What is written on the foreheads of those with the Lamb in 14:1, and what mark do the beast's followers carry in 13:16–17?

In 14:1 the Lamb's people have His name and His Father's name "written on their foreheads." In 13:16–17 the beast's followers are given marks on the right hand or forehead, "the name of the beast or the number of his name." The contrast is between two names and two owners. The text does not explain how the mark works in practice, and readers differ on what it is.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 14:1 and 13:16–17. Whose name is on each group?

INTERPRET

5 12:11 names the Lamb's blood, their testimony, and not loving their life even to death. What kind of victory is this, and how does it differ from winning a fight?

The voice in 12:11 says the saints overcame "because of the Lamb's blood" and "because of the word of their testimony." They also "didn't love their life, even to death." The text names no weapon of force. Victory comes through the Lamb's death and the saints' faithful word, even when it costs them their lives. That would surprise people who expect that dying means losing.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 12:11. What three phrases describe how the saints overcame?

6 Chapter 13 describes a beast that demands worship and economic loyalty. What does this teach about the pressures the first readers faced, and about any system that claims what belongs to God?

The sea beast is given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation and is worshiped in 13:4. The earth beast in 13:17 limits who can buy or sell. For first readers, public life and trade were tied to loyalty claims, and refusing could cost a living. Many readers take any power that demands the worship or total loyalty that belongs to God as beast-like. Readers differ on how to map the beasts onto history, and the text supports more than one reading.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 13:4 and 13:16–17. What does the first beast receive, and what does the second control?

7 13:10 says 'Here is the endurance and the faith of the saints,' and 14:12 says 'Here is the perseverance of the saints.' What do these verses ask of the saints while the beast is strong, and why might that count as victory?

Verse 13:10 calls the saints to endure captivity and the sword, and 14:12 follows the warning about worshiping the beast with a call to perseverance. In 13:10 the text says "Here is the endurance and the faith of the saints." In 14:12 it says "Here is the perseverance of the saints," those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Endurance here means staying loyal to God under pressure. The dragon is thrown down in 12:9, and 12:11 says the saints overcame him by the Lamb's blood and their testimony, so steady faithfulness counts as victory in the text's own terms.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 13:10 and 14:12. What do the saints keep?

8 Look only at what 13:18 and 14:1 say. What is plain, and what is left unexplained? (if time)

All agree 13:18 calls for wisdom and says the number is “the number of a man” and gives it as six hundred sixty-six. Readers have proposed many solutions, and no living person today should be labeled with it. All agree 14:1 says the 144,000 belong to the Lamb and bear His name and His Father's name. Some read the number literally and some as the whole people of God, and the text supports more than one reading. The group can hold the details lightly and the clear parts firmly.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 13:18 and 14:1. What does each passage say plainly about the number?

APPLY (PRINTED ON THE REFLECTION PAGE)**9 What is a modern counterpart to the pressure to give your loyalty to something other than God (power, money, status, approval)? How would you recognize it? PERSONAL**

There is no single right answer. The passage gives you a pattern: a beast demands worship and loyalty, and the saints are marked by the Lamb's name. People often name power, money, status or approval. Nobody has to share more than they choose.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 13:4. What do the people say to the beast when they worship him?

10 12:11 says the saints ‘didn’t love their life, even to death.’ What is one thing you are tempted to hold on to too tightly, and what would it look like to trust the Lamb with it? PERSONAL

There is no single right answer. The text says the saints “didn’t love their life, even to death” (12:11), and it places that beside the Lamb's blood and their testimony. The passage gives you a Lamb who is trustworthy, and a people who belong to Him. Some will think of a particular thing to loosen their grip on, and nobody has to share more than they choose.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 12:11. What did the saints overcome by, and what did they not love?

NOTES**Reflection questions****1 Whatever one makes of the 144,000, the Lamb's people belong to Him (14:1; 7:3). Write a sentence describing what it means to belong to the Lamb.**

This question asks each person to write a sentence about belonging to the Lamb, using the name written on the foreheads in 14:1. It turns the passage toward identity before pressure. Invite people to write privately and share only if they wish.

2 Where are you tempted to endure by willpower alone? What would it look like to endure by trusting the Lamb's blood?

This question asks the group to consider the difference between willpower and trust in the Lamb's blood, using the language of 12:11. Keep the tone gentle and do not require anyone to disclose a struggle. Allow a few quiet minutes to write before any sharing.

- 3** How can you hold the debated parts of these chapters with humility, while holding the clear parts with confidence?

This question asks the group to hold the debated parts of these chapters with humility, such as 666, the 144,000 and the woman, and the clear parts with confidence. Invite people to name one clear thing the chapter says. Leave room for different traditions in the circle without settling any dispute.

ANSWER KEY

Recall practice

- 1** Memory verse 12:11: "They overcame him because of the Lamb's blood, and because of the word of their _____. They didn't love their life, even to death." — the missing word?

D testimony

Revelation 12:11: They overcame him because of the Lamb's blood, and because of the word of their testimony. They didn't love their life, even to death.

- 3** Where is the dragon thrown down in 12:9?

A To the earth

Revelation 12:9: He was thrown down to the earth.

- 5** Memory verse

Revelation 12:11, printed on page 29.

- 2** What does 12:10 call the one who has been thrown down?

D The accuser of our brothers

Revelation 12:10: the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down.

- 4** What is written on the foreheads of those standing with the Lamb (14:1)?

B His name and the name of His Father

Revelation 14:1: having his name and the name of his Father written on their foreheads.

LEADER'S NOTES

Care note · 13:16–18. Do not label any person, leader, nation, technology, or medical treatment as the mark or the beast. If someone fears they have taken the mark, read 14:1 and 12:11 with them and talk after.

LEADER'S GUIDE · SESSION 7 OF 8

Babylon Falls, the King Returns

Rev 15–19 · 60 minutes · 5–12 people · participant pages 33–36 · memory verse Revelation 19:6

GROUP LEADER NOTES

Gather: When has justice finally been done in a situation that felt hopeless? How did it feel, and who got to celebrate?

Open: Notice the rhythm of these chapters: a song (15), plagues with a refusal to repent (16), a seductive woman (17), a falling city with mourning and rejoicing (18), and heaven's praise and a coming King (19). The answer to judgment in the text is worship that calls God's judgments 'true and righteous' (16:7; 19:2).

Babylon is read in several ways: Rome as the first readers knew it, a symbol of every proud, seductive, wealth-hoarding power through history, a final end-time system, or some combination. Present these without choosing. The readings share what the passage does with her: she seduces, exploits, and persecutes, and God judges her.

Be careful with 17:9–10. The seven hills and the seven kings are read both as Rome and its emperors and as symbols, and the group does not need to settle it. Be equally careful with the language of the 'great prostitute': it is a picture of unfaithful, exploiting power and not a statement about any gender or about individual people.

19:7–8 says both that the bride 'made herself ready' and that the linen 'was given to her'; the linen is 'the righteous acts of the saints.' Traditions weigh gift and works differently, so hold both. The wedding supper is an invitation that comes to each reader. Harmagedon (16:16) is named only once, and the text moves quickly to 'It is done!' (16:17). Say that readers differ about the timing and nature of the battle, and keep attention on who wins it.

Handle 18:4 with care. It is addressed to God's people about sharing in Babylon's sins. It is not a warrant for any leader to demand that anyone leave family, church or work, and no one in the group should be told they have failed to 'come out.' If Babylon or the beast turns into a current politician, party or nation, say that Revelation names none of them and return to what the text says.

Old Testament echoes: The song of Moses (15:3) echoes Exodus 15; the plagues echo Exodus again; 'Come out of her' (18:4) echoes Jeremiah 51:45 and Isaiah 48:20; the lament over the city echoes Ezekiel 26–27 (Tyre) and Isaiah 13 and 47 (Babylon); the Rider's sword and rod (19:15) echo Psalm 2:9 and Isaiah 11:4; the winepress echoes Isaiah 63:1–6.

History: Rome's wealth flowed in through ships and trade, and the long cargo list in 18:11–13 reads like the empire's import market, ending with 'people's bodies and souls.' Many scholars read the list, which ends with slaves, as a critique of the human cost behind Rome's prosperity.

Close in prayer: Praise God for His true and righteous judgments, ask for courage to come out of anything that has captured your loyalty, and pray for the oppressed.

SIXTY MINUTES drawn to scale

5	10	10	15	12	8
Gather	Read together	Observe	Interpret	Apply	Close in prayer

ANSWER GUIDE

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

- 1** Read Revelation 15:1–4 aloud, then 18:1–5 and 19:1–10. How does heaven respond to judgment, and what does God ask His people to do about Babylon?

Heaven answers judgment with worship. The victors sing that “Righteous and true are your ways” (15:3), and the great multitude cries, “Salvation, power, and glory belong to our God” (19:1). In 18:4 a voice from heaven tells God’s people to “Come out of her, my people.” The reason given is “that you have no participation in her sins.” The text calls them to leave her sins behind and does not say here how that looks day to day.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 18:4. What reason does the voice give for coming out?

OBSERVE

- 2** What two songs do the victors sing in 15:3, and what do they say about God?

The victors sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. They say that God’s works are “Great and marvelous” (15:3) and that His ways are righteous and true. They call Him King of the nations and say “you only are holy” (15:4). They also say that “all the nations will come and worship before you,” because His righteous acts have been revealed.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 15:3–4. What titles do the victors give to God?

- 3** How is Babylon described in 17:1–6 and 18:2–3 (what she does, what she wears, and who profits)?

In 17:1–6 she is a woman on a scarlet beast who is “dressed in purple and scarlet” and decked with gold and pearls. Her golden cup is full of abominations, and she is “drunken with the blood of the saints.” Kings of the earth and the peoples of the earth are drawn into her. In 18:2–3 her city falls, and “the merchants of the earth grew rich from the abundance of her luxury.” Her forehead carries the name “BABYLON THE GREAT.”

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 18:3. Who has drunk her wine, and who has grown rich?

4 What do the Hallelujahs of 19:1–8 praise, and what is announced in 19:7–9?

The Hallelujahs praise God for His salvation, power and glory, and for judgments that are “true and righteous” (19:2). They praise Him because “he has avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.” They end with “the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns” (19:6). In 19:7–9 the announcement is that the wedding of the Lamb has come and His wife has made herself ready. A blessing follows: “Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb.”

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 19:7–9. What has come, and who is called blessed?

INTERPRET

5 Heaven calls God's judgments ‘true and righteous’ (16:7, the altar; 19:2, the great multitude). Why is it good news for the oppressed, and for those who love justice, that God judges?

The text answers with what Babylon has done. In 17:6 she is drunk with the blood of the saints, and in 18:13 her cargo list ends with “people's bodies and souls.” In 19:2 God has avenged the blood of His servants. For people who have been harmed by power, the verses say that the harm is seen and the judge is true and righteous. The same chapters also carry a call to come out in 18:4 and an invitation to the supper in 19:9, so judgment does not stand alone.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 19:1–2. What does the multitude say God has done for His servants?

6 Babylon is read as Rome, as every proud power that uses people for gain, or as a final system. What does the text itself say she does, and what does that teach regardless of which reading we choose?

The text says she seduces the kings and nations, grows merchants rich through luxury, and is drunk with the blood of the saints. In 19:2 she has “corrupted the earth.” Readers have taken her as Rome, as any proud and exploiting power, as a final system, or as a mix of these, and the verses support more than one reading. On each reading the lesson stays the same. Power and wealth that feed on people and persecute God's servants come under God's judgment, and she falls.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 17:6 and 18:3. What does she do to the saints and to the nations?

7 What does ‘no participation in her sins’ (18:4) ask of God's people? How might that look for the first readers, and for us?

The text gives the purpose of coming out: “that you have no participation in her sins” (18:4). It does not say how, and readers differ on whether the call asks for a physical departure or a separation of loyalty. For the first readers it could mean refusing the loyalties and trade practices tied to the empire's worship. For readers now, the verse names sharing in her sins and does not name any person or group to be shunned. It is also not a warrant for anyone to demand that another person leave family, church or work. The same book says the Lamb bought people “out of every tribe, language, people, and nation” (5:9), so God's love for the nations stays in view.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 18:4. What are God's people told to avoid sharing in?

- 8 The Rider of 19:11–16 is called Faithful and True and the Word of God, and His garment is sprinkled with blood before the battle. Who is He, and how does His victory differ from the empires' victories?**

The text names Him “Faithful and True” (19:11) and “The Word of God” (19:13), and the name on His garment is “KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS” (19:16). The text identifies Him: the Lamb is “Lord of lords and King of kings” (17:14), so the Rider is Jesus Christ. The text says “In righteousness he judges and makes war.” His garment is “sprinkled with blood” before the battle. His weapon is the sword from His mouth (19:15), which many readers take as His word, and the armies with Him (19:14) wear white linen. The contrast with the empires is in how He wins: the armies with Him are not said to fight, and the killing is done by the sword from His mouth (19:21). Readers differ on whether the battle is a future event or a picture of Christ's victory.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 19:11–13. What names does the Rider carry, and what is on His garment?

APPLY (PRINTED ON THE REFLECTION PAGE)

- 9 Whatever Babylon is taken to be, the text calls God's people away from sharing in her sins (18:4). Where do you feel her pull (comfort, status, luxury, going along with unfair systems)? What is one small step away from it? **PERSONAL****

There is no single right answer. The text names luxury, trade and sharing in her sins in 18:3–4, and each person can ask what has shaped them. The call in 18:4 is addressed to “my people,” so it comes from a God who claims them. Nobody has to share more than they choose, and a quiet moment of prayer is enough.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 18:3–4. What does the voice call those in Babylon, and what does it say they should avoid?

- 10 The Lamb's wife has made herself ready, and fine linen was given to her; those invited to the wedding supper are called blessed (19:7–9). What does it mean for you that readiness is both given and lived? (if time) **PERSONAL****

There is no single right answer. The text says that “his wife has made herself ready” (19:7) and also that “It was given to her” (19:8) to wear bright, pure linen. The fine linen is “the righteous acts of the saints.” People can take either phrase as a starting place for prayer. The wedding supper is an open invitation that the text says is blessed, and each person can answer it in their own way. Nobody has to say more than they wish.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 19:7–9. What was given to the bride, and what is the linen?

NOTES

Reflection questions

- 1 Write your own Hallelujah. What would you praise God for today (19:1–6)?**

This question asks each person to write a short Hallelujah of their own, using 19:1–6 as the pattern. Give a few quiet minutes. Invite people to read theirs aloud if they wish, and let anyone keep theirs private.

- 2** Where are you tempted to envy the people who profit from Babylon? What does 18:17 say about their riches?

This question asks the group to be honest about envy toward people who gain from the world's systems. It is a private matter, so invite and do not require sharing. Lead gently to 18:17, where such riches are gone in an hour.

- 3** How does the picture of the Rider shape what you expect from Jesus when He comes?

This question asks people to look at the Rider in 19:11–16 and name what it tells them about Jesus. Some will feel fear and some will feel comfort. Welcome both, and invite people to write what they expect from Him. Nobody has to share the answer.

ANSWER KEY

Recall practice

- 1** Memory verse 19:6: "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, ____!" — the missing word?

A reigns

Revelation 19:6: Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns!

- 3** What does a voice from heaven tell God's people about Babylon (18:4)?

B Come out of her

Revelation 18:4: Come out of her, my people, that you have no participation in her sins.

- 5** Memory verse

Revelation 19:6, printed on page 33.

- 2** What is said of God's judgments in 16:7?

A True and righteous

Revelation 16:7: true and righteous are your judgments.

- 4** Which name is on the Rider's garment and thigh (19:16)?

C KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS

Revelation 19:16: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

LEADER'S NOTES

Care note · 17–18. Babylon is pictured as a woman, but the image judges a city's violence and greed (18:24), not women. Read 17:16 with care where anyone has known abuse.

Judgment and All Things New

GROUP LEADER
NOTES

Gather: If you could ask God to fix one thing in the world, what would it be? What does that wish tell you about what you hope for? Pass if this is tender today.

Open: This final session carries the most weight, so give it unhurried time and leave room for personal response. Start with the picture of God's dwelling with people (21:3), because everything in the book has been moving toward it. Some in the room may be grieving. Let 21:4 be read slowly, and do not rush anyone toward comfort.

The thousand years (20:1–6) are read in three main ways. Premillennial readers see a future reign of Christ on earth before the final judgment. Amillennial readers see the thousand years as the present age, with Christ reigning from heaven. Postmillennial readers expect the gospel to bring a golden age before Christ returns. Faithful Christians hold each. Report them without choosing, and notice what they share: Christ wins, Satan is judged, and the dead are raised.

Judgment 'according to their works' (20:12–13) sits beside the book of life (20:15). The book belongs to the Lamb who was killed (13:8; 21:27), and those who overcame did so by the Lamb's blood (12:11; 5:9). Read the verses together. Traditions explain the link differently: many Protestant readers see works as the evidence of a faith the Lamb's blood has made alive, while Catholic and Orthodox readers speak of faith working through love, with works as the fruit of grace. All of them rest salvation on the Lamb (5:9; 12:11), and the group does not need to settle the wording. Stay with the text for the lists in 21:8 and 22:15 and do not use them to judge anyone in the room. Traditions read them as a description of those who finally refuse God, as a sober call for every reader to examine their life, or both. Always read them beside the open invitation of 21:6–7 and 22:17 and the Lamb's book of life (21:27).

Anyone who is afraid they are not saved should be pointed to the invitation: 'He who is thirsty, let him come.' Treat 22:18–19 as a solemn warning about changing the book's message and not as a trap for the sincere. 'Coming soon' (22:7, 12, 20) has been understood in several ways, including near in expectation, sudden when it comes, or certain and swift. State this and keep the main point, that Jesus will come and that His people can wait with trust. In 22:17 many readers hear 'Come' from the Spirit and the bride as a prayer for Jesus to come, as in 22:20, and others as an invitation; the text supports both.

Old Testament echoes: The new heaven and new earth (21:1) echo Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22; God dwelling with people (21:3) fulfills Leviticus 26:11–12 and Ezekiel 37:27; no more tears (21:4) echoes Isaiah 25:8; the river and tree of life (22:1–2) echo Genesis 2 and Ezekiel 47; the bride city echoes Isaiah 54 and 62; Gog and Magog (20:8) echo Ezekiel 38–39; the warning in 22:18–19 echoes Deuteronomy 4:2 and 12:32; 'he who is thirsty' echoes Isaiah 55:1.

History: The first readers lived in cities that promised glory through Rome. John's final vision sets a very different city against Rome's, one with open gates, no temple, and a throne shared with the Lamb. The ending speaks to the oldest question of the book, who really reigns.

Close in prayer: Thank God for the promise that He will dwell with His people and wipe away every tear, and pray 'Come, Lord Jesus' together.

SIXTY MINUTES drawn to scale

5	10	10	15	12	8
Gather	Read together	Observe	Interpret	Apply	Close in prayer

ANSWER GUIDE

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

- 1** Read Revelation 21:1–8 aloud, then 22:1–5 and 22:17–21. What does God do for His people, and how does the book end?

God makes His home with people. John hears that “God’s dwelling is with people” (21:3), and that “He will wipe away every tear from their eyes” (21:4). The One on the throne says “I am making all things new” (21:5). In 22:1–5 a river and the tree of life are in the city, and His servants see His face. The book ends with the cry “Come” (22:17), the words “I am coming soon” (22:20), and the prayer “Yes, come, Lord Jesus,” followed by grace for all the saints.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 21:3–4. What will God do for His people?

OBSERVE

- 2** What happens to Satan, to death and Hades, and to those not written in the book of life in 20:7–15?

In 20:7–10 Satan is released and gathers the nations. Fire comes down from God, and the devil is thrown into the lake of fire, where with the beast and false prophet “They will be tormented day and night forever and ever” (20:10). In 20:14 “Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire,” the second death. In 20:15 anyone “not found written in the book of life” is cast in. The text states this soberly, without inviting speculation, and sets it beside the free offer of water to the thirsty in 21:6.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 20:14–15. What happens to death and Hades, and who is cast in at the end?

- 3** What does God promise in 21:3–5, and what does the new Jerusalem lack (21:22–25) and contain (22:1–5)?

God promises that He will live with people, that they will be His people, and that He will wipe away every tear. Death, mourning, crying and pain are gone. The city has no temple: “I saw no temple in it” (21:22), because the Lord God and the Lamb are its temple. Its gates “will in no way be shut by day” (21:25). It contains the river of water of life and the tree of life, whose leaves are “for the healing of the nations” (22:2). In 22:3 “There will be no curse any more,” and His servants will see His face.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 22:1–5. What flows from the throne, and what grows beside the river?

4 What invitations and promises appear in 21:6–7 and 22:16–21?

In 21:6 the Lord says “I will give freely to him who is thirsty” from the spring of the water of life. In 21:7 He promises “I will be his God, and he will be my son” to the one who overcomes. In 22:16 Jesus calls Himself “the Bright and Morning Star.” In 22:17 the Spirit and the bride say Come (read as a prayer to Jesus or as an invitation, and the text supports both), and anyone who is thirsty may come and take the water freely. In 22:18–19 there is a solemn warning about adding to or taking away from the words of the book. In 22:20 Jesus says “Yes, I am coming soon.”

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 22:17. Who is invited to come, and what are they offered?

INTERPRET

5 Read 20:1–6. What does the text say plainly (who is bound, who reigns, what has no power over them), and what does it leave open (when, where, what the thousand years means)?

Plainly: an angel binds “the dragon, the old serpent, who is the devil and Satan” (20:2) for “a thousand years”; those beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and those who refused the beast “lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years” (20:4); and over those who share in the first resurrection “the second death has no power” (20:6), for they will be priests of God and of Christ. Left open: when this happens, whether the reign is on earth or in heaven, and whether the thousand years is literal or symbolic. Premillennial, amillennial and postmillennial readers answer these differently, and the text supports more than one reading. The group does not need to settle it.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 20:4–6. What happens to those who reign with Christ, and what has no power over them?

6 People are judged ‘according to their works’ (20:12), yet only those written in the book of life are saved (20:15). How do 13:8, 21:27 and 12:11 help us hold these together?

The text does speak of works. In 20:12 the dead are judged “according to their works,” and in 20:15 anyone not found in the book of life is cast into the lake of fire. In 13:8 the book belongs to the Lamb, and in 21:27 it is “the Lamb’s book of life.” In 12:11 the people of God overcame “because of the Lamb’s blood” and the word of their testimony. Traditions explain the connection between works and grace in different ways, and the text puts the two side by side. The invitation of 22:17 stays open to all who are thirsty.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 20:12, 20:15 and 21:27. Whose book is the book of life?

- 7 The new Jerusalem is a city and a bride, with a river and the tree of life (21:1–22:5). What do these images say about what God finally intends, and how does this answer the troubles of the whole book?**

The city is a bride (21:2) and a place where God lives among people. It has a river and a tree that heals the nations, no curse, and no night. Readers differ on how literally to take the images, and the group can hold them as pictures of what the text says God intends. God finally dwells with His people and removes tears, death, mourning and pain. These answer the book's troubles of persecution, mourning and the rule of beasts and Babylon. The throne in the city belongs to God and the Lamb.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 21:3–4. Which troubles are named as passed away?

- 8 Jesus says 'I am coming soon' (22:7, 12, 20). What does the book tell the reader to do while waiting? Look at 22:7, 17 and 20. (if time)**

The Spirit and the bride say "Come" (22:17) (read as a prayer to Jesus or as an invitation, and the text supports both), and anyone who is thirsty may come and take the water freely. In 22:7 Jesus says "I am coming soon" and gives a blessing to the one "who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." Readers have taken coming soon as near in expectation, as sudden when it comes, or as certain and swift. Each reading holds that Jesus will come and that His people can wait with trust. The ending asks people to take the water now and to pray Yes, come, Lord Jesus.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 22:7. Who is called blessed? Then read 22:17 and 22:20. What do the Spirit and the bride say, and what does John pray?

APPLY (PRINTED ON THE REFLECTION PAGE)

- 9 Which promise of 21:3–5 do you most need to hear today, and why? PERSONAL**

There is no single right answer. The promises in 21:3–5 include God's presence, tears wiped away, the end of death, mourning, crying and pain, and all things made new. Each person may need one of them more than the others on a given day. Nobody has to explain their choice or say more than they wish.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 21:3–5. Which words does God speak about tears and pain?

- 10 In 22:17 the thirsty are told, 'let him come.' Who in your life could use that invitation, and how could you extend it this week? (if time) PERSONAL**

There is no single right answer. The text says that "He who is thirsty, let him come" (22:17), and it offers the water of life freely. Some people may come to mind, and some may not. A kind word, a prayer or an invitation to a meal can all echo the Come. Nobody has to name anyone or share a plan.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 22:17. Who may come, and how is the water offered?

NOTES

Reflection questions

- 1 What are you most looking forward to in the new heaven and new earth?
This question asks each person to name one hope of the new heaven and new earth and let it rest. Use 21:1–5 and 22:1–5 as a source of images. Invite sharing and accept silence.
- 2 How has your picture of this book changed since the first session? What fear has been replaced by what hope?
This question asks people to look back over the eight sessions and notice what has shifted. It is a private reflection, so invite and do not require sharing. Let it close with thanks for the hope the book gives.
- 3 Write a short prayer that begins with 'Come, Lord Jesus' and ends with how you want to live, trusting Him.
This question asks each person to write a short prayer that starts with Come, Lord Jesus and ends with how they want to live, trusting Him. Give a few quiet minutes. Invite people to read theirs if they wish and keep it private if they prefer.

ANSWER KEY

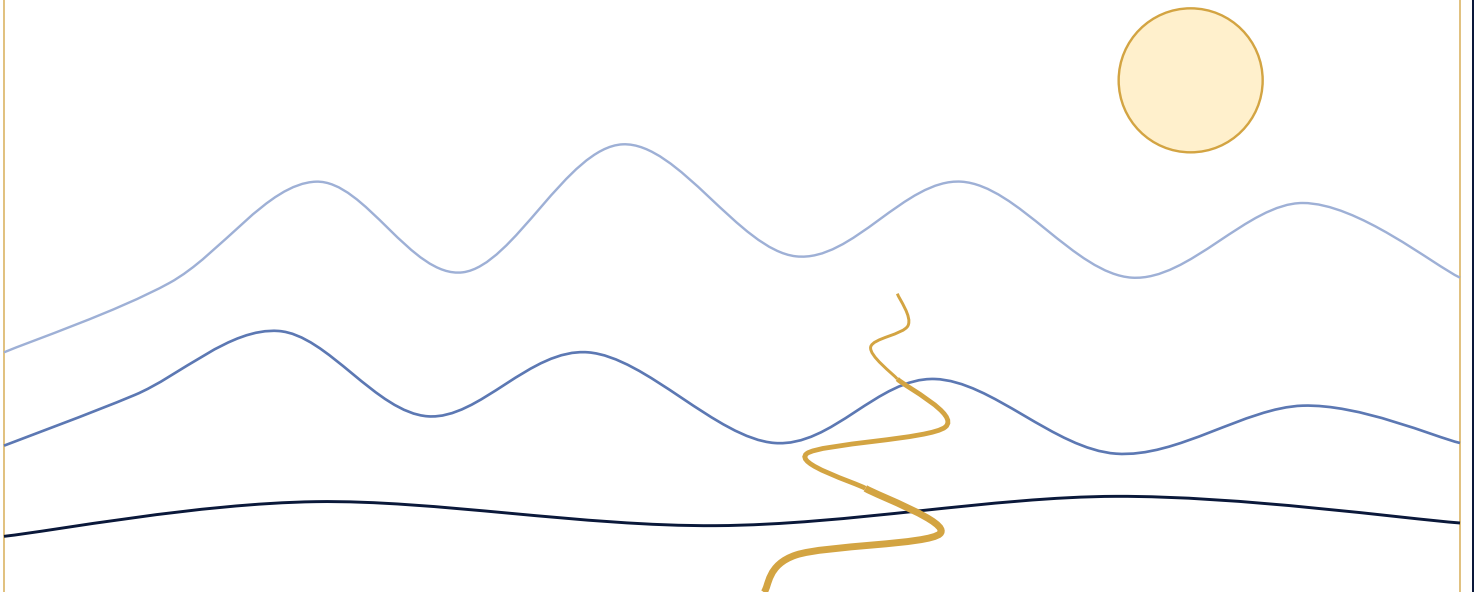
Recall practice

- 1 Memory verse 21:3–4: "Behold, God's dwelling is with people; and he will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every ____ from their eyes." — the missing word?
B tear
Revelation 21:3–4: Behold, God's dwelling is with people; and he will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes.
- 2 What does John not see in the new Jerusalem (21:22)?
B A temple
Revelation 21:22: I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.
- 3 According to 21:27, whose book of life is it?
C The Lamb's
Revelation 21:27: only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life. The invitation to the thirsty (22:17) stays open.
- 4 Who may take the water of life freely (22:17)?
D Whoever is thirsty and desires it
Revelation 22:17: He who is thirsty, let him come. He who desires, let him take the water of life freely.
- 5 Memory verse
Revelation 21:3–4, printed on page 37.

PART FOUR

The Book of Revelation

The complete text in the World English Bible, arranged by session.



WORLD ENGLISH BIBLE

The Book of Revelation

The complete text, arranged by session. Verse numbers are small and raised; each session's reading begins with a tinted heading.

SESSION 1 READING

Revelation 1

Jesus Unveiled · session on page 9

REVELATION 1

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

¹This is the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things which must happen soon, which he sent and made known by his angel to his servant, John, ²who testified to God's word and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, about everything that he saw. ³Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written in it, for the time is near. ⁴John, to the seven assemblies that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from God, who is and who was and who is to come; and from the seven Spirits who are before his throne; ⁵and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us, and washed us from our sins by his blood—⁶and he made us to be a Kingdom, priests to his God and Father—to him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. ⁷Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, including those who pierced him. All the tribes of the earth will mourn over 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." ⁹I John, your brother and partner with you in the oppression, Kingdom, and perseverance in Christ Jesus, was on the isle that is called Patmos because of God's Word and the testimony of Jesus Christ. ¹⁰I was in the Spirit

on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, like a trumpet ¹¹saying, "What you see, write in a book and send to the seven assemblies: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and to Laodicea." ¹²I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. Having turned, I saw seven golden lamp stands. ¹³And among the lamp stands was one like a son of man, clothed with a robe reaching down to his feet, and with a golden sash around his chest. ¹⁴His head and his hair were white as white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire. ¹⁵His feet were like burnished brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace. His voice was like the voice of many waters. ¹⁶He had seven stars in his right hand. Out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining at its brightest. ¹⁷When I saw him, I fell at his feet like a dead man. He laid his right hand on me, saying, "Don't be afraid. I am the first and the last, ¹⁸and the Living one. I was dead, and behold, I am alive forever and ever. Amen. I have the keys of Death and of Hades. ¹⁹Write therefore the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will happen hereafter. ²⁰The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lamp stands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven assemblies. The seven lamp stands are seven assemblies.

SESSION 2 READING

Revelation 2–3 Jesus Speaks to His Churches · session on page 13REVELATION **2**

Letters to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, and Thyatira

¹“To the angel of the assembly in Ephesus write: “He who holds the seven stars in his right hand, he who walks among the seven golden lamp stands says these things: ²“I know your works, and your toil and perseverance, and that you can’t tolerate evil men, and have tested those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and found them false. ³You have perseverance and have endured for my name’s sake, and have not grown weary. ⁴But I have this against you, that you left your first love. ⁵Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent and do the first works; or else I am coming to you swiftly, and will move your lamp stand out of its place, unless you repent. ⁶But this you have, that you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. ⁷He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of my God. ⁸“To the angel of the assembly in Smyrna write: “The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life says these things: ⁹“I know your works, oppression, and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews, and they are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰Don’t be afraid of the things which you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested; and you will have oppression for ten days. Be faithful to death, and I will give you the crown of life. ¹¹He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies. He who overcomes won’t be harmed by the second death. ¹²“To the angel of the assembly in Pergamum write: “He who has the sharp two-edged sword says these things: ¹³“I know your works and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. You hold firmly to my name, and didn’t deny my faith in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among

you, where Satan dwells. ¹⁴But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to throw a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. ¹⁵So also you likewise have some who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. ¹⁶Repent therefore, or else I am coming to you quickly and I will make war against them with the sword of my mouth. ¹⁷He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies. To him who overcomes, to him I will give of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows but he who receives it. ¹⁸“To the angel of the assembly in Thyatira write: “The Son of God, who has his eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet are like burnished brass, says these things: ¹⁹“I know your works, your love, faith, service, patient endurance, and that your last works are more than the first. ²⁰But I have this against you, that you tolerate your woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. She teaches and seduces my servants to commit sexual immorality and to eat things sacrificed to idols. ²¹I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality. ²²Behold, I will throw her and those who commit adultery with her into a bed of great oppression, unless they repent of her works. ²³I will kill her children with Death, and all the assemblies will know that I am he who searches the minds and hearts. I will give to each one of you according to your deeds. ²⁴But to you I say, to the rest who are in Thyatira—as many as don’t have this teaching, who don’t know what some call ‘the deep things of Satan’—to you I say, I am not putting any other burden on you. ²⁵Nevertheless, hold that which you have firmly until I come. ²⁶He who overcomes, and he who keeps my works to the end, to him I will give authority over the nations. ²⁷He will rule them with a rod of iron,

shattering them like clay pots, as I also have received of my Father; ²⁸and I will give him the morning star. ²⁹He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies.

REVELATION 3

Letters to Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea

¹“And to the angel of the assembly in Sardis write: “He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars says these things: “I know your works, that you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. ²Wake up and strengthen the things that remain, which you were about to throw away, for I have found no works of yours perfected before my God. ³Remember therefore how you have received and heard. Keep it and repent. If therefore you won’t watch, I will come as a thief, and you won’t know what hour I will come upon you. ⁴Nevertheless you have a few names in Sardis that didn’t defile their garments. They will walk with me in white, for they are worthy. ⁵He who overcomes will be arrayed in white garments, and I will in no way blot his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. ⁶He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies. ⁷“To the angel of the assembly in Philadelphia write: “He who is holy, he who is true, he who has the key of David, he who opens and no one can shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says these things: ⁸“I know your works (behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one can shut), that you have a little power, and kept my word, and didn’t deny my name. ⁹Behold, I make some of the synagogue of Satan, of those who say they are Jews, and they are not, but lie—behold, I will make them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that

I have loved you. ¹⁰Because you kept my command to endure, I also will keep you from the hour of testing which is to come on the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. ¹¹I am coming quickly! Hold firmly that which you have, so that no one takes your crown. ¹²He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he will go out from there no more. 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 out of heaven from my God, and my own new name. ¹³He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies. ¹⁴“To the angel of the assembly in Laodicea write: “The Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of God’s creation, says these things: ¹⁵“I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were cold or hot. ¹⁶So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will vomit you out of my mouth. ¹⁷Because you say, ‘I am rich, and have gotten riches, and have need of nothing,’ and don’t know that you are the wretched one, miserable, poor, blind, and naked; ¹⁸I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich; and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see. ¹⁹As many as I love, I reprove and chasten. Be zealous therefore, and repent. ²⁰Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with me. ²¹He who overcomes, I will give to him to sit down with me on my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne. ²²He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies.”

SESSION 3 READING

Revelation 4–5 The Throne and the Lamb · session on page 17**REVELATION 4**
The Throne Room of God

¹After these things I looked and saw a door opened in heaven; and the first voice that I heard, like a trumpet speaking with me, was one saying, “Come up here, and I will show you the things which must happen after this.” ²Immediately I was in the Spirit. Behold, there was a throne set in heaven, and one sitting on the throne ³that looked like a jasper stone and a sardius. There was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald to look at. ⁴Around the throne were twenty-four thrones. On the thrones were twenty-four elders sitting, dressed in white garments, with crowns of gold on their heads. ⁵Out of the throne proceed lightnings, sounds, and thunders. There were seven lamps of fire burning before his throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. ⁶Before the throne was something like a sea of glass, similar to crystal. In the middle of the throne, and around the throne were four living creatures full of eyes before and behind. ⁷The first creature was like a lion, the second creature like a calf, the third creature had a face like a man, and the fourth was like a flying eagle. ⁸The four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within. They have no rest day and night, saying, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come!” ⁹When the living creatures give glory, honor, and thanks to him who sits on the throne, to him who lives forever and ever, ¹⁰the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever, and throw their crowns before the throne, saying, ¹¹“Worthy are you, our Lord and God, the Holy One, to receive the glory, the honor, and the power, for you created all things, and because of your desire they existed and were created!”

REVELATION 5
The Lamb and the Scroll

¹I saw, in the right hand of him who sat on the throne, a book written inside and outside, sealed shut with seven seals. ²I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the book, and to break its seals?” ³No one in heaven above, or on the earth, or under the earth, was able to open the book or to look in it. ⁴Then I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look in it. ⁵One of the elders said to me, “Don’t weep. Behold, the Lion who is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome: he who opens the book and its seven seals.” ⁶I saw in the middle of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the middle of the elders, a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. ⁷Then he came, and he took it out of the right hand of him who sat on the throne. ⁸Now when he had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. ⁹They sang a new song, saying, “You are worthy to take the book and to open its seals, for you were killed, and bought us for God with your blood out of every tribe, language, people, and nation, ¹⁰and made us kings and priests to our God; and we will reign on the earth.” ¹¹I looked, and I heard something like a voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders. The number of them was ten thousands of ten thousands, and thousands of thousands, ¹²saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who has been killed to receive the power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing!” ¹³I heard every created thing which is in heaven, on the earth, under the earth, on

the sea, and everything in them, saying, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be the blessing, the honor, the glory, and the dominion, forever and

ever! Amen!” ¹⁴The four living creatures said, “Amen!” Then the elders fell down and worshiped.

SESSION 4 READING

Revelation 6–7 Who Can Stand? · session on page 21REVELATION **6**

The Seven Seals and the Four Horsemen

¹I saw that the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying, as with a voice of thunder, “Come and see!” ²Then a white horse appeared, and he who sat on it had a bow. A crown was given to him, and he came out conquering, and to conquer. ³When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, “Come!” ⁴Another came out, a red horse. To him who sat on it was given power to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another. There was given to him a great sword. ⁵When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, “Come and see!” And behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a balance in his hand. ⁶I heard a voice in the middle of the four living creatures saying, “A choenix of wheat for a denarius, and three choenix of barley for a denarius! Don’t damage the oil and the wine!” ⁷When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the fourth living creature saying, “Come and see!” ⁸And behold, a pale horse, and the name of he who sat on it was Death. Hades followed with him. Authority over one fourth of the earth, to kill with the sword, with famine, with death, and by the wild animals of the earth was given to him. ⁹When he opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been killed for the Word of God, and for the testimony of the Lamb which they had. ¹⁰They cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, Master, the holy and true, until you judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” ¹¹A long white robe was given to each of them. They were told that they should rest yet for a while, until their fellow servants and their brothers,

who would also be killed even as they were, should complete their course. ¹²I saw when he opened the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake. The sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became as blood. ¹³The stars of the sky fell to the earth, like a fig tree dropping its unripe figs when it is shaken by a great wind. ¹⁴The sky was removed like a scroll when it is rolled up. Every mountain and island was moved out of its place. ¹⁵The kings of the earth, the princes, the commanding officers, the rich, the strong, and every slave and free person, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains. ¹⁶They told the mountains and the rocks, “Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, ¹⁷for the great day of his wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”

REVELATION **7**

Who Can Stand? The Sealed and the Great Multitude

¹After this, I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, so that no wind would blow on the earth, or on the sea, or on any tree. ²I saw another angel ascend from the sunrise, having the seal of the living God. He cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to harm the earth and the sea, ³saying, “Don’t harm the earth, the sea, or the trees, until we have sealed the bondservants of our God on their foreheads!” ⁴I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred forty-four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the children of Israel: ⁵of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed, of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand, of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand, ⁶of the tribe of Asher twelve

thousand, of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand, of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand, ⁷of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand, of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand, of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand, ⁸of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand, of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand, and of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed.

⁹After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no man could count, out of every nation and of all tribes, peoples, and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, dressed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰They cried with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation be to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” ¹¹All the angels were standing around the throne, the elders, and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before his throne, and

worshiped God, ¹²saying, “Amen! Blessing, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honor, power, and might, be to our God forever and ever! Amen.” ¹³One of the elders answered, saying to me, “These who are arrayed in the white robes, who are they, and where did they come from?” ¹⁴I told him, “My lord, you know.” He said to me, “These are those who came out of the great suffering. They washed their robes and made them white in the Lamb’s blood. ¹⁵Therefore they are before the throne of God, and they serve him day and night in his temple. He who sits on the throne will spread his tabernacle over them. ¹⁶They will never be hungry or thirsty any more. The sun won’t beat on them, nor any heat; ¹⁷for the Lamb who is in the middle of the throne shepherds them and leads them to springs of life-giving waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

SESSION 5 READING

Revelation 8–11 Warnings and Witness · session on page 25REVELATION **8**

The Seventh Seal and the First Trumpets

¹When he opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. ²I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. ³Another angel came and stood over the altar, having a golden censer. Much incense was given to him, that he should add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne. ⁴The smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel’s hand. ⁵The angel took the censer, and he filled it with the fire of the altar, then threw it on the earth. Thunders, sounds, lightnings, and an earthquake followed. ⁶The seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. ⁷The first sounded, and there followed hail and fire, mixed with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. One third of the earth was burned up, and one third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up. ⁸The second angel sounded, and something like a great burning mountain was thrown

into the sea. One third of the sea became blood, ⁹and one third of the living creatures which were in the sea died. One third of the ships were destroyed.

¹⁰The third angel sounded, and a great star fell from the sky, burning like a torch, and it fell on one third of the rivers, and on the springs of water. ¹¹The name of the star is “Wormwood.” One third of the waters became wormwood. Many people died from the waters, because they were made bitter. ¹²The fourth angel sounded, and one third of the sun was struck, and one third of the moon, and one third of the stars, so that one third of them would be darkened; and the day wouldn’t shine for one third of it, and the night in the same way. ¹³I saw, and I heard an eagle, flying in mid heaven, saying with a loud voice, “Woe! Woe! Woe to those who dwell on the earth, because of the other blasts of the trumpets of the three angels, who are yet to sound!”

REVELATION 9

The Trumpet Woes and Hardened Hearts

¹The fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from the sky which had fallen to the earth. The key to the pit of the abyss was given to him. ²He opened the pit of the abyss, and smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke from a burning furnace. The sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke from the pit. ³Then out of the smoke came locusts on the earth, and power was given to them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. ⁴They were told that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only those people who don't have God's seal on their foreheads. ⁵They were given power, not to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a person. ⁶In those days people will seek death, and will in no way find it. They will desire to die, and death will flee from them. ⁷The shapes of the locusts were like horses prepared for war. On their heads were something like golden crowns, and their faces were like people's faces. ⁸They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like those of lions. ⁹They had breastplates like breastplates of iron. The sound of their wings was like the sound of many chariots and horses rushing to war. ¹⁰They have tails like those of scorpions, with stingers. In their tails they have power to harm men for five months. ¹¹They have over them as king the angel of the abyss. His name in Hebrew is "Abaddon", but in Greek, he has the name "Apollyon". ¹²The first woe is past. Behold, there are still two woes coming after this. ¹³The sixth angel sounded. I heard a voice from the horns of the golden altar which is before God, ¹⁴saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Free the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates!" ¹⁵The four angels were freed who had been prepared for that hour and day and month and year, so that they might kill one third of mankind. ¹⁶The number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred million. I heard the number of them. ¹⁷Thus I saw the horses in the vision and those who sat on them, having breastplates of

fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the horses' heads resembled lions' heads. Out of their mouths proceed fire, smoke, and sulfur. ¹⁸By these three plagues, one third of mankind was killed: by the fire, the smoke, and the sulfur, which proceeded out of their mouths. ¹⁹For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails. For their tails are like serpents, and have heads; and with them they harm. ²⁰The rest of mankind, who were not killed with these plagues, didn't repent of the works of their hands, that they wouldn't worship demons, and the idols of gold, and of silver, and of brass, and of stone, and of wood, which can't see, hear, or walk. ²¹They didn't repent of their murders, their sorceries, their sexual immorality, or their thefts.

REVELATION 10

The Mighty Angel and the Little Scroll

¹I saw a mighty angel coming down out of the sky, clothed with a cloud. A rainbow was on his head. His face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. ²He had in his hand a little open book. He set his right foot on the sea, and his left on the land. ³He cried with a loud voice, as a lion roars. When he cried, the seven thunders uttered their voices. ⁴When the seven thunders sounded, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from the sky saying, "Seal up the things which the seven thunders said, and don't write them." ⁵The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up his right hand to the sky ⁶and swore by him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there will no longer be delay, ⁷but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished, as he declared to his servants the prophets. ⁸The voice which I heard from heaven, again speaking with me, said, "Go, take the book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the land." ⁹I went to the angel, telling him to give me the little book. He said to me, "Take it and eat it. It will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be as sweet as honey." ¹⁰I took the

little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it. It was as sweet as honey in my mouth. When I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter. ¹¹They told me, "You must prophesy again over many peoples, nations, languages, and kings."

REVELATION 11

The Two Witnesses and the Seventh Trumpet

¹A reed like a rod was given to me. Someone said, "Rise and measure God's temple, and the altar, and those who worship in it. ²Leave out the court which is outside of the temple, and don't measure it, for it has been given to the nations. They will tread the holy city under foot for forty-two months. ³I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." ⁴These are the two olive trees and the two lamp stands, standing before the Lord of the earth. ⁵If anyone desires to harm them, fire proceeds out of their mouth and devours their enemies. If anyone desires to harm them, he must be killed in this way. ⁶These have the power to shut up the sky, that it may not rain during the days of their prophecy. They have power over the waters, to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every plague, as often as they desire. ⁷When they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them, and kill them. ⁸Their dead bodies will be in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. ⁹From among the peoples, tribes, languages, and nations, people will look at their dead bodies for three and a half days, and will not allow

their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb. ¹⁰Those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, and they will be glad. They will give gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. ¹¹After the three and a half days, the breath of life from God entered into them, and they stood on their feet. Great fear fell on those who saw them. ¹²I heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here!" They went up into heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them. ¹³In that day 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. ¹⁴The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe comes quickly. ¹⁵The seventh angel sounded, and great voices in heaven followed, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. He will reign forever and ever!" ¹⁶The twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God's throne, fell on their faces and worshiped God, ¹⁷saying: "We give you thanks, Lord God, the Almighty, the one who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and reigned. ¹⁸The nations were angry, and your wrath came, as did the time for the dead to be judged, and to give your bondservants the prophets, their reward, as well as to the saints and those who fear your name, to the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth." ¹⁹God's temple that is in heaven was opened, and the ark of the Lord's covenant was seen in his temple. Lightnings, sounds, thunders, an earthquake, and great hail followed.

SESSION 6 READING

Revelation 12–14 The Conflict Behind the Conflict · session on page 29

REVELATION 12

The Woman, the Dragon, and the War in Heaven

¹A great sign was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on

her head a crown of twelve stars. ²She was with child. She cried out in pain, laboring to give birth. ³Another sign was seen in heaven. Behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and

on his heads seven crowns. ⁴His tail drew one third of the stars of the sky, and threw them to the earth. The dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child. ⁵She gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron. Her child was caught up to God and to his throne. ⁶The woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that there they may nourish her one thousand two hundred sixty days. ⁷There was war in the sky. Michael and his angels made war on the dragon. The dragon and his angels made war. ⁸They didn't prevail. No place was found for them any more in heaven. ⁹The great dragon was thrown down, the old serpent, he 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. ¹⁰I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, the power, and the Kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ has come; for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night. ¹¹They overcame him because of the Lamb's blood, and because of the word of their testimony. They didn't love their life, even to death. ¹²Therefore rejoice, heavens, and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and to the sea, because the devil has gone down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has but a short time." ¹³When the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child. ¹⁴Two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, so that she might be nourished for a time, times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. ¹⁵The serpent spewed water out of his mouth after the woman like a river, that he might cause her to be carried away by the stream. ¹⁶The earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the river which the dragon spewed out of his mouth. ¹⁷The dragon grew angry with the woman, and went away to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep God's commandments and hold Jesus' testimony.

REVELATION 13

The Two Beasts and the Mark

¹Then I stood on the sand of the sea. I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads. On his horns were ten crowns, and on his heads, blasphemous names. ²The beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. ³One of his heads looked like it had been wounded fatally. His fatal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled at the beast. ⁴They worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" ⁵A mouth speaking great things and blasphemy was given to him. Authority to make war for forty-two months was given to him. ⁶He opened his mouth for blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, his dwelling, and those who dwell in heaven. ⁷It was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. Authority over every tribe, people, language, and nation was given to him. ⁸All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been killed. ⁹If anyone has an ear, let him hear. ¹⁰If anyone is to go into captivity, he will go into captivity. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, he must be killed. Here is the endurance and the faith of the saints. ¹¹I saw another beast coming up out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. ¹²He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. He makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. ¹³He performs great signs, even making fire come down out of the sky to the earth in the sight of people. ¹⁴He deceives my own people who dwell on the earth because of the signs he was granted to do in front of the beast, saying to those who dwell on the earth that they should make an image to the beast who had the sword wound and lived. ¹⁵It was given to him to give breath to the

image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause as many as wouldn't worship the image of the beast to be killed. ¹⁶He causes all, the small and the great, the rich and the poor, and the free and the slave, to be given marks on their right hands or on their foreheads; ¹⁷and that no one would be able to buy or to sell unless he has that mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name. ¹⁸Here is wisdom. He who has understanding, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. His number is six hundred sixty-six.

REVELATION 14

The Lamb and the 144,000

¹I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with him a number, one hundred forty-four thousand, having his name and the name of his Father written on their foreheads. ²I heard a sound from heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of a great thunder. The sound which I heard was like that of harpists playing on their harps. ³They sing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the one hundred forty-four thousand, those who had been redeemed out of the earth. ⁴These are those who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are those who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These were redeemed by Jesus from among men, the first fruits to God and to the Lamb. ⁵In their mouth was found no lie, for they are blameless. ⁶I saw an angel flying in mid heaven, having an eternal Good News to proclaim to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people. ⁷He said with a loud voice, “Fear the Lord, and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and the springs of waters!” ⁸Another, a second angel, followed, saying, “Babylon the great has fallen, which has made

all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her sexual immorality.” ⁹Another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a great voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of his anger. He will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. They have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name. ¹²Here is the perseverance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” ¹³I heard a voice from heaven saying, “Write, ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, for their works follow with them.” ¹⁴I looked, and saw a white cloud, and on the cloud one sitting like a son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. ¹⁵Another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, “Send your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come; for the harvest of the earth is ripe!” ¹⁶He who sat on the cloud thrust his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped. ¹⁷Another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven. He also had a sharp sickle. ¹⁸Another angel came out from the altar, he who has power over fire, and he called with a great voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, “Send your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for the earth's grapes are fully ripe!” ¹⁹The angel thrust his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vintage of the earth and threw it into the great wine press of the wrath of God. ²⁰The wine press was trodden outside of the city, and blood came out of the wine press, up to the bridles of the horses, as far as one thousand six hundred stadia.

SESSION 7 READING

Revelation 15–19

Babylon Falls, the King Returns · session on page 33

REVELATION 15

Preparing the Seven Last Plagues

¹I saw another great and marvelous sign in the sky: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them God's wrath is finished. ²I saw something like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who overcame the beast, his image, and the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. ³They sang the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are your works, Lord God, the Almighty! Righteous and true are your ways, you King of the nations. ⁴Who wouldn't fear you, Lord, and glorify your name? For you only are holy. For all the nations will come and worship before you. For your righteous acts have been revealed." ⁵After these things I looked, and the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. ⁶The seven angels who had the seven plagues came out, clothed with pure, bright linen, and wearing golden sashes around their chests. ⁷One of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever. ⁸The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power. No one was able to enter into the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels would be finished.

REVELATION 16

The Seven Bowls of God's Wrath

¹I heard a loud voice out of the temple, saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out the seven bowls of the wrath of God on the earth!" ²The first went, and poured out his bowl into the earth, and it became a harmful and painful sore on the people who had the mark of the beast, and who worshiped his image. ³The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became blood as of a dead man. Every living thing in the sea died. ⁴The third poured out his bowl

into the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. ⁵I heard the angel of the waters saying, "You are righteous, who are and who were, O Holy One, because you have judged these things. ⁶For they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink. They deserve this." ⁷I heard the altar saying, "Yes, Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are your judgments." ⁸The fourth poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was given to him to scorch men with fire. ⁹People were scorched with great heat, and people blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues. They didn't repent and give him glory. ¹⁰The fifth poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was darkened. They gnawed their tongues because of the pain, ¹¹and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores. They still didn't repent of their works. ¹²The sixth poured out his bowl on the great river, the Euphrates. Its water was dried up, that the way might be prepared for the kings that come from the sunrise. ¹³I 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, something like frogs; ¹⁴for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole inhabited earth, to gather them together for the war of that great day of God the Almighty. ¹⁵"Behold, I come like a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his clothes, so that he doesn't walk naked, and they see his shame." ¹⁶He gathered them together into the place which is called in Hebrew, "Harmagedon". ¹⁷The seventh poured out his bowl into the air. A loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, "It is done!" ¹⁸There were lightnings, sounds, and thunders; and there was a great earthquake such as has not happened since there were men on the earth—so great an earthquake and so mighty. ¹⁹The great city

was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. Babylon the great was remembered in the sight of God, to give to her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. ²⁰Every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. ²¹Great hailstones, about the weight of a talent, came down out of the sky on people. People blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, for this plague was exceedingly severe.

REVELATION 17

The Great Prostitute and the Beast

¹One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, “Come here. I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who sits on many waters, ²with whom the kings of the earth committed sexual immorality. Those who dwell in the earth were made drunken with the wine of her sexual immorality.” ³He carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness. I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet-colored beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns. ⁴The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of the sexual immorality of the earth. ⁵And on her forehead a name was written, “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.” ⁶I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. When I saw her, I wondered with great amazement. ⁷The angel said to me, “Why do you wonder? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. ⁸The beast that you saw was, and is not; and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go into destruction. Those who dwell on the earth and whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world will marvel when they see that the beast was, and is not, and shall be present. ⁹Here is the mind that has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. ¹⁰They are seven kings. Five have fallen,

the one is, and the other has not yet come. When he comes, he must continue a little while. ¹¹The beast that was, and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is of the seven; and he goes to destruction. ¹²The ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour. ¹³These have one mind, and they give their power and authority to the beast. ¹⁴These will war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with him are called, chosen, and faithful.” ¹⁵He said to me, “The waters which you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages. ¹⁶The ten horns which you saw, they and the beast will hate the prostitute, will make her desolate, will strip her naked, will eat her flesh, and will burn her utterly with fire. ¹⁷For God has put in their hearts to do what he has in mind, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God should be accomplished. ¹⁸The woman whom you saw is the great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.”

REVELATION 18

The Fall of Babylon

¹After these things, I saw another angel coming down out of the sky, having great authority. The earth was illuminated with his glory. ²He cried with a mighty voice, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, and she has become a habitation of demons, a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hated bird! ³For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her sexual immorality, the kings of the earth committed sexual immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth grew rich from the abundance of her luxury.” ⁴I heard another voice from heaven, saying, “Come out of her, my people, that you have no participation in her sins, and that you don’t receive of her plagues, ⁵for her sins have reached to the sky, and God has remembered her iniquities. ⁶Return to her just as she returned, and repay her double as she did, and according to her works. In the cup which she mixed, mix to her double. ⁷However much she glorified herself and

grew wanton, so much give her of torment and mourning. For she says in her heart, 'I sit a queen, and am no widow, and will in no way see mourning.'⁸ Therefore in one day her plagues will come: death, mourning, and famine; and she will be utterly burned with fire, for the Lord God who has judged her is strong.⁹ The kings of the earth who committed sexual immorality and lived wantonly with her will weep and wail over her, when they look at the smoke of her burning,¹⁰ standing far away for the fear of her torment, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For your judgment has come in one hour.'¹¹ The merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise any more:¹² merchandise of gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, fine linen, purple, silk, scarlet, all expensive wood, every vessel of ivory, every vessel made of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble;¹³ and cinnamon, incense, perfume, frankincense, wine, olive oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle, sheep, horses, chariots, and people's bodies and souls.¹⁴ The fruits which your soul lusted after have been lost to you. All things that were dainty and sumptuous have perished from you, and you will find them no more at all.¹⁵ The merchants of these things, who were made rich by her, will stand far away for the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning,¹⁶ saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, she who was dressed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls!'¹⁷ For in an hour such great riches are made desolate.' Every ship master, and everyone who sails anywhere, and mariners, and as many as gain their living by sea, stood far away,¹⁸ and cried out as they looked at the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What is like the great city?'¹⁹ They cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and mourning, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, in which all who had their ships in the sea were made rich by reason of her great wealth!' For she is made desolate in one hour.²⁰ "Rejoice over her, O heaven, you saints, apostles, and prophets, for God has judged your judgment on her."²¹ A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and cast it into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence will Babylon, the

great city, be thrown down, and will be found no more at all.²² The voice of harpists, minstrels, flute players, and trumpeters will be heard no more at all in you. No craftsman of whatever craft will be found any more at all in you. The sound of a mill will be heard no more at all in you.²³ The light of a lamp will shine no more at all in you. The voice of the bridegroom and of the bride will be heard no more at all in you, for your merchants were the princes of the earth; for with your sorcery all the nations were deceived.²⁴ In her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slain on the earth."

REVELATION 19

The Marriage Supper and the Return of the King

¹After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation, power, and glory belong to our God;² for his judgments are true and righteous. For he has judged the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her sexual immorality, and he has avenged the blood of his servants at her hand."³ A second said, "Hallelujah! Her smoke goes up forever and ever."⁴ The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne, saying, "Amen! Hallelujah!"⁵ A voice came from the throne, saying, "Give praise to our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, the small and the great!"⁶ I heard something like the voice of a great multitude, and like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of mighty thunders, saying, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns!"⁷ Let's rejoice and be exceedingly glad, and let's give the glory to him. For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his wife has made herself ready."⁸ It was given to her that she would array herself in bright, pure, fine linen, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.⁹ He said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb.'" He said to me, "These are true words of God."¹⁰ I fell down before his feet to worship him. He said to me, "Look! Don't do it! I am a fellow bondservant with you and with your brothers who hold the testimony

of Jesus. Worship God, for the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy.” ¹¹I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it is called Faithful and True. In righteousness he judges and makes war. ¹²His eyes are a flame of fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has names written and a name written which no one knows but he himself. ¹³He is clothed in a garment sprinkled with blood. His name is called “The Word of God.” ¹⁴The armies which are in heaven, clothed in white, pure, fine linen, followed him on white horses. ¹⁵Out of his mouth proceeds a sharp, double-edged sword that with it he should strike the nations. He will rule them with an iron rod. He treads the wine press of the fierceness of the wrath of God, the Almighty. ¹⁶He has on his garment and on his thigh a name written, “KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.” ¹⁷I saw an angel standing in the sun. He cried with a loud voice,

saying to all the birds that fly in the sky, “Come! Be gathered together to the great supper of God, ¹⁸that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, small and great.” ¹⁹I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him who sat on the horse and against his army. ²⁰The beast was taken, and with him the false prophet who worked the signs in his sight, with which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. ²¹The rest were killed with the sword of him who sat on the horse, the sword which came out of his mouth. So all the birds were filled with their flesh.

SESSION 8 READING

Revelation 20–22

Judgment and All Things New · session on page 37

REVELATION 20

The Thousand Years and the Final Judgment

¹I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. ²He seized the dragon, the old serpent, who is the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole inhabited earth, and bound him for a thousand years, ³and cast him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more until the thousand years were finished. After this, he must be freed for a short time. ⁴I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and such as didn’t worship the beast nor his image, and didn’t receive the mark on their forehead and on their hand. They lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ⁵The rest of the dead didn’t live until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. ⁶Blessed and holy is he who has part in

the first resurrection. Over these, the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with him one thousand years. ⁷And after the thousand years, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸and he will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to the war, whose number is as the sand of the sea. ⁹They went up over the width of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. Fire came down out of heaven from God and devoured them. ¹⁰The devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet are also. They will be tormented day and night forever and ever. ¹¹I saw a great white throne and him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the sky fled away. There was found no place for them. ¹²I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and they opened books. Another book was opened, which is the book of life.

The dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. ¹³The sea gave up the dead who were in it. Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them. They were judged, each one according to his works.

¹⁴Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵If anyone was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire.

REVELATION 21

A New Heaven and a New Earth

¹I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth have passed away, and the sea is no more. ²I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband. ³I heard a loud voice out of heaven saying, “Behold, God’s dwelling is with people; and he will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; neither will there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain any more. The first things have passed away.” ⁵He who sits on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” He said, “Write, for these words of God are faithful and true.” ⁶He said to me, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give freely to him who is thirsty from the spring of the water of life. ⁷He who overcomes, I will give him these things. I will be his God, and he will be my son. ⁸But for the cowardly, unbelieving, sinners, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their part is in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.” ⁹One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls which were loaded with the seven last plagues came, and he spoke with me, saying, “Come here. I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” ¹⁰He carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, ¹¹having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; ¹²having a great and high wall with twelve

gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. ¹³On the east were three gates, and on the north three gates, and on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. ¹⁴The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb.

¹⁵He who spoke with me had for a measure a golden reed to measure the city, its gates, and its walls.

¹⁶The city is square. Its length is as great as its width. He measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand twelve stadia. Its length, width, and height are equal.

¹⁷Its wall is one hundred forty-four cubits, by the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. ¹⁸The construction of its wall was jasper. The city was pure gold, like pure glass. ¹⁹The foundations of the city’s wall were adorned with all kinds of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, ²⁰the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. ²¹The twelve gates were twelve pearls. Each one of the gates was made of one pearl. The street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. ²²I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³The city has no need for the sun or moon to shine, for the very glory of God illuminated it and its lamp is the Lamb.

²⁴The nations will walk in its light. The kings of the earth bring the glory and honor of the nations into it. ²⁵Its gates will in no way be shut by day (for there will be no night there), ²⁶and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it so that they may enter. ²⁷There will in no way enter into it anything profane, or one who causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

REVELATION 22

The River of Life and the Final Invitation

¹He showed me a river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, ²in the middle of its street. On this side of

the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruits, yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. ³There will be no curse any more. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will serve him. ⁴They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵There will be no night, and they need no lamp light or sun light; for the Lord God will illuminate them. They will reign forever and ever. ⁶He said to me, “These words are faithful and true. The Lord God of the spirits of the prophets sent his angel to show to his bondservants the things which must happen soon.” ⁷“Behold, I am coming soon! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.” ⁸Now I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. When I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who had shown me these things. ⁹He said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow bondservant with you and with your brothers, the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.” ¹⁰He said to me, “Don’t seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. ¹¹He who acts unjustly, let him act unjustly still. He who is filthy, let him be filthy still. He who is righteous, let him do righteousness still. He who is holy, let him be

holy still.” ¹²“Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, to repay to each man according to his work. ¹³I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. ¹⁴Blessed are those who do his commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city. ¹⁵Outside are the dogs, the sorcerers, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood. ¹⁶I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify these things to you for the assemblies. I am the root and the offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.” ¹⁷The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” He who hears, let him say, “Come!” He who is thirsty, let him come. He who desires, let him take the water of life freely. ¹⁸I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book. ¹⁹If anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book. ²⁰He who testifies these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon.” Amen! Yes, come, Lord Jesus! ²¹The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with all the saints. Amen.

AFTER THE LAST SESSION

Eight verses to carry

One verse from each session. Read them aloud once a week and they will stay with you.

1 Don't be afraid. I am the first and the last, and the Living one. I was dead, and behold, I am alive forever and ever. Amen.

REVELATION 1:17–18

2 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with me.

REVELATION 3:20

3 Worthy is the Lamb who has been killed to receive the power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing!

REVELATION 5:12

4 The Lamb who is in the middle of the throne shepherds them and leads them to springs of life-giving waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

REVELATION 7:17

5 The kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. He will reign forever and ever!

REVELATION 11:15

6 They overcame him because of the Lamb's blood, and because of the word of their testimony. They didn't love their life, even to death.

REVELATION 12:11

7 Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns!

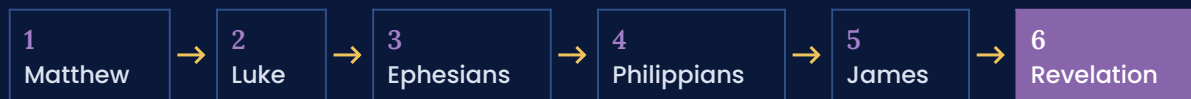
REVELATION 19:6

8 Behold, God's dwelling is with people; and he will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

REVELATION 21:3–4

WHAT COMES NEXT

Revelation is step 6 of 6 on the **Disciple** path.

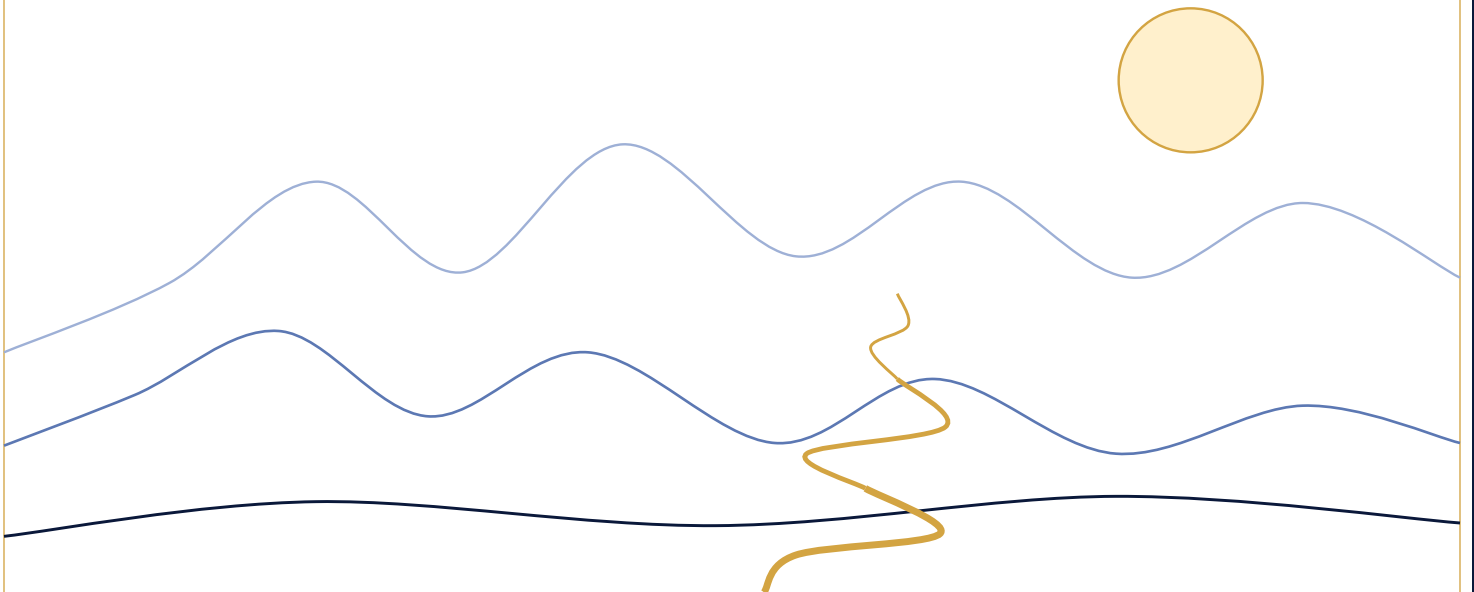


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PART FIVE

Take it with you

A worked example, a harder question for each session, a glossary, a Scripture index, and the pages that connect you to the people behind this study.



PART FIVE · BEFORE YOU BEGIN

What a good answer looks like

Most discussion questions do not have one right answer, but they do have good ones. Here is the sixth question of Session 1, a sample answer written the way a participant might write it, and the note a leader has beside it. Read all three once. That is what “doing the study” looks like.

- 6** John’s greeting names Jesus as ‘the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth’ (1:5). Why would believers under pressure need to hear these three titles first?

A SAMPLE ANSWER · WRITTEN IN THE MARGIN

John names Jesus three ways before anything frightening appears: “the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth” (1:5). Each title answers a pressure. A witness who stayed faithful answers the pressure to keep quiet. The firstborn of the dead answers the fear of dying. The ruler of the kings answers the feeling that someone else is in charge. Then John says He “loves us, and washed us from our sins by his blood.” So the question I am left with is which of the three I need to hear first this week.

WHY IT IS A GOOD ANSWER

It stays in the passage. It quotes the three titles exactly and the line about His love, with the verse.

It notices why the order matters. It sees that the titles come before the beasts and bowls, and says what each one answers.

It ends with the reader, not with a summary. “Which of the three I need to hear first” is the reader’s own question. It does not recap the verse.

THE LEADER’S NOTE FOR THE SAME QUESTION · PAGE 55

Each title speaks to pressure. The title “the faithful witness” (1:5) points to One who told the truth and held to it. The title “the firstborn of the dead” points to One who has already come through death. The title “the ruler of the kings of the earth” places Him above the powers that press on His people. John adds that He “loves us, and washed us from our sins by his blood.”

Getting the most from this guide

- **Write before you talk.** Two minutes of silent writing before the first question gives quieter people time to find their words.
- **Ask what the picture shows about Jesus.** Revelation is a book of images. Before asking when or who, ask what each scene shows about the Lamb and His people.
- **Hold the clear parts firmly and the debated parts gently.** Christ wins, evil is judged, God dwells with His people. The study notes where faithful readers differ.
- **Keep the one thing small.** The “One thing to live out” is meant to be done, not admired.

PART FIVE · FOR GROUPS THAT WANT MORE

Go deeper

One extra question for each session, for groups that have walked with Revelation before. Each comes with a leader's note. Leaders can use one in the Interpret or Apply minutes of the timed plan if the room has the energy. This section is for leaders.

Session 1 · Revelation 1:7

- "Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, including those who pierced him" (1:7). Which Old Testament voices does John join here?

LEADER'S NOTE

Daniel 7:13 and Zechariah 12:10 (see the leader notes). "All the tribes of the earth will mourn over him." Readers differ on whether that mourning is repentance or grief at judgment.

Session 2 · Revelation 3:7–13

- Jesus tells Philadelphia, "I have set before you an open door, which no one can shut," and says they have "a little power" (3:8). Why would a weak church need that promise?

LEADER'S NOTE

The door is His to open, so their small strength is not the limit. He adds, "I am coming quickly" and "Hold firmly that which you have" (3:11).

Session 3 · Revelation 5:8

- The elders hold "golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints" (5:8). Where do those prayers appear again?

LEADER'S NOTE

In 8:3–5 the prayers rise before God and then fire is thrown to the earth. The book treats the prayers of ordinary believers as part of how God acts.

Session 4 · Revelation 7:14–15

- ✚ The multitude “washed their robes and made them white in the Lamb’s blood” (7:14). What is surprising about that picture?

LEADER’S NOTE

Blood would stain, yet here it cleanses. Their standing comes from the Lamb: “Therefore they are before the throne of God” (7:15).

Session 5 · Revelation 10:8–11

- ✚ John eats the little book: “sweet as honey in my mouth,” then “my stomach was made bitter” (10:10). What might that say about receiving God’s word?

LEADER’S NOTE

The scene echoes Ezekiel 2:8–3:3. John is then told, “You must prophesy again” (10:11). The word is sweet to receive and can be costly to carry.

Session 6 · Revelation 12:1–6

- ✚ The dragon waits to devour the child, but “Her child was caught up to God and to his throne” (12:5). What story does John tell in one verse?

LEADER’S NOTE

Many readers see the Messiah’s birth and ascension compressed here (12:5 echoes Psalm 2:9). Readers differ on whether the woman pictures Israel, Mary, the church, or God’s people across time.

Session 7 · Revelation 16:15

- ✚ In the middle of the bowls Jesus speaks: “Behold, I come like a thief. Blessed is he who watches” (16:15). Why put a blessing here?

LEADER’S NOTE

It interrupts judgment with a call to readiness and echoes 3:3. It is one of seven blessings in the book (1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7, 14).

Session 8 · Revelation 22:1–2

- ✚ “The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations” (22:2). Where has the tree of life appeared before, and what does its return say?

LEADER’S NOTE

Genesis 2–3 and Ezekiel 47:12; it was also promised to the one who overcomes (2:7). The story that began in a garden ends in a city where the nations are healed.

PART FIVE · FOR LEADERS

Objectives and questions, aligned

Every session names what it is for. This table shows which discussion (D) and reflection (R) questions carry each objective, so a leader who is short on time can cut a question without cutting an aim.

D = discussion questions 1–10 (9 and 10 sit on the reflection page, under “Apply this week”); R = the three reflection questions on your own. A dash means no question asks that directly. A star means a partial fit: the question touches the objective without asking it outright. A leader who wants a dashed objective covered can raise it from the passage or the leader page. The recall practice on each fourth page serves most objectives by retrieval. Session 8’s first two objectives, the judgments of chapter 20 and the thousand years, have no reflection question of their own; the leader can raise them from 20:1–15. Session 1’s and Session 2’s third objectives and Session 5’s first have none either.

	LEARNING OBJECTIVE	DISCUSSION	REFLECTION
1	Say what the book calls itself and what it promises its readers (1:1–3)	D1, D2	R3
	Describe the risen Jesus in 1:13–16 and name two things the chapter says about who He is (1:17–18)	D4, D6, D8, D9, D10	R1, R2
	Say what the book’s three labels (revelation, prophecy, letter) tell us about how to read it (1:1–4)	D5, D7	—
2	Recognize the pattern that repeats in the seven letters	D2, D6	R1*
	Contrast what Jesus commends and corrects in Ephesus, Smyrna and Laodicea	D1, D3, D5, D7, D9	R2, R3
	Say what the promises to ‘him who overcomes’ offer	D8	—
3	Describe what John sees around the throne in chapter 4	D1, D2, D10	R1
	Explain why the Lamb alone can open the scroll (5:1–7)	D3, D5, D7	R2
	Compare the two songs of worship and what each praises	D4, D6, D8, D9	R3
4	List what happens as each of the first six seals is opened (6:1–17)	D1, D2, D3, D6	R2*
	Say what the sealing and the great multitude promise (7:1–17)	D4, D7, D8, D10	R1, R3
	Explain how chapter 7 answers the question in 6:17	D5	R1*
5	Explain how the trumpets echo the plagues of Egypt and what it means that they strike only a third	D3, D5, D6	—
	Describe the response of the world in 9:20–21 and 11:13 and what it shows about repentance	D4	R2*
	Say what the two witnesses and the seventh trumpet tell us about faithful witness	D1, D7, D8, D9, D10	R3
6	Trace the dragon’s fall in 12:7–12 and say how the saints overcome him	D1, D2, D5, D10	R2
	Contrast the beast’s mark with the Lamb’s name on His people	D3, D4, D6, D9	R1
	Say what 13:10 and 14:12 ask of the saints, and name one thing the text says plainly about 666 or the 144,000	D7, D8	R3

7	Describe the two songs and the Hallelujahs and what they teach about worship in the face of judgment	D1, D2, D4, D5	R1
	Describe what the text says Babylon does (17:1–6; 18:2–3, 13) and the reason given for ‘come out’ (18:4)	D3, D6, D7, D9	R2
8	Say who the Rider of 19:11–16 is and how His victory is won	D8	R3
	Describe the judgments of chapter 20 and say whose names are in the book of life and whose book it is (13:8; 21:27)	D2, D6	—
	Say what 20:1–6 states plainly and what it leaves open	D5	—
	Describe the new heaven, new earth and new Jerusalem, and say one way you could pass on the invitation of 22:17	D1, D3, D4, D7, D8, D9, D10	R1, R3

PART FIVE · WORDS REVELATION USES

Glossary

Short definitions of the words a first-time reader of Revelation is most likely to stumble on. Chapter and verse point to where Revelation uses them.

Abyss

A bottomless pit, the place of the forces of evil. Its angel is called “Abaddon” and “Apollyon” (9:11).

Alpha and Omega

The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. God says, “I am the Alpha and the Omega” (1:8); Jesus says the same (22:13).

Antichrist

The word is not in Revelation; it comes from 1 John 2:18–22. Revelation speaks of beasts and a false prophet (13; 19:20).

Babylon

The great city that seduces and oppresses (17–18), read as Rome, as every proud power like it, or as a final system.

Beast

The powers that make war on the saints and demand worship (13:1–18). Readers differ on whether they are past, future, or recurring.

Book of life

The Lamb’s record of those who belong to Him (13:8; 20:15; 21:27).

Elders

Twenty-four figures seated around the throne, crowned and in white (4:4). Readers differ on whom they represent.

Hades

The realm of the dead. Jesus holds “the keys of Death and of Hades” (1:18), and both end in the lake of fire (20:14).

Harmagedon

The gathering place of 16:16, often spelled Armageddon; the name is often linked with Megiddo.

Lake of fire

The place of final judgment, called “the second death” (20:14).

Lamb

John’s main name for Jesus, “a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain” (5:6), who conquers by His blood.

Lampstand

A stand for lamps. “The seven lamp stands are seven assemblies” (1:20).

Living creatures

Four beings around the throne, “full of eyes” (4:6), who worship day and night.

Mark of the beast

The sign of loyalty to the beast, without which no one can “buy or to sell” (13:17). It stands against the seal of God on His people (7:3).

New Jerusalem

The holy city coming down from God, “prepared like a bride” (21:2).

Overcome

To stay faithful to the end. Each letter ends with a promise to “him who overcomes” (2:7, 17).

Seven Spirits

A phrase many read as the Spirit of God in His fullness (1:4); others see angelic spirits.

Son of man

John sees “one like a son of man” (1:13), a title from Daniel 7:13.

Thousand years

The reign of 20:2–7. Readers hold premillennial, amillennial and postmillennial views; see the leader notes on page 89.

PART FIVE • WHERE EACH PASSAGE IS USED

Scripture index

Every passage cited by chapter and verse in the sessions, the reference pages, the leader's guide, and this Part Five, with the pages where it appears. The full text of Revelation is in Part Four, pages 95–110.

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PART FIVE · YOUR TURN

Tell me what helped.

You've just spent some hours in this study. Before you put it on the shelf, I'd like to know how it went: the part that landed, the part that lost you, and the part you'd fix if it were yours.

Three questions. No account needed. Name and email only if you want me to write back.

1 What helped? A session, a question, a line you underlined.

2 What confused you, or slowed you down? Be blunt. If a question didn't make sense, that's my writing, not your reading.

3 What would you add, cut, or change?

What you write helps shape the next edition of this study.

— Ron Givens

Founder — Executive Director, Clear Path Bible Studies



SCAN TO ANSWER

clearpathbiblestudies.com/s/revelation/feedback

Opens the three questions with this study already selected.

Jotted your answers above? Type them into the form when you're ready. Nothing on this page is sent anywhere until you do. Hand it to your group leader, too, if you'd rather say it out loud.

PART FIVE · FOR EVERYONE WHO LEADS, AND EVERYONE WHO SHARES

Care in the room

People say real things in a Bible study, and that's the point. These four agreements keep the room safe. The lines at the bottom are for the moments that are bigger than a study.

Four agreements

What's said here stays here. Names, stories, and struggles don't leave the room, not even as prayer requests somewhere else. The one exception is safety: if someone is in danger, or a child is being hurt, you get help.

No one has to speak. Silence is fine. A person who listens for eight sessions has still done the study.

The text comes first. The leader isn't the last word. When we disagree, we go back to the page together.

Disagree, but don't scorn. A question is never a threat. No mocking, no interrupting, no fixing people.

Revelation can frighten people. Some arrive hurt by end-times teaching. The pictures of judgment, the mark of the beast, the woman Babylon, and the lake of fire can land hard on real people. No person, party, nation, or technology is to be labeled the beast. The leader pages carry notes on each. Read them ahead of time.

If someone shares something heavy

Thank them. Don't rush to a verse. Say, "That took courage. Can we talk after?" and then do. If what they shared involves danger to them or to someone else, now or at home, the help lines below come first, and, if they want it and it is safe, you stay with them while they call.

If a child is being hurt, call Childhelp, below, any hour, and report to child protective services or the police as your state requires. Reporting laws vary by state, and in some states every adult is required to report. If a child is in immediate danger, call 911.

If someone says they want to die, ask them plainly, stay with them, and call or text 988 together. If they have a plan or are in immediate danger, call 911.

A study isn't counseling. Before you ever need it, know the name of one counselor, one pastor, and one help line, so you can hand them over without scrambling.

Help lines · United States

Emergency — call 911.

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline — call or text 988, any hour. For anyone thinking about ending their life, in a mental-health crisis, or worried about someone who is. Veterans and service members: call 988 and press 1, or text 838255.

National Domestic Violence Hotline — 1-800-799-7233, or text START to 88788. Danger or fear at home.

Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline — 1-800-422-4453. A child who is being hurt, or an adult who suspects it.

National Human Trafficking Hotline — 1-888-373-7888, or text 233733. Forced labor or forced sex.

RAINN National Sexual Assault Hotline — 1-800-656-4673. Free and confidential.

SAMHSA National Helpline — 1-800-662-4357. A treatment referral and information line for substance use and mental health; it is not a crisis line.

Verified October 2026. The current list, with lines for other situations, is kept at clearpathbiblestudies.com/help. These pages are not a substitute for a doctor, a counselor, or a pastor who knows you.



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