

ADULT BIBLE STUDY IN SIMPLIFIED ENGLISH

# STUDY GUIDE

# Revelation: Strong Hope for Fearful Times

## WRITERS

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# Adult Bible Study in Simplified English Study Guide

## Revelation: Strong Hope for Fearful Times

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# Revelation: Strong Hope for Fearful Times

## Introduction

Are you facing great trials in your life? Maybe you are worried about your job, your health, or your family. There are many kinds of troubles in this life.

Anyone with hard times will find comfort in the book of Revelation. This book reminds us that God will overcome anything that stands against Him or His people. For almost 2,000 years, Christians have found great hope for the future when they read Revelation.

The first readers of Revelation were facing great problems. Followers of Christ were being hunted down and killed. Many went into hiding. It was a hard time to be a Christian.

Revelation was written by John. He was one of Jesus' special followers. When John was very old, Jesus gave John a special vision of what would happen in the future. This vision was *revealed* (shown) to him. Jesus told John to write down what he saw.

Much of John's vision is hard to understand. But some things are very clear. First, in the future there will be a great war between good and evil. Second, God wants His people to stay faithful in those hard times.

Third, God will one day bring all His followers to heaven to live with Him forever.

Revelation teaches us that God will be with us in times of trouble. Do you need hope? Do you need strength for dealing with hard times? You will find it in the Book of Revelation.

### **About the Writers**

**Jennifer Carson** wrote Lessons 1-7 of the Study Guide and Teaching Guide. A graduate of Baylor University in Waco, Jennifer is a part-time English teacher, homeschool mom, and a long-time editor and writer for this curriculum series. She and her husband, Mark, and their six children attend First Baptist Church, Arlington, Texas.

**Margaret Gayle** wrote the Study Guide and Teaching Guide for Lessons 8-13. She and her late husband, Jim, served as missionaries in Vietnam and Indonesia. She has been an ESL teacher and worker with internationals for years. Margaret is a member of First Baptist Church, Hurst.

# Revelation: Strong Hope for Fearful Times

## Lesson Overview

Lesson 1	<b>The Revelation of Jesus</b>	Revelation 1:1-18
Lesson 2	<b>A Message to the Churches</b>	Revelation 2:1-5, 8-10; 3:1-5
Lesson 3	<b>What Comes Next?</b>	Revelation 4:1-7; 5:1-14
Lesson 4	<b>Evil Will Not Last</b>	Revelation 6:1-17
Lesson 5	<b>God Saves His People</b>	Revelation 7:1-12
Lesson 6	<b>Trumpets of Judgment</b>	Revelation 8:1-6; 9:20-21
Lesson 7	<b>Telling About Jesus</b>	Revelation 11:1-14
Lesson 8	<b>Saints vs. the Serpent</b>	Revelation 12:1-6, 13-17; 13:1-4, 11-18
Lesson 9	<b>The Forces of Evil Receive Judgment</b>	Revelation 14:1-13
Lesson 10	<b>Songs of Victory and Scenes of Destruction</b>	Revelation 15-16
Lesson 11	<b>Babylon Falls</b>	Revelation 17:1-6; 18:1-8
Lesson 12	<b>The Return of the King</b>	Revelation 19:11-21; 20:1-10
Lesson 13	<b>A New Heaven and a New Earth</b>	Revelation 21:1-8; 22:1-7, 16-17

# Revelation: Strong Hope for Fearful Times

## Word List

### Lesson 1

**destruction:** the act of damaging something so badly that it no longer exists

**endure:** to keep going in unpleasant circumstances

**exile:** a period of time in which you must leave your country and live in another land as punishment for some wrongdoing

**mystery:** something that is unknown or hard to understand or explain

**revelation:** the act of making something known

**symbols:** objects that represent other ideas or qualities

### Lesson 2

**attention:** the act of noticing or focusing on something

**persecuted:** treated cruelly or unfairly because of race or religion

**repent:** to be sorry for one's sins and determined not to sin again

**technology:** the use of science to create new inventions like computers or electronic devices

### Lesson 3

**bestows:** to give as a gift or honor

**prism:** a clear piece of glass or plastic that separates light into different colors when light is shined through it, often making a rainbow

**resurrection:** the act of coming to life again

### Lesson 4

**advanced:** beyond the basic level

**authority:** power to make laws and enforce rules

**disqualified:** put out of competition or participation for breaking the rules

**tortured:** caused severe pain

**vision:** a mental picture of objects or scenes as if seen in a dream

### Lesson 5

**justice:** action that needs to be done in order to make something right or fair.

**plague:** a large number of repeated troubles intending to harm or destroy

**predict:** to tell about something in advance

**shelter:** a place that covers or protects people

**terrorize:** to cause someone to be extremely afraid

### Lesson 6

**brief:** short

**deliverance:** being saved from something dangerous

**fury:** violent anger

**just:** agreeing with what is right and good

### Lesson 7

**bold:** not afraid of danger or difficulties

**boundaries:** lines, walls, fences, etc. that mark a limit

**deny:** to say something is not the truth; to refuse to accept connection with someone or something

# Revelation: Strong Hope for Fearful Times

## Word List

**revolt:** to fight in a violent way against the rule of a leader or government

**witnesses:** people who saw something happen and can tell the truth about it

### Lesson 8

**appeared:** looked like

**ascended:** moved toward the sky

**endure:** to accept something unpleasant

**influence:** change in an important way

**opponent:** a team or person competing against another in a contest

**opposition:** action that is done to stop or defeat something

**refuse:** to say you will not accept

**resurrection:** the event when Jesus returned to life after death

### Lesson 9

**aligned:** in agreement with a group supporting or opposing something

**get away with:** succeed in avoiding punishment

**got away:** escaped

**in charge:** to be responsible for something

**inferior:** less important

**proclaim:** to declare or announce

**seal:** an official mark

**sentenced:** punished by the state

**survivor:** a person who continues to live after an accident, illness, or war

**tormented:** to feel extreme physical or emotional pain

### Lesson 10

**drought:** a time when there is little or no rain

**heritage:** history, tradition

**plagues:** harmful things

**resound:** to make a loud deep sound

**shedding:** losing

### Lesson 11

**corrupt:** dishonest, immoral

**greed:** a selfish desire to have more

**immoral:** evil or wrong

**promote:** make people aware

**take advantage of:** use in a way that is harmful

**thriving:** succeeding

**underprivileged:** poor or disadvantaged

### Lesson 12

**authority:** power to give orders and make decisions

**certain:** having no doubt

**lyrics:** words to a song

**mercy:** forgiving treatment of someone who could be treated harshly

**parade:** march in way that attracts attention, celebrate

**sequence:** order in which things happen

**warrior:** a courageous fighter in battles

### Lesson 13

**fulfilled:** made true or real

**varmints:** animals that are considered a problem

**witchcraft:** magical powers gotten from evil spirits

# Revelation: Strong Hope for Fearful Times

## Memory Verses

### Lesson 1

“The Lord God says, ‘I am the First and the Last, the beginning and the end of all things. I am the All-powerful One Who was and Who is and Who is to come.’” (Revelation 1:8)

### Lesson 2

“Remember how you once loved Me. Be sorry for your sin and love Me again as you did at first.” (Revelation 2:5a)

### Lesson 3

“The Lamb Who was killed has the right to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and shining-greatness and thanks.” (Revelation 5:12)

### Lesson 4

“For God did not send His Son into the world to say it is guilty. He sent His Son so the world might be saved from the punishment of sin by Him.” (John 3:17)

### Lesson 5

“They said, ‘Let it be so!’ May our God have worship and shining-greatness and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength forever. Let it be so!” (Revelation 7:17)

### Lesson 6

“The Lord is not slow about keeping His promise as some people think. He is waiting for you. The Lord does not want any person to be punished forever. He wants all people to be sorry for their sins and turn from them.” (2 Peter 3:9)

### Lesson 7

“You will tell about Me in the city of Jerusalem and over all the countries of Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8b)

### Lesson 8

“Since God is for us, who can be against us?” (Roman 8:31b)

### Lesson 9

“This is why God’s people need to keep true to God’s Word and stay faithful to Jesus.” (Revelation 14:12)

### Lesson 10

“The joy of being saved is being heard in the tents of those who are right and good. The right hand of the Lord does powerful things.” (Psalm 118:15)

### Lesson 11

“The love of money is the beginning of all kinds of sin.” (1 Timothy 6:10a)

### Lesson 12

“Thanks to our God. For the Lord our God is King. He is the All-powerful One.” (Revelation 19:6b)

### Lesson 13

“Then the One sitting on the throne said, ‘See! I am making all things new. Write, for these words are true and faithful.’” (Revelation 21:5)

# Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Revelation:  
Strong Hope for Fearful Times*

## Lesson 1: The Revelation of Jesus

### Bible Text

Revelation 1:1-18

### Memory Verse

“The Lord God says, ‘I am the First and the Last, the beginning and the end of all things. I am the All-powerful One Who was and Who is and Who is to come.’” (Revelation 1:8)

### Word List

**destruction:** the act of damaging something so badly that it no longer exists

**endure:** to keep going in unpleasant circumstances

**exile:** a period of time in which you must leave your country and live in another land as punishment for some wrongdoing

**mystery:** something that is unknown or hard to understand or explain

**revelation:** the act of making something known

**symbols:** objects that represent other ideas or qualities

What frightens you the most? Tall buildings? Snakes? Tornadoes? Large bodies of water? These are all common fears. In addition, many people fear the future. The world is not a stable place. People all over the

globe face many wars and terrible troubles.

Things are not getting better.

People wonder if the world will end. They wonder when and how it will end. They fear the end of time will bring total **destruction**. The Book of **Revelation** gives some clues about the end of time. It was written around 95 AD by one of Jesus’ special followers. John wrote the words of this special book in the Bible. His words tell something about the future. More importantly, John’s words tell a lot about Jesus.

The Book of Revelation is not an easy book to understand. It confuses many people who read it. It frightens many other people who read it. Most agree that it is a book of **mystery**. Even so, it is an important part of God’s message in the Bible. In this book, John writes down many important words Jesus said to him. His words reveal truth about what God is like. His words encourage people in hard times of suffering. We cannot know everything about the future. But we can learn to know the One True God. Then we can face the future without fear.

### Who Was John? (Revelation 1:1-11)

John was a close friend to Jesus. He was the son of Zebedee and the brother of James (Matthew 4:21). He was one of the first disciples. He was with Jesus in the garden when Jesus was arrested. All the other special

followers ran away in fear. But John followed. He saw the soldiers crucify Jesus. He saw Jesus hang on the cross. And he saw Jesus die.

Years later, John's brother was killed for teaching about Jesus (Acts 12:1-2). All of the other special followers also died for Him one by one. John heard about all of their deaths. The Roman emperor, Nero, killed many Christians. John knew about their deaths, too. The Romans also treated John badly. They sent him into **exile** on Patmos. John suffered many troubles in his life (v. 9).

The early Christians suffered many troubles, too. Nero made their lives painful and hard. They lived in fear for their lives. Many were killed in violent ways. They often felt discouraged and afraid. They faced hard times in an evil world. They needed encouragement. They needed hope. John's letter is a message of hope. The Book of Revelation is a message *from* Jesus. But it is also a message *about* Jesus.

In this book, Jesus reveals Himself to His people. John recorded His words for believers. They can help Christians **endure**. This book gives Christians a picture of what God will do in the end. Revelation gives a picture of hope for the future. Christians can find hope in Jesus. We lose our fear as we know more of Him. Jesus is faithful and true. Jesus is at the beginning and the end of all time. There is nothing before Jesus or after

Him. There is nothing greater than Him. He has honor and power forever!

### **Who Is Jesus? (Revelation 1:12-15a)**

The Book of Revelation uses many **symbols**. These symbols give a picture of the future. But symbols can be hard to understand. It is important to think about them. We can imagine the pictures John describes. These verses hold meaningful truths about Jesus. Each one shows something powerful about Jesus. Each one encourages Christians in this dark world.

John shows Jesus surrounded by light (v. 13). Jesus shines in the darkness of the evil in this world. He stands strong as the Son of Man. He is God in a human body. He wears a long coat. He is the King in His royal robe. He rules all that He created (John 1:1-3, Hebrews 1:1-3). He holds all of creation together (Colossians 1:16-17). His white hair is a sign of wisdom and purity. His eyes burn like fire that cleanses (v. 14). His feet are firmly fixed in strong brass (v. 15). No evil will stand against Jesus. He is our hope!

### **Hope in Jesus (Revelation 1:15b-18)**

John uses two images that stand out above the others. John describes Jesus' voice and His mouth. John's images make it clear that Jesus speaks powerfully. His voice is like the rush of heavy waters. It is like water that

removes whatever is in its path. In the same way, His words move all creation. No power can stand against the flood of His Word.

John's second image paints an even clearer picture. The sword in Jesus' mouth shows the strength of the truth He speaks. Jesus speaks truth to protect and defend us from evil. Evil does not have the last word in this world. Evil does not have the final say over our lives. Only Jesus' truth can defeat evil. His word is the final word.

On earth, John was Jesus' beloved friend. But even John could not stand in the presence of such strong power. He fell down in front of Jesus as if he were dead. Sinful man cannot stand up in the strong and holy presence of Jesus. Jesus is mightier than anything we can face on this earth. And He is alive (v. 18)! He has power even over death. He has victory over all the powers in hell.

### Things to Think About

1. Think about John. How would you feel after a life of suffering and loss? How would you feel to be left as a prisoner on a distant island?
2. How would you respond to seeing Jesus the way John did?
3. Does the Book of Revelation frighten or confuse you? Why? Remember that God is not the author of fear or confusion.
4. Think about the images of Jesus in this passage. Which one is most frightening to you? Why? Which one is the most reassuring to you? Why?
5. Who else in your life needs to know the Jesus John describes?

This is the Jesus that John saw. This is the Jesus that John describes for the churches in Asia. This is the same Jesus that Christians know today.

### Things to Remember

John's picture is a strong one. It can encourage us, too, when we face darkness in today's world. Jesus brings victory over the darkness. Only through His power can Christians defeat evil that surrounds them. And at the end of time, our strong God will win the final battle. He will free His people from evil forever.

Evil might win the day, but it cannot rule forever because Jesus is faithful and true. Apart from Jesus, there is no hope. There is no strength or power. There is no forgiveness from sin. There is no freedom from sin. There is only darkness and evil. Turn away from sin. Turn to God through faith in Jesus! Remember John's strong picture of Jesus. Put your hope in Him alone!

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### Revelation 1:1-18

1 The things that are written in the Book are made known by Jesus Christ. God gave these things to Christ so He could show them to the servants He owns. These are things which must happen very soon. Christ sent His angel to John who is a servant owned by Him. Christ made these things known to John.

2 John tells that the Word of God is true. He tells of Jesus Christ and all that he saw and heard of Him.

3 The man who reads this Book and listens to it being read and obeys what it says will be happy. For all these things will happen soon.

John Writes to the Seven Churches in Asia

4 This is John writing to the seven churches in the country of Asia. May you have loving-favor and peace from God Who was and Who is and Who is to come. May you have loving-favor and peace from the seven Spirits who are before His throne.

5 May you have loving-favor and peace from Jesus Christ Who is faithful in telling the truth. Jesus Christ is the first to be raised from the dead. He is the head over all the kings of the earth. He is the One Who loves us and has set us free from our sins by His blood.

6 Christ has made us a holy nation of religious leaders who can go to His God and Father. He is the One to receive honor and power forever! Let it be so.

7 See! He is coming in the clouds. Every eye will see Him. Even the men who killed Him will see Him. All the people on the earth will cry out in sorrow because of Him. Yes, let it be so.

8 The Lord God says, "I am the First and the Last, the beginning and the end of all things. I am the All-powerful One Who was and Who is and Who is to come."

What God Wanted to Show John of Christ

9 I, John, am your Christian brother. I have shared with you in suffering because of Jesus Christ. I have also shared with you His holy

nation and we have not given up. I was put on the island called Patmos because I preached the Word of God and told about Jesus Christ.

10 I was under the Spirit's power on the Lord's Day when I heard a loud voice behind me like the loud sound of a horn.

11 It said, "(\*I am the First and the Last.) Write in a book what you see and send it to the seven churches. They are in the cities of Ephesus and Smyrna and Pergamum and Thyatira and Sardis and Philadelphia and Laodicea."

12 I turned around to see who was speaking to me. As I turned, I saw seven lights made of gold.

13 Among the lights stood One Who looked like the Son of Man. He had on a long coat that came to His feet. A belt of gold was around His chest.

14 His head and His hair were white like white wool. They were as white as snow. His eyes were like fire.

15 His feet were like shining brass as bright as if it were in a fire. His voice sounded like powerful rushing water.

16 He held seven stars in His right hand. A sharp sword that cuts both ways came out of His mouth. His face was shining as bright as the sun shines at noon.

17 When I saw Him, I fell down at His feet like a dead man. He laid His right hand on me and said, "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last.

18 I am the Living One. I was dead, but look, I am alive forever. I have power over death and hell.

# Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Revelation:  
Strong Hope for Fearful Times*

## Lesson 2: A Message to the Churches

### Bible Text

Revelation 2:1-5, 8-10; 3:1-5

### Memory Verse

“Remember how you once loved Me. Be sorry for your sin and love Me again as you did at first.”  
(Revelation 2:5a)

### Word List

**attention:** the act of noticing or focusing on something

**persecuted:** treated cruelly or unfairly because of race or religion

**repent:** to be sorry for one's sins and determined not to sin again

**technology:** the use of science to create new inventions like computers or electronic devices

Today we can easily connect with friends and family. **Technology** makes communication simple and quick. We can email or text many times a day. We can call, video chat, or send messages through social media. We can even send messages across the world. Loved ones in other countries can see the pictures and videos that we send. They can know about our daily lives. They can

share our pictures and videos with other people. Even total strangers can share moments of our lives!

Honestly, we don't always value the power of communication. Sometimes we are careless with our words. We don't always pay **attention** to what others say. Our attention spans are short. We see and hear lots of information. So much information can distract us. We can lose our focus. Maybe there are even times when we fail to hear God's messages to us.

Jesus had an important message for the churches in John's time. He knew how to get their attention. Truthfully, it wasn't as hard then as it is now. They did not have as many ways to communicate as we do today. They could speak with one another in person. Or they could send letters by messengers. Jesus asked John to record His message to the churches. Jesus had words of encouragement and words of warning for them.

The churches John mentions in this letter were real churches. John knew people in these churches. And the people knew John. He had worked and served in these churches. He knew their strengths and weaknesses. He knew their good points and bad points. He knew what they did well. And he knew the problems they faced. Jesus had a message for these churches. He wanted John to deliver His message to each one.

## The Church in Ephesus

**(Revelation 2:1-5)**

Ephesus was a large and important city. It was a center for business and trade. People from many nations worked and lived there. The church in Ephesus grew well. Paul, Timothy, and John had been good leaders for this church. These men built a strong foundation of truth for the church. The Ephesian church needed this foundation. Their city was filled with many different kinds of people. They were surrounded by many false religions from people of different nations.

This was a church who stood firm in the truth of the gospel. They worked and served well. They never loosened their hold on the truth. They kept up their guard against lies. They did not accept false teachings. They clung to the One True God. Jesus was very pleased with their strength.

But they had forgotten something. They had forgotten to love. Jesus taught that the greatest commandment in Scripture is to “Love the Lord your God with all your heart” (Matthew 22:37). This is where the Ephesians failed. They loved truth. But they did not love God as well as they did once. They loved the truth of God, but their hearts were growing cold.

Knowing God’s truth is not the same as loving Him with your whole heart. Obedience is not the same as love. Sometimes people

obey God without loving Him. People obey God for many reasons. Some obey to avoid punishment. Some obey to look good in the eyes of religious people. Some obey because they are afraid of God. Others obey because it makes them feel better than others. Jesus warned the Ephesians to look at their hearts. He told them that they would lose their light if they did not **repent**. A heart that does not love God is full of pride and sin.

## The Church in Smyrna

**(Revelation 2:8-11)**

Smyrna was a beautiful and rich city. But the church in Smyrna was poor and suffering. One of John’s students was likely the leader of this church. They were surrounded by a beautiful city. But the beauty hid a great ugliness. Believers were strongly **persecuted** in Smyrna. Jesus spoke words to encourage them in hard times of trouble.

When we face troubles, sometimes we wonder if God sees us. Does He know what is happening to us? Does He care? Jesus spoke great words of hope to the troubled church in Smyrna. God did not forget them! He knew about their troubles (v. 9). Jesus told them not to be afraid, even if they faced death. He promised them a “crown of life” (v. 10).

## The Church in Sardis

### (Revelation 3:1-5)

Sardis was a strong city with a famous history. But in John's time, Sardis had become poor and weak. Yet the people continued to think about the old days of strength and glory. This church was like their city. The church had started out strong, but it grew weak over time. Jesus wanted them to "wake up!" (3:2).

Jesus knew that there were still some Christians in Sardis who were faithful and full of life. They had not quit. They were not looking at the past. They were continuing to walk in faith with God. He promised not to forget them.

Even when others do not stay close to God, we must choose to walk in faith. God see us. He knows how we are living. He knows our hearts. If those around us live weak lives, they will face punishment for

their sins. If your faith is dead, wake up!

Come to life again. If you are staying close to God, don't give up. Don't get discouraged. He knows what you are doing. He will be faithful to you!

### Things to Remember

John's letters to these churches give important advice to all Christians. We need to listen closely to Jesus' words. We must cling to God's truth with deep love for Him. Also, we must keep our focus on Jesus in troubled times. He sees us and will reward us for our suffering. Finally, we must work to keep our faith alive. We must not let others weaken our faith. We must use our spiritual ears to listen to Jesus. He still speaks to the people of His church today! What is He saying to you?

### Things to Think About

1. Do you know church people who know all the right things but don't love well? How would you describe these people?
2. What kinds of persecution, discrimination, or trouble have you faced as a Christian? How does Jesus' message encourage you?
3. Why is it dangerous to let your faith grow weak?
4. Do you think God still speaks messages to His church today? How do you think He does this?
5. What was the last message God gave you? How did you respond?

**Revelation 2:1-5**

1 “Write this to the angel of the church in the city of Ephesus: ‘The One Who holds the seven stars in His right hand and the One Who walks among the seven lights made of gold, says this:

2 I know what you have done and how hard you have worked. I know how long you can wait and not give up. I know that you cannot put up with sinful men. I know that you have put men to the test who call themselves missionaries. You have found they are not missionaries but are false.

3 You have waited long and have not given up. You have suffered because of Me. You have kept going on and have not become tired.

4 But I have this one thing against you. You do not love Me as you did at first.

5 Remember how you once loved Me. Be sorry for your sin and love Me again as you did at first. If you do not, I will come to you and take your light out of its place. I will do this unless you are sorry for your sin and turn from it.

**Revelation 2:8-10**

8 “Write this to the angel of the church in the city of Smyrna: ‘The One Who is First and Last, the One Who died and came to life again, says this:

9 I know of your troubles. I know you are poor. But still you are rich! I know the bad

things spoken against you by those who say they are Jews. But they are not Jews. They belong to the devil.

10 Do not be afraid of what you will suffer. Listen! The devil will throw some of you into prison to test you. You will be in trouble for ten days. Be faithful even to death. Then I will give you the crown of life.

**Revelation 3:1-5**

1 “Write this to the angel of the church in the city of Sardis: ‘The One Who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: I know what you are doing. I know people think you are alive, but you are dead.

2 Wake up! Make stronger what you have before it dies. I have not found your work complete in God’s sight.

3 So remember what you have received and heard. Keep it. Be sorry for your sins and turn from them. If you will not wake up, I will come as a robber. You will not know at what time I will come.

4 But there are a few people in the church in the city of Sardis whose clothes are not dirty with sins. They will walk with Me wearing white clothes. They have done what they should.

5 Everyone who has power and wins will wear white clothes. I will not take his name from the book of life. I will speak of his name before My Father and His angels.

# Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Revelation:  
Strong Hope for Fearful Times*

## Lesson 3: What Comes Next?

### Bible Text

Revelation 4:1-7; 5:1-14

### Memory Verse

“The Lamb Who was killed has the right to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and shining-greatness and thanks.” (Revelation 5:12)

### Word List

**bestows:** to give as a gift or honor

**prism:** a clear piece of glass or plastic that separates light into different colors when light is shined through it, often making a rainbow

**resurrection:** the act of coming to life again

A preschool teacher gave her young students four pictures. Each picture showed a step in the process of growing a plant. One picture showed a simple seed. Another picture showed the seed placed in a pot of dirt. A third picture showed the seed sprouting into a small plant. And a final picture showed a hand pulling a full-grown carrot from the dirt.

The teacher handed the children these pictures in no certain order. Then she pointed

out the simple picture of the seed. She asked the children, “Which picture comes next?”

There is an order to every story. There is an order to life and to history. Some things happen first. Some things come next. And some things happen last. God is in charge of history. He knows what happens first, next, and last. The first three chapters of Revelation talk about what happens on earth. But God knows there is more to the story. He is the author of creation. He created time, the earth, and everything in it. He knows what will happen at the end of time.

As the next chapters in Revelation begin, John had finished writing down Jesus’ words for the church. But Jesus was not finished speaking to John. He invited John to see what happens next. He showed John a glimpse of what will happen at the end of time when the earth passes away.

The heavenly scene John saw is one piece to the puzzle of creation’s story. And it is filled with the praise and glory of God. It is a beautiful and hopeful picture of what comes next in God’s story of the world.

### A Throne in Heaven (Revelation 4:1-7)

John described the heavenly images Jesus showed him next. The first thing he saw was a door standing open. That is a simple and familiar image, but a very meaningful one. A door is a common object. We use

doors every day. They take us from one place to another. A closed door keeps us from something. But an open door is an opportunity. The door to heaven was open. God has created for us an opportunity to be with Him in heaven! This life leads us somewhere. The door is not closed. This life on earth is not the end of the story.

Like John, we are invited to come through the door. God wants to show us wonderful and beautiful things. But we do not have to wait until we die. He invites us right now to be with Him. He invites us into His presence while we still live on this earth. We live in a world that is filled with darkness and evil. Yet even now He invites us into the light of His rightness and goodness.

John describes God sitting on a throne. Light shines from Him. John compares God's light to the light of beautiful, brilliant, shining jewels. This light is valuable, pure and precious. A ruby blazes a deep red. A jasper stone shines clear like a diamond. It can reflect light like a **prism**. This is how John describes God seated on His throne.

All around Him, people were dressed in white. They were clean and spotless. Unlike John in the presence of Jesus, they did not fall down like they were dead. They stood and worshipped God with crowns on their head. These crowns showed the authority God had given them. Powerful people on earth want as

much power as they can get. They keep it for themselves and use it to control others. God is different! In heaven, God **bestows** part of His power on His people. He is more powerful than lightning, thunder, and fire. But He is not selfish or controlling. He does not keep all power for Himself. It is His to give or keep, but He shares it with His faithful people. They praise Him with crowns on their heads.

### A Worthy Lamb (Revelation 5:1-7)

John saw God holding a book that was locked up. This book was sealed. No one could read the words written inside. These were God's words. They revealed God's good plans for the future. But "no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or look in it" (v. 3). All of creation was locked out of God's plan. John cried because no one could read God's words. He cried because people were separated from God. No one was good enough to be with Him. Sin kept God apart from the people He had created.

While John was crying, one of the leaders told him to stop. There was someone coming who could break the lock. The "Lion from the family group of Judah" had the power that was needed. Jesus is called the Lion of Judah. He was born to the house and family of David from the family group of Judah. He is the One who brings people back

to God. He rescues people through His death and **resurrection**.

John saw a lamb in front of the leaders. Though Jesus has the power of a lion, He appeared as a lamb. The word for *lamb* describes a young sheep, not an adult sheep. The picture is an image more like a child than an adult. This is unusual because a child would not be fit to have power or authority. But there was something different about this young lamb. He was wounded. He looked like he had been killed. Surely this is Jesus. He is the Lamb of God described in John 1:29. He alone can open the locked book. He made us a part of God's plan by dying on the cross. He is the good and perfect sacrifice for our sin. He is worthy of thanks and praise!

### Hymns of Praise (Revelation 5:8-14)

Jesus, the Lamb, is the object of worship in heaven. He should be the object of worship in our lives, too! He deserves praise because in all creation He is the only One

### Things to Think About

1. How would you respond if, like John, you were called to "Come up here!"?
2. Read Revelation 4:1-6 and Isaiah 6:1-8. What are some similarities and differences?
3. Why do you think John cried in Revelation 5:4?
4. When life seems out of control, how does the knowledge that Jesus holds all of history in His power help to reassure you? Who do you know that needs this assurance today?

who is sinless. His blood is the only worthy sacrifice for sin (v. 9). He alone can buy back men who are separated from God. He deserves praise because He conquered death and will live forever (v. 12).

### Things to Remember

The door to heaven is not closed. It is open to us because of Jesus! He is not dead. He is alive forever. He has all power and authority. This is great comfort for God's people. God is in control of history. He has a plan for the world, and through Jesus we are part of that plan. He gives us power to join Him in service of His kingdom. And someday we will rule with Him. He is worthy!

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### Revelation 4:1-7

- 1 After this, I looked and saw a door standing open in heaven. The first voice I heard was like the loud sound of a horn. It said, "Come up here. I will show you what must happen after these things."
- 2 At once I was under the Spirit's power. See! The throne was in heaven, and One was sitting on it.
- 3 The One Who sat there looked as bright as jasper and sardius stones. The colors like those of an emerald stone were all around the throne.
- 4 There were twenty-four smaller thrones around the throne. And on these thrones twenty-four leaders were sitting dressed in white

clothes. They had crowns of gold on their heads.

5 Lightning and noise and thunder came from the throne. Seven lights of fire were burning before the throne. These were the seven Spirits of God.

6 Before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, shining and clear. Around the throne and on each side there were four living beings that were full of eyes in front and in back.

7 The first living being was like a lion. The second one was like a young cow. The third one had a face like a man. The fourth one was like a very large bird with its wings spread.

#### **Revelation 5:1-14**

1 I saw a book in the right hand of the One Who sat on the a throne. It had writing on the inside and on the back side. It was locked with seven locks.

2 I saw a powerful angel calling with a loud voice, “Who is able to open the book and to break its locks?”

3 No one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look in it.

4 Then I began to cry with loud cries. I cried because no one was good enough to open the book or to look in it.

5 One of the leaders said to me, “Stop crying. See! The Lion from the family group of Judah has power and has won. He can open the book and break its seven locks. He is of the family of David.”

6 I saw a Lamb standing in front of the twenty-four leaders. He was before the throne and in front of the four living beings. He looked as if

He had been killed. He had seven horns and seven eyes. These are the seven Spirits of God. They have been sent out into all the world.

7 The Lamb came and took the book from the right hand of the One Who sat on the throne.

8 When the Lamb had taken the book, the four living beings and the twenty-four leaders got down before Him. Each one had a harp. They all had pots made of gold, full of special perfume, which are the prayers of the people who belong to God.

9 They sang a new song, saying, “It is right for You to take the book and break its locks. It is because You were killed. Your blood has bought men for God from every family and from every language and from every kind of people and from every nation.

10 You have made them to be a holy nation of religious leaders to work for our God. They will be the leaders on the earth.”

11 I looked again. I heard the voices of many thousands of angels. They stood around the throne and around the four living beings and the leaders.

12 They said with a loud voice, “The Lamb Who was killed has the right to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and shining-greatness and thanks.”

13 Then I heard every living thing in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and in the sea and all that are in them. They were saying, “Thanks and honor and shining-greatness and all power are to the One Who sits on the throne and to the Lamb forever.”

14 The four living beings kept saying, “Let it be so!” And the twenty-four leaders fell down and worshiped.

# Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Revelation:*  
*Strong Hope for Fearful Times*

## Lesson 4: Evil Will Not Last

### Bible Text

Revelation 6:1-17

### Memory Verse

“For God did not send His Son into the world to say it is guilty. He sent His Son so the world might be saved from the punishment of sin by Him.” (John 3:17)

### Word List

**advanced:** beyond the basic level

**authority:** power to make laws and enforce rules

**disqualified:** put out of competition or participation for breaking the rules

**tortured:** caused severe pain

**vision:** a mental picture of objects or scenes as if seen in a dream

A college student often cheated on his papers. He would steal other people’s ideas and use them as his own. He copied down their words and lied about it. This student already had two college degrees. Now he was working on an **advanced** degree. Several professors thought he was cheating, but no one had caught him.

Then it came time for this student to finish his degree. Finally, a professor found proof of his cheating. The professor showed this proof to the leader of the college department. The student was punished. He was **disqualified** from the program. He could no longer attend the university. He never received the degree he spent four years working toward. His time and money were all wasted. His reputation was ruined. He faced a stiff penalty. But he deserved this penalty because of his actions.

Sometimes it may seem that others do wrong and face no punishment. They do not seem to suffer for their wrong actions. For a time, they might not receive any punishment for what they have done. It seems unfair. But God sees everything. Some people may escape the penalty for wrong actions on earth. But God always punishes sin in the end.

The people living in John’s time lived under the cruel **authority** of the Roman Empire. The Roman rulers did many horrible things. They killed anyone who was against them. They **tortured** people. They caused many people, especially Christians, to live in fear. They used their power against people. And it seemed like no one could stop them. Christians wondered if God was really fair and just. They wondered why God did not punish or stop evil.

But John's **vision** in Revelation 6 encouraged these early Christians. John described how God's justice would conquer evil at the end of time. He showed that evil will not always win.

### **War and Power, Famine and Death (Revelation 6:1-8)**

In Revelation 5, God was seated on the throne of heaven. He was holding a book with many words. The book contained His plans for the future of all creation. But the book was locked with seven locks. Only Jesus, the Lamb of God, was able to unlock the book. He is the one who is worthy because He is the only one without sin. Without Jesus, all creation is kept apart from God's plan. But Jesus makes it possible to bring God's creation back to Him.

In Revelation 6, Jesus, the Lamb of God, broke the locks. Each one showed something different that will happen at the end of time. The first lock revealed a white horse. Its rider carried a bow. The second lock showed a red horse. Its rider had a sword. These two pictures display images of military power and fighting. Many will suffer because of battles and war.

The next lock revealed a black horse. The black horse and its rider meant famine. Famine is when there is no food to eat. The famine John talked about will be very hard.

There will be food. But it will cost too much money. A man's pay will buy only his food. He will have no money left to feed his wife or his children.

Behind the fourth lock was a light-colored horse. The rider of the light-colored horse was Death. Hell was close behind him. This part of John's vision is full of death and ruin, famine, sickness, and war. This is a terrible punishment. This frightening image was a strong reminder for the early Christians. They were suffering because of evil people. John's words showed them that evil people cannot escape God's punishment forever.

### **Those Killed for Telling of Jesus (Revelation 6:9-11)**

When the fifth lock was broken, John thought about all those who had died for their faith. Jesus predicted that His followers would suffer and be killed (Matthew 24:9). John saw an altar in Heaven. It was like the one built for God in the Temple on earth. The souls of those who had been killed were under the altar. The blood of those killed was poured out as an offering to God.

When someone dies for their faith, it seems like a tragedy. It may look like the evil men have won. But every life laid down for the gospel is important to God. It is a sacrifice. It is an offering made to God.

Throughout history, many have been killed for telling about Jesus. Even today, many are killed for this reason. This will keep happening until the end of time. God will remember their sacrifices. They will be clothed in white. And He will reward them. Evil will not have the final say in their lives.

### **The Earth and Stars (Revelation 6:12-17)**

The sixth lock showed that all of creation will feel God's punishment in the end of time. The earth will shake. The stars will fall. The sun will go dark. The sky will crumble. The rocks and the mountains will be destroyed. There will be no place to hide from God's punishment.

Sin affects all of creation. So all of creation will feel the effect when God, at last, gives the final punishment for sin. Even great people will be afraid. They will cry out in fear. John saw a time when everything will be

shaken. Every bad thing he could imagine will happen. This will be a terrible time. No one will be able to escape the suffering.

### **Things to Remember**

Jesus is the Lamb of God. We do not think of Him as angry. We usually think of Him as gentle and kind. But Jesus will bring in a season of God's judgment at the end of time. He will judge all evil because He wants to rid the earth of evil. He loves His creation. He wants to restore everything that is good. His plans mean that evil cannot last forever.

Even in His anger against evil, God wants to save us. He wants to redeem the ones He loves. Have you placed your faith in Jesus, the Lamb of God? Have you asked Him to forgive you of your sins? Have you placed your faith in Him to have power over sin in your life? Have you asked Him to bring you back to God? No one can keep standing against God. But through Jesus, God offers freedom from the punishment of sin. Turn to Jesus, the Lamb of God.

### **Things to Think About**

1. Read Zechariah 1:8-17. What are the similarities and differences in these two visions?
2. John lived under the rule of the cruel Roman empire. What forces of evil rule in our own time?
3. Those killed for telling of Jesus had to wait for their killers to be punished. What should we learn from them?
4. In what ways do you see sin affecting creation even today?
5. How do you feel about God, knowing that many terrible things will happen at the end of time?

**Revelation 6:1-17**

1 I saw the Lamb break open the first of the seven locks. I heard one of the four living beings cry out like the sound of thunder, “Come and see!”

2 I looked and saw a white horse. The one who sat on it had a bow. A crown was given to him. He went out to win and he won.

3 He broke open the second lock. Then I heard the second living being say, “Come and see!”

4 Another horse came out. This one was red. The one who sat on it was given a long sword. He was given power to take peace from the earth so men would kill each other.

5 He broke open the third lock. Then I heard the third living being say, “Come and see!” I looked and saw a black horse. The one who sat on it had something in his hand with which to weigh things.

6 I heard a voice from among the four living beings saying, “A small jar of wheat for a day’s pay. Three small jars of barley for a day’s pay. Do not hurt the olive oil and wine.”

7 He broke open the fourth lock. Then I heard the fourth living being say, “Come and see!”

8 I looked and saw a light colored horse. The one who sat on it had the name of Death. Hell followed close behind him. They were given the right and the power to kill one-fourth part of everything on the earth. They were to kill with the sword and by people having no food and by sickness and by the wild animals of the earth.

9 He broke open the fifth lock. Then I saw under the altar all the souls of those who had

been killed for telling the Word of God. They had also been killed for being faithful in telling about Christ.

10 All those who had been killed cried out with a loud voice saying, “How long will it be yet before You will punish those on the earth for killing us? Lord, You are holy and true.”

11 White clothes were given to each one of them. They were told to rest a little longer. They were to wait until all the other servants owned by God and their Christian brothers would be killed as they had been. Then the group would be complete.

12 I looked as the Lamb broke the sixth lock. The earth shook as if it would break apart. The sun became black like dark cloth. The moon became like blood.

13 The stars of the sky fell to the earth. They were like figs falling from a tree that is shaken by a strong wind.

14 The sky passed away like paper being rolled up. Every mountain and island moved from its place.

15 The kings and the leaders of the earth hid themselves in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. All the head soldiers and rich men and strong men and men who were free and those who were owned by someone hid themselves also.

16 They called to the mountains and to the rocks, “Fall on us! Hide us from the face of the One Who sits on the throne. Hide us from the anger of the Lamb,

17 because the special day of Their anger has come! Who is able to stand against it?”

# Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Revelation:*  
*Strong Hope for Fearful Times*

## Lesson 5: God Saves His People

**Bible Text**  
Revelation 7:1-12

**Memory Verse**

“They said, ‘Let it be so!’ May our God have worship and shining-greatness and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength forever. Let it be so!” (Revelation 7:17)

**Word List**

**justice:** action that needs to be done in order to make something right or fair.

**plague:** a large number of repeated troubles intending to harm or destroy

**predict:** to tell about something in advance

**shelter:** a place that covers or protects people

**terrorize:** to cause someone to be extremely afraid

In Texas, severe storms are common. These are dangerous storms. Some produce tornadoes that can destroy homes. Some storms even kill people. Thankfully, weather experts can warn people about coming storms. They can **predict** when storms will come. They use special equipment to see where the storms are going. They can predict

how strong the storms will be. They can predict how long the storms may last. These warnings help people know when to seek **shelter**.

In Texas and surrounding states, most families have safe spaces in their homes to find shelter. This might be a closet or bathroom in the center of the home. Some families even build special rooms called *safe rooms*. They are small, strong rooms with thick walls. They are designed to stand against the strongest storms. They protect the people inside from deadly storms.

The idea of a safe room is a good picture for this lesson. At the end of time, God will send strong judgments on the earth. They will bring more destruction than anyone has ever seen. No one will be able to find a safe place. But in the middle of strong danger, God will keep *His people* safe. He will surround them like a strong wall. He will be like a safe room. He will save His people from ruin and death.

Remember that John was writing about the things he saw in a special vision. He hoped to encourage other Christians. At that time, most Christians lived under the rule of the Roman Empire. The Roman emperor **terrorized** Christians. The early Christians had many troubles. They wondered if they would ever be free from the evil rulers of Rome. They wondered if God would ever

bring **justice** to the Roman Empire.

In John's vision, he saw a time where the evil rulers on earth would face judgment. He wanted Christians to know that God would save His people. The suffering Christians in Rome must have been encouraged by this. God is a safe place in evil times!

### **God Marks His People (Revelation 7:1-3)**

John saw the whole earth. And he saw four angels surrounding it. The angels were holding back a mighty wind. They were protecting the earth. In the picture John described, the angels were holding back the storm. These angels held the power to "hurt the earth and sea" (v. 2). They were waiting to let go of the wind. They were ready to send destruction on the earth.

Another angel came carrying the "mark of the living God" (v. 2). John's words are a reminder of other verses in Scripture. In the Old Testament, God told His people to put a mark of blood on their doors. This mark kept them safe from the **plague** of death sent by God in Egypt. In the New Testament, Paul told the Christians in Ephesus that they were marked with the promise of God's Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13). God's mark has always been used to identify God's people. In John's vision, God marked His people to protect them and keep them safe.

The first four angels were ready to let the winds destroy the earth. But another angel loudly told them to wait. They must wait until all God's faithful people were marked. The mark was to be put on each forehead. The mark belonged to the living God. With this mark, God would keep His people safe.

The people knew that other gods were made of metal or stone. Those gods could not live. They could not save anyone. But the One True God is alive. He directs everything on earth. This same God is with us today. John understood how great it was to know the living God. He knew how great it was to belong to God. Today we can know God and receive His help. We can see the power and know the presence of the living God today.

### **God's Faithful Are Safe (Revelation 7:4-8)**

Next, John saw 144,000 people marked with God's sign. This number does not include all of God's servants throughout history. These people are those who would face the terrible times ahead. They would be able to get through those terrible times safely.

The number 144,000 is important. It is 12 times 12, a perfect square. Then it was multiplied by 1,000. It was a perfect number. It did not mean only a few people would be saved. It meant that the number of people who would be saved would be great. And God

would know each one. No one who belonged to God would be forgotten or left out. All of God's people would be saved.

### **God's Many People (Revelation 7:9-12)**

John saw that a time of testing would come. He saw a time of terror like the world had never known. He saw that people could not escape. John saw the awful future. God must someday judge the evil in this world. But John also saw that God will keep His people safe.

John saw many of God's people. He could not count them all. He could see that they were from all nations. They spoke many different languages. They were all together as the family of God.

The people John saw were not beaten down. Yes, they had been through troubles. But they had won a great victory. They wore

white clothes because they were pure. They waved palm branches to celebrate. They all praised God who saved them through Jesus, the Lamb of God.

Even the angels praised God for His blessings. Together they surrounded His throne. They fell down in praise. All the world will bless the Lord for His goodness and kindness and power to save.

### **Things to Remember**

John wrote to help the early Christians know that they can trust God's promises. We can still trust His promises today. We have the promise of God's protection. God does not always keep us from every trouble. But God is always with us in every trouble. He is strong. He is good. He can save His people!

We must look for God. We must wait and listen for His voice. We must do this especially when things are bad. If we stay pure, we will win the victory. We must worship only God. We must trust Him completely. We must give Him glory like the angels in heaven. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords!

### **Things to Think About**

1. Can you remember a time when God kept you safe?
2. How do you feel knowing that God will judge all evil in the world?
3. Do you think of God as a safe place? Why or why not?
4. How do you feel knowing that God's people are from every nation and language? What does this show you about God?
5. Do you look for God when trouble is all around you? Do you praise Him in the middle of trouble?

**Revelation 7:1-12**

1 After this I saw four angels. They were standing at the four corners of the earth. They were holding back the four winds of the earth so no wind would blow on the earth or the sea or on any tree.

2 I saw another angel coming from the east. He was carrying the mark of the living God. He called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to hurt the earth and sea.

3 The angel from the east said, “Do not hurt the earth or the sea or the trees until we have put the mark of God on the foreheads of the servants He owns.”

4 I heard how many there were who received the mark of God. There were 144,000 people of the twelve family groups of Israel.

5 These received the mark of God: 12,000 from the family group of Judah, 12,000 from the family group of Reuben, 12,000 from the family group of Gad,

6 12,000 from the family group of Asher, 12,000 from the family group of Naphtali, 12,000 from the family group of Manasseh,

7 12,000 from the family group of Simeon, 12,000 from the family group of Levi, 12,000 from the family group of Issachar,

8 12,000 from the family group of Zebulun, 12,000 from the family group of Joseph, and 12,000 from the family group of Benjamin.

The Many People Who Belonged to God

9 After this I saw many people. No one could tell how many there were. They were from every nation and from every family and from every kind of people and from every language.

They were standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white clothes and they held branches in their hands.

10 And they were crying out with a loud voice, “We are saved from the punishment of sin by our God Who sits on the throne and by the Lamb!”

11 Then all of the angels standing around the throne and around the leaders and the four living beings got down on their faces before God and worshiped Him.

12 They said, “Let it be so! May our God have worship and shining-greatness and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength forever. Let it be so!”

# Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Revelation:  
Strong Hope for Fearful Times*

## Lesson 6: Trumpets of Judgment

### Bible Text

Revelation 8:1-6; 9:20-21

### Memory Verse

“The Lord is not slow about keeping His promise as some people think. He is waiting for you. The Lord does not want any person to be punished forever. He wants all people to be sorry for their sins and turn from them.” (2 Peter 3:9)

### Word List

**brief:** short

**deliverance:** being saved from something dangerous

**fury:** violent anger

**just:** agreeing with what is right and good

On a hot summer day in July, a man in Dallas did something very evil. He killed as many police officers as he could. He began shooting into a large group of people. People began to run. They were scared for their lives. Twelve people were shot. Five officers died.

When the bullets stopped, dozens of police officers ran to help as many people as they could. They ran into the danger. They worked to find the man who did this evil

thing. The mayor worked with the police chief to help. The governor called to offer his help. Even the President called to offer his help. People all over the city gathered to pray. Citizens all around Dallas looked for ways to help the victims of this tragedy. Everyone was filled with sadness. It was a terrible night.

In John’s vision, a terrible tragedy was about to happen. God was getting ready to destroy much of the world. But there was no one to help the people. They had turned to false gods. They had done every bad thing you might imagine. They would not stop doing bad things. John saw an angry God who was ready to punish evil. No one could stop the punishment from coming.

### No Sound (Revelation 8:1)

Jesus, the Lamb of God, was opening God’s special book. He was opening up God’s plan for the end of time. The book was sealed with seven locks. Every opened lock had revealed a part of God’s plan to punish evil. But God kept His people safe from all of these things.

John described what happened when the seventh lock was unlocked. There was no sound for one-half hour. This was a **brief** time. Up until this time, John had seen bright colors. He had heard loud noises. Now there was no sound. All of heaven was waiting for the judgment of God.

Have you ever waited for God's judgment to help you? Maybe you were treated unfairly. Maybe someone lied about you. Maybe someone hurt you or your family. Has evil ever come against you? If so, you may have had to wait on God to act. You may have had to wait for God to make things right. Maybe you waited a long time. Maybe you are still waiting.

The scene John described in heaven teaches us something. You will not have to wait forever. You can expect God to do something. He is faithful and **just**. He will not let evil remain forever. Wait expectantly for Him to move.

### **Prayers of the People (Revelation 8:2-4)**

What happened while all of heaven waited for God's judgment? John described seven angels holding horns. These horns were like trumpets in the angels' hands. Trumpets were important in the history of God's people. They blew trumpets in war (1 Samuel 13:3). They blew trumpets in worship and praise to God (Numbers 10:10; Leviticus 23:24). In Exodus, the people heard a trumpet blast before God appeared (Exodus 19:16). In the history of God's people, trumpets sounded before important things happened.

Now, the trumpets would ring in God's judgment on the earth. All of heaven waited

for the angels to sound the trumpets. And now something interesting happened. An angel stepped up carrying a golden cup. Inside the cup were the prayers of God's people. They were like a special perfume. They were poured out on the altar as an offering to God. This special offering rose up like smoke. It was pleasing to God.

What do you do when you are suffering because of evil? What do you do in painful times? How do you wait for God to bring right judgment? Consider what John saw happen in heaven. Wait for God to move. Wait silently. Do not cry out loudly to others about your pain over and over again. Quietly trust God. Expect Him to do what is right. While you wait, confess that He is faithful and just. Then pour out your pain to Him in prayer. It will be a pleasing offering to God.

### **Thunder from Heaven (Revelation 8:5-6)**

Much noise came after this silence in heaven. Lightning flashed and the earth shook. The seven angels got ready to blow their horns. But first, God received the prayers of His people. He acted on their cries for **deliverance**. God would not wait any longer. His anger would punish those who kept doing evil. The enemies of God's people would be punished.

Next came some frightening events (Revelation 8:7 to 9:19). Hail and fire fell on the earth. It was mixed with blood. Mountains fell into the sea. A large star fell from heaven into the waters of the earth. The water was poisoned. The moon and stars became dark. A hole in the earth opened up. Demons flooded the earth like locusts. Suffering and death were everywhere. An army of 200 million soldiers began killing people. They killed one-third of all the people.

### **Foolish Men (Revelation 9:20-21)**

But still, God did not destroy the entire earth. Two-thirds of creation survived. God wanted to give one more chance. He limited the destruction. He hoped that His judgments would cause people to repent and return to Him. God loves everything He created. He wants to love His creation, not punish evil.

### **Things to Think About**

1. Tell about a time you suffered because of evil. How did you respond?
2. Is it hard for you to wait on God? Why?
3. Do you believe God is faithful? Do you trust God to do what is right?
4. How could you help someone see that God is faithful in a time of deep pain?
5. How do you feel knowing that God is loving and kind, but He will not keep His fury against evil back forever?

Even after all these terrible things, the foolish people did not change. They should have changed their evil ways. Instead, they kept worshiping their false gods. When they worshiped idols, they worshiped devils and demons. The foolish people did not consider why these terrible things were happening. They did not understand God's **fury**. They kept sinning. So God's fury did not stop there.

### **Things to Remember**

The early church was suffering. John's vision reminded them how to wait for God's judgment. It reminds us, too, how to wait patiently for God. God judges evil for the good of His own people. He promises to remove evil from our lives in the end. That promise should give Christians great hope!

His punishment warns us to pursue goodness and rightness over evil. His anger is meant to bring sinners back to Him. Do not be like the foolish men at the end of time. If God is trying to get your attention, repent! Return to Him with all your heart! He is a God who saves His people.

**Revelation 8:1-6**

- 1 When the Lamb broke the seventh lock, there was not a sound in heaven for about one-half hour.
- 2 Then I saw the seven angels standing before God. They were given seven horns.
- 3 Another angel came and stood at the altar. He held a cup made of gold full of special perfume. He was given much perfume so he could mix it in with the prayers of those who belonged to God. Their prayers were put on the altar made of gold before the throne.
- 4 Smoke from burning the special perfume and the prayers of those who belong to God went up before God out of the angel's hand.
- 5 Then the angel took the cup of gold. He filled it with fire from the altar and threw it down on the earth. There was thunder and noise and lightning and the earth shook.
- 6 The seven angels that had the seven horns got ready to blow them.

**Revelation 9:20-21**

- 20 The men that were still living after these troubles were past would not turn away from worshiping demons. They would not turn away from false gods made from gold and silver and brass and stone and wood. None of these false gods can see or hear or walk.
- 21 These men were not sorry for their sins and would not turn away from all their killing and their witchcraft. They would not stop their sex sins and their stealing.

# Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Revelation:  
Strong Hope for Fearful Times*

## Lesson 7: Telling About Jesus

### Bible Text

Revelation 11:1-14

### Memory Verse

“You will tell about Me in the city of Jerusalem and over all the countries of Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8b)

### Word List

**bold:** not afraid of danger or difficulties  
**boundaries:** lines, walls, fences, etc. that mark a limit  
**deny:** to say something is not the truth; to refuse to accept connection with someone or something  
**revolt:** to fight in a violent way against the rule of a leader or government  
**witnesses:** people who saw something happen and can tell the truth about it

Polycarp lived in the Roman Empire in the years after Jesus returned to heaven. Polycarp was a Christ follower and a leader in the early church at Smyrna (in modern day Turkey). The Roman leaders arrested him. They wanted to punish him for being a strong leader in the church. The Romans feared the church. They hated Christians. The Roman

leaders were afraid that Jesus’ followers would cause problems. They thought Christians might lead a **revolt** against them. They feared losing their power.

The Romans planned to kill Polycarp. They said he could not live unless he would **deny** Jesus Christ. The Romans were ready to burn Polycarp alive. They tied him to a pole. Before they killed him, they gave him one last chance to live. The Romans wanted Polycarp to say that Jesus is not God.

Polycarp would not do this. The Romans said, “If you deny Jesus, you will not die today.” Polycarp replied, “If you accept Jesus, you will live today.” What **bold** faith to tell about Jesus!

The Romans killed him when he was about 86 years old. But Polycarp was faithful to tell about Jesus until the end of his life.

No matter how bad things get, God gives His people boldness to tell about Him.

### God Will Judge (Revelation 11:1-2)

In John’s vision of heaven, John had already seen punishment and destruction. But soon, things were going to get much worse. The angels had blown six horns. Each horn had brought punishment and suffering. But the nations of earth would not learn. People still would not stop sinning. Now, God would pour out even more punishment. But God

continued to protect His people. He would also protect His message of salvation.

God told John to measure the house of God. This is like the visions of the early preachers. Ezekiel and Zechariah also saw a vision of measuring the Temple (Ezekiel 40; Zechariah 2:1-2). Measuring something helps identify it. A measurement shows the lines around something. It separates something from other things around it. Measuring something shows its **boundaries** and limits.

The Temple was God's dwelling place. God's people gathered to worship Him there. God had John measure the Temple to mark out His people. He was putting a boundary around His people to preserve and protect them. Notice that God did not mark out the porch of the Temple. This area represented the people and nations who did not belong to God. They were not marked off for God's protection in the coming punishment.

### **Speaking for God (Revelation 11:3-6)**

God's punishment would be strong. But God was not ready to walk away. He would remain with His people. He made sure they knew He was near. He sent two men with a special job. They would tell about His love and power. They would tell about Jesus. These two men were **witnesses**. They kept telling God's message about Jesus for 42

months. They dressed in clothes made from animal hair. These were special clothes. God's people wore this kind of clothes to show they were sorry for their sins. These clothes also showed how much sorrow God has toward sin.

Some people think these two men were Elijah and Moses. Other people are not sure. Maybe they are a symbol. Maybe they stand for all God's people who tell about Him. John calls the two men *olive trees*. The olive tree is a symbol of peace and salvation through Christ. Then John calls the two men *lights*. The lights remind us that God is always with us in any darkness.

The two witnesses kept telling God's message. They had the power of God. No one could hurt them. The fire of God's power protected them. God's message would not be destroyed. This has been true throughout history. Evil men have tried to destroy and stop God's message. But God's message is stronger than evil men. Only God has the power to remove His message from the world. And that will not happen until He says it will.

### **An Unwelcome Message (Revelation 11:7-10)**

The world will never welcome God's message. We should not be surprised. John saw what happened to the two witnesses. They were killed when God decided they

were finished speaking for Him. Their dead bodies were in the middle of the street for three-and-a-half days. This picture reminds Christians of the way Jesus died. John described the two messengers dying in the same place Jesus died. Jesus was dead for three days. Evil people celebrated when Jesus was killed. But Jesus did not stay dead. After three days, Jesus rose to life again!

### **God's Power Wins (Revelation 11:11-14)**

Evil people celebrated when God's messengers died, too. But this was not the end of what John saw. Just like Jesus, God's messengers came to life again after three-and-a-half days. Just like Jesus, the two men told what they knew. Then they went up to heaven in a cloud. All the evil people who hated the messengers watched them go. Then the earth shook. Seven thousand people were killed.

### **Things to Think About**

1. Are you a faithful witness to God's truth about Jesus?
2. What is your greatest fear about telling what you know about God?
3. How can John's description in Revelation 11 encourage you to be a faithful witness?
4. Who in your life needs you to tell them what you know about God?
5. What risk would you take in order to tell the truth about God to another person?

The people watching saw that God's messengers told a true message. They saw that God has power over death. They were afraid of God's power. Even the evil people on the earth saw that God is the One True God. They knew that more terrible troubles would come soon.

### **Things to Remember**

John told how God would protect His people during these terrible times. He described how they were marked out for God's protection. We live in terrible times today, too. Many people suffer because of wars, fighting, sickness, hunger, and being poor. God knows the times we live in. We don't know all that the future holds. But God does. The future is in His hands. When all evil is destroyed, God will be on His throne. This is where He has always been. That is where He is now.

We can be like the men who told what they knew about God. Even when we are surrounded by evil, we can keep telling about Jesus. We can point people to Jesus. We can show people the love and power of God. Though we may suffer, we can trust God. We can be sure He has power over all things. We can know that God will punish evil in the end.

**Revelation 11:1-14**

1 I was given a stick that is used to see how big things are. Someone said, “Go up to the house of God and find out how big it is. Find out about the altar also. See how many people are worshiping.

2 Do not find out about the porch of the house of God. It has been given over to the nations who do not know God. They will walk over all the Holy City to wreck it for forty-two months.

3 I will give power to my two men who tell what they know. They will speak for God for 1,260 days (forty-two months). They will be dressed in clothes made from the hair of animals.”

4 These two men who tell what they know are the two olive trees and the two lights that stand before the Lord of the earth.

5 If anyone hates them and tries to hurt them, fire comes out of the mouths of these two men. The fire kills those who try to hurt them.

6 They have power to shut up the sky. During the time they speak for God, there will be no rain. They have power to change all waters into blood. They can send every kind of trouble to the earth whenever they want to.

7 When they have finished speaking for God, the wild animal will make war with them. It will come up out of the hole without a bottom. This wild animal will have power over them and kill them.

8 Their dead bodies will lie in the street of Jerusalem. It is where their Lord was nailed to a cross. The city is sometimes called Sodom and Egypt.

9 For three-and-one-half days those from every people and from every family and from every language and from every nation will look at their dead bodies. People will not allow the dead bodies of these two men to be put in a grave.

10 Those who are living on the earth will be happy because of the death of these two men. They will do things to show they are happy. They will send gifts to each other. They will do this because these two men brought much trouble and suffering to the people of the earth.

11 After three-and-one-half days, life from God came into them again. They stood on their feet. Those who saw them were very much afraid.

12 Then the two men who told what they knew heard a loud voice from heaven. It said, “Come up here.” And they went up to heaven in a cloud. All those who hated them watched them go.

13 At the same time the earth shook. One-tenth part of the buildings of the city fell down. Seven thousand people were killed. The rest of the people were afraid and gave honor to the God of heaven.

14 The second time of trouble is past. But look, the third time of trouble is coming soon.

# Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Revelation:  
Strong Hope for Fearful Times*

## Lesson 8: Saints vs. the Serpent

### Bible Text

Revelation 12:1-6, 13-17; 13:1-4, 11-18

### Memory Verse

“Since God is for us, who can be against us?” (Roman 8:31b)

### Word List

**appeared:** looked like

**ascended:** moved toward the sky

**endure:** to accept something unpleasant

**influence:** change in an important way

**opponent:** a team or person competing against another in a contest

**opposition:** action that is done to stop or defeat something

**refuse:** to say you will not accept

**resurrection:** the event when Jesus returned to life after death

Tony Dungy had a dream. He wanted to become an NFL (National Football League) head coach. He had played in the Super Bowl once. But he wanted to coach a team in the Super Bowl. In 1996, he began coaching the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. This team was not winning games.

Tony had quiet strength. He was patient with the team. Before every game, he told his players they could win. He told them to “just do what you do.” He taught his team to stick to their game plan, no matter what. No matter what the scoreboard said. No matter what team they were playing. He taught them to believe in victory. He knew the players needed to believe they would win.

Tony led the Buccaneers well. They became one of the best NFL teams. Then in 2007, Tony’s dream came true. He was head coach of the Indianapolis Colts. His team won in the Super Bowl over the Chicago Bears.

Often life is like a game. We have battles to fight. We struggle to do the right thing. We struggle to be the right person. But we face **opposition**. Satan brings evil forces against us. But Christians are confident of victory over Satan. Christ won the victory.

Today’s lesson from Revelation 12 and 13 gives a picture of a spiritual battle between good and evil. Christians **endure** our earthly battles with faith in Christ. Christ is on our side. No matter what evil Satan brings against us, God will help us win.

### The Serpent and the Child (Revelation 12:1-6, 13-17)

In this scene, John gave a picture of a battle in the heavens. He introduced three characters: a pregnant woman, a snake-like

animal (serpent), and a child. The woman was large with child, in pain, and about to give birth. The first readers of Revelation would have understood the symbol of a pregnant woman. Her description—clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and wearing a crown of 12 stars—was a symbol for Israel. It was also a symbol for the Christian church. In the scene, the people of God were anticipating the coming of the child Jesus.

John described the serpent: He was the color red, had seven heads and ten horns, and on his head were seven crowns. The first readers would have known who the serpent was. He was Satan. The crowns showed that Satan had power. Satan **influences** people to do evil. In the Garden of Eden, Satan **appeared** as a serpent (Genesis 3). He led Adam and Eve to disobey God.

The baby in the scene was the Son, the promised King Jesus. The woman's Son would rule with an iron rod and with power. Jesus' **resurrection** from the dead showed God's power. In the end time, Jesus will rule all nations. This scene showed Satan's plan from the beginning. Satan wanted to kill the Child before He could rule. But God protected His Son. God took His Son to His throne.

Satan always opposes the people of God. When Jesus was born, Satan tried to kill Him. He wanted to stop Jesus from completing His mission. But God protected

the Child. He led the Magi (Wise Men) not to tell evil King Herod where Jesus was born. Later, Satan used Judas to try to kill Jesus. But this plan did not work. God resurrected Jesus, and He **ascended** into heaven. Satan's plans failed; God won the victory.

In the next scene, the serpent began to hunt the woman. Not able to destroy the child, he tried to destroy the woman. But God came to her aid. He gave her wings, a symbol of His protection, so she could fly away to a place of safety. Satan next tried to drown the woman. But the earth came to help. The earth drank the water Satan spewed from his mouth. Still, Satan did not give up. He stayed in the battle. Not able to destroy the woman, he now went after her children—the followers of Jesus.

Satan hates the people of God. He wants to destroy them. He causes evil things to happen to discourage them. He wants to destroy their faith. But the followers of Jesus are faithful to God's teachings. They know bad things come from Satan. They know God is with them in the midst of their struggles. So they face their battles with confidence. They know God has won the battle over Satan.

### **The Beasts from the Sea and the Land (Revelation 13:1-4, 11-18)**

Next in the scene, a wild animal like a beast came up out of the sea. This beast symbolized the evil Roman empire. Rome

thought it was a savior of the world. It ruled unjustly. It persecuted Christians. The serpent Satan gave power to the evil empire. The Roman emperors wanted glory for themselves that only belongs to God. They demanded people worship them as gods. The Roman kingdom was against God's kingdom.

A second wild animal came out of the earth. He was like a false prophet. He had horns and looked like a lamb, but he spoke like the devil. He had power and did great signs. He spoke with **authority**. He told people on earth to make an image of the first beast and worship him. He gave the image a spirit so he could speak. This image was against Christ. Everyone who did not worship the image would be killed.

The number 666 is a symbol. It was called the "mark of the beast." No one knows its exact meaning. In the scene, everyone who worshiped the beast got the number 666 on his/her right hand or forehead. Those who

received the number were able to buy and sell freely. But Christ-followers **refused** the number, so they could not buy or sell. They suffered because they could not buy food. The first readers of Revelation probably understood the number 666 reminded them not to submit to the authority of the beast.

The scenes in Revelation 13 spoke to the Christians of that day. The Roman empire was not God, and their rulers were not to be worshiped. Christians would stand firm in their faith in Christ, even under persecution. They would worship only God. Revelation 13 speaks the same message to Christians today. Many Christians are facing persecution for their faith. None of us knows what opposition we will face from the powers of evil in the future. But we are confident God has won the final victory. We will stand firm in our faith!

### Things to Remember

The strange beasts and mysterious number 666 in today's lesson are not meant to be scary. John's "behind the scene" pictures of a battle in the spiritual realm is meant to give us hope. It alerts us to the fact that Satan is alive and well in our world today. He is our enemy, our **opponent** in every battle. Our lesson reminds us that Christ has already won the victory. With God's strength, we fight on, no matter how long the fight! God's final victory is sure!

### Things to Think About

1. When has Satan seemed real to you? How did you resist him?
2. What "beasts" might you be worshiping more than Christ?
3. What do you know about Jesus that gives you confidence He is the victor?
4. Has this study helped you realize that Jesus is on your side?

**Revelation 12:1-6, 13-17**

1 Something very special was seen in heaven. A woman was there dressed with the sun. The moon was under her feet. A crown with twelve stars in it was on her head.

2 She was about to become a mother. She cried out with pain waiting for the child to be born.

3 Something else special was seen in heaven. A large dragon was there. It was red and had seven heads and ten horns. There was a crown on each head.

4 With his tail he pulled one-third part of the stars out of heaven. He threw them down to the earth. This dragon stood in front of the woman as she was about to give birth to her child. He was waiting to eat her child as soon as it was born.

5 Then the woman gave birth to a son. He is to be the leader of the world using a piece of iron. But this child was taken away to God and His throne.

6 The woman ran away into the desert. God had made the place ready for her. He will care for her there 1,260 days.

...

13 When the dragon which is the devil saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he began to hunt for the woman who had given birth to the boy baby.

14 The woman was given two wings like the wings of a very large bird so she could fly to

her place in the desert. She was to be cared for there and kept safe from the snake, which is the devil, for three-and one-half years.

15 Then the snake spit water from his mouth so the woman might be carried away with a flood.

16 The earth helped the woman by opening its mouth. It drank in the flood of water that this dragon spit from his mouth.

17 This dragon was very angry with the woman. He went off to fight with the rest of her children. They are the ones who obey the Laws of God and are faithful to the teachings of Jesus.

**Revelation 13:1-4, 11-18**

1 I stood on the sand by the sea-shore. There I saw a wild animal coming up out of the sea. It had seven heads and ten horns with a crown on each horn. There were names on each head that spoke bad words against God.

2 The wild animal I saw was covered with spots. It had feet like those of a bear. It had a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave this wild animal his own power and his own throne as king. The wild animal was given much power.

3 One of the heads of the wild animal looked as if it had been killed. But the bad cut given to kill him was healed. The whole world was surprised and wondered about this, and they followed after the wild animal.

4 They worshiped the dragon for giving this wild animal such power. And they worshiped this wild animal. They said, “Who is like this wild animal? Who can fight against it?”

...

11 Then I saw another wild animal coming out of the earth. He had two horns like those of a lamb. His voice was like that of the dragon.

12 He used the power of the first wild animal who was there with him. He made all the people on earth worship the first wild animal who had received the bad cut to kill him but was healed.

13 The second wild animal did great powerful works. It spoke and made those who did not worship the first wild animal to be killed.

14 He fooled the men of the earth by doing powerful works. He did these things in front of the first wild animal. He told those who live on the earth to make a god that looks like the first wild animal. The first wild animal was the one that was cut by the sword but lived.

15 The second wild animal was given power to give life to the false god. This false god was the one that was made to look like the first wild animal. It was given power to talk. All those who did not worship it would die.

16 The second wild animal made every person have a mark on their right hand or on their forehead. It was given to important men

and to those not important, to rich men and poor men, to those who are free and to those who are servants.

17 No one could buy or sell anything unless he had the mark on him. This mark was the name of the first wild animal or another way to write his name.

18 This is wisdom. Let the person who has good understanding learn the meaning of the other way to write the name of the first wild animal. This name is a man's name. It is 666.

# Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Revelation:  
Strong Hope for Fearful Times*

## Lesson 9: The Forces of Evil Receive Judgment

### Bible Text

Revelation 14:1-13

### Memory Verse

“This is why God’s people need to keep true to God’s Word and stay faithful to Jesus.”  
(Revelation 14:12)

### Word List

**aligned:** in agreement with a group supporting or opposing something  
**get away with:** succeed in avoiding punishment  
**got away:** escaped  
**in charge:** to be responsible for something  
**inferior:** less important  
**proclaim:** to declare or announce  
**seal:** an official mark  
**sentenced:** punished by the state  
**survivor:** a person who continues to live after an accident, illness, or war  
**tormented:** to feel extreme physical or emotional pain

At the end of World War II, thousands of Nazi murderers **got away**. They slipped away to other countries to hide from justice. They changed their names. They changed the

way they looked. They helped kill 6,000,000 Jews. They killed millions of other people they thought were **inferior**. They were guilty of great evil. Yet these murderers were living in freedom.

Then Simon Wiesenthal, a death camp **survivor**, began to hunt them down. With help from government authorities and the media, he was able to find some of the murderers. They were tried and **sentenced** for their crimes. At last, the murderers had to pay for their evil deeds.

Wiesenthal spent his life trying to bring the murderers to justice. He said, “When history looks back, I want people to know the Nazis weren’t able to kill millions of people and **get away with it**.”

Revelation 14:1–13 is filled with information about the end times. It gives a clear warning: People and governments who do evil will not get away with it. In the end, they will have to face God and His judgment.

There is a vision of Christ and 144,000 of His faithful followers. They were singing a new song and were an offering to God. An angel **proclaimed** the gospel to all the earth. Another declared that Babylon had fallen. And a third pronounced judgment on all the evil people. The passage ends with believers being blessed. They enjoy an eternal rest.

### The 144,000 (Revelation 14:1-5)

This vision of John's begins with a beautiful scene. The Lamb (Christ) was standing on Mount Zion, the place Israel believed God dwelled. This is the New Jerusalem. From here, God will reign over the whole world forever and ever. And Christ was not alone. He had 144,000 believers with Him.

Who were the 144,000 people? Why were they standing with Christ at this time? They were people who had the names of Christ and God on their foreheads. The names were like a **seal**. It shows that they were **aligned** with Christ. They will stand with Him against those who align with the beast, those who have the mark of the beast on their foreheads.

These 144,000 people were singing a victory song with booming voices. They were celebrating because they knew Christ will be victorious. Christ will reign forever and ever. John said the 144,000 were like an army of men. At that time, only men served in the army. These are people who were blameless. They were committed to following Christ. But they were not chosen because they were good. They were chosen because the blood of Christ made them blameless. They were the first ones to give themselves fully to following God. They spoke only the truth. This was in contrast to Satan, the father of lies, who leads people away from the truth.

### The Angel with the Gospel (Revelation 14:6-8)

John's vision turned now from believers in heaven to the unbelievers on earth. Unbelievers have a totally different future than followers of Christ. In John's vision, the first of three angels proclaimed a message of eternal judgement for all who don't believe. He proclaimed that the heavens, the earth, the sea, and the springs all show the glory of God. So people can see God's glory. They have no excuse for not believing. The angel proclaimed that it is time for people everywhere to turn to God. They should fear God and His judgment!

In contrast to the angel, the beast told people that he was **in charge** of the world. He tempted Israel (and us today) to worship the world's system. His promises of wealth and success are lies. The world's ways lead to disappointment, loss, and final destruction.

A second angel proclaimed that Babylon the Great had fallen. Israel lived under both the ancient city of Babylon and Roman rule. Both empires led Israel away from God. Both empires persecuted followers of God. The message of the angel was that the world's systems mean nothing at the end time. Only Christ will reign forever and ever. Right now is the time to turn to God. No one should wait. The opportunity is now.

## The Angel with the Message of Doom (Revelation 14:9-13)

The third angel pronounced judgment. He delivered a strong warning to people who chose to follow the beast (the world's system). People who turn away from God's goodness and love, will face His anger.

John's description of God's anger is terrifying. It is hard to understand how anyone would choose that path. Those who worship the beast will be **tormented** day and night, forever and ever. But those who love and follow God will worship Him forever.

John then recorded words from God about the saints who suffered for their faith. In the end, they will be blessed. They will rest from their work. And they will be rewarded for their faithfulness. Their reward is an eternal reward.

### Things to Think About

1. Thousands of Nazis got away with mass murder. How does this knowledge affect your thinking about God's judgment?
2. How do you feel about people who get away with doing bad things?
3. How does it encourage you to know God will reward your faithfulness?
4. People around the world suffer for following Christ. How much would you suffer for your faith?
5. Are you faithfully proclaiming the message of salvation to others?

No doubt these words encouraged the early Christians. Many were suffering for their faith, even facing death. These words also encourage Christ-followers today. Many live in a world system that persecutes Christians. They endure because they know their suffering is temporary. Their hope is in God's justice. They know a divine justice awaits all who choose to follow Satan and do evil. Those who do evil will not get away with it in the end. They will face a day of judgment.

### Things to Remember

Our lesson today pictures the final victory of Christ in the end time. We rejoice because the final victory is on the way. In this life, we face struggles and oppression. But Christ's victory gives us hope. We know that a blessing awaits all who follow Christ. A judgment awaits all who worship the beast. Still, there is a call to salvation going out. It is a call to fear God and His judgment. It is a call to worship Him as Maker of heaven and earth. It is a call to trust Christ as Savior and Lord of life. Missionaries all over the world proclaim the message of Christ. Pastors proclaim the message each week in their churches. And every person who follows Christ proclaims the message by the way we live. May we also be bold to proclaim Him with our words!

**Revelation 14:1-13**

1 Then I looked and saw the Lamb standing on Mount Zion. There were 144,000 people with Him. These people had His name and His Father's name written on their foreheads.

2 I heard a voice coming from heaven. It was like the sound of rushing water and of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like people playing music on their harps.

3 This large group sang a new song. They sang before the throne and in front of the four living beings and the twenty-four leaders. Only the 144,000 could learn this song. They had been bought by the blood of Christ and made free from the earth.

4 These are men who have kept themselves pure by not being married. They follow the Lamb wherever He goes. They have been bought by the blood of Christ and have been made free from among men. They are the first ones to be given to God and to the Lamb.

5 No lie has come from their mouths. They are without blame.

6 Then I saw another angel flying in the heavens. He was carrying the Good News that lasts forever. He was preaching to every nation and to every family group and to the people of every language and to all the people of the earth.

7 He said with a loud voice, "Honor God with love and fear. The time has come for Him to judge all men. Worship Him Who made

heaven and earth and the sea and the places where water comes out of the earth."

8 A second angel followed, saying, "Babylon has fallen! The great city Babylon has fallen! She made all the nations drink of the wine of her sinful sex life."

9 A third angel followed, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the wild animal and his false god and receives a mark on his forehead or hand,

10 he will drink of the wine of the anger of God. It is mixed in full strength in the cup of God's anger. They will be punished with fire and burning sulphur in front of the holy angels and before the Lamb.

11 The smoke of those who are being punished will go up forever. They have no rest day or night. It is because they have worshiped the wild animal and his false god and have received the mark of his name.

12 This is why God's people need to keep true to God's Word and stay faithful to Jesus.

13 Then I heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Write these words: 'From now on those who are dead who died belonging to the Lord will be happy.'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will have rest from all their work. All the good things they have done will follow them."

# Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Revelation:*  
*Strong Hope for Fearful Times*

## Lesson 10: Songs of Victory and Scenes of Destruction

### Bible Text

Revelation 15-16

### Memory Verse

“The joy of being saved is being heard in the tents of those who are right and good. The right hand of the Lord does powerful things.” (Psalm 118:15)

### Word List

**drought:** a time when there is little or no rain  
**heritage:** history, tradition  
**plagues:** harmful things  
**resound:** to make a loud deep sound  
**shedding:** losing

The Batak people of North Sumatra love to sing. Few of them have any musical training. Yet tourists come from far and wide to hear them sing. Nightly, in small cafes and coffee houses, they entertain visitors with their singing. In the 1880s, German missionaries brought the gospel to Sumatra. They translated the Bible into the Batak language. Entire tribes and villages became Christian. The missionaries wrote songs for

the church. The new believers had joy in the Lord. The songs helped them celebrate their new life in Christ. Mothers sang songs to their children. Music became part of their **heritage**. Today the voices of Batak Christians **resound** from churches in North Sumatra.

People who experience victory in Jesus have joy. They sing about that joy. In John’s vision of the end times, the saints were singing. They were celebrating with Christ the final victory against Satan. But not everyone will be singing in the end time. Those who have not worshiped Christ will face judgment.

### Seven Troubles by Seven Angels

**(Revelation 15:1-8)**

The early Christians lived at a difficult time. They lived under the rule of Rome. The Roman empire persecuted Christians. They made their lives hard. They often killed Christians. But Christians were faithful. They refused to worship the emperor and do evil.

God gave John visions about the end times. The visions encouraged the early Christians and us today. The visions helped the Christians know their suffering was temporary. In the end, Satan will be judged and punished. Faithful followers of Christ will receive eternal reward.

In one vision, John saw something happening in heaven. He saw a group of

people standing at a sea of glass. They were singing. They were the army of people who were the first to be given to God (chapter 14). They were those who had not followed the serpent Satan. They remained faithful to Christ, even when they faced death.

This group was singing a celebration song. It was the Song of Moses and the Song of the Lamb. The early Christians knew the story of their history. Years before, their ancestors stood on the banks of the Red Sea after Moses led them across. God destroyed the Egyptians who followed in the water. God poured out His anger on the Egyptians. But He protected His people. Now, God was preparing to pour out His anger on Satan and his followers in the final battle. The Song of the Lamb celebrated Jesus, the Lamb of God who saves everyone who trusts in Him.

The song said God's judgment at the end is right. God is All-powerful. He is always right and true. The song asked the question: "Who will not honor You, Lord, with love and fear? For You are the only One Who is holy." The song proclaimed that God is King of all nations. And in the end, all nations will come and worship the one true God.

John kept looking at the vision. He saw seven angels with seven jars of trouble. The troubles were a symbol for God's anger. The angels were about to pour troubles on the earth. The seven angels came out of the

Holiest Place of All, the Temple. They were wearing white, the symbol of holiness. They received the jars filled with the anger of God.

The Temple filled with smoke because God's presence and power were there. No one was allowed to go into the Temple until the seven angels poured out the seven jars of God's anger.

The vision showed what will happen at the end time. God will pour out His anger on Satan and all evil. In the end, Satan and all who follow him will be destroyed. God will have complete victory over Satan. John's vision gives the early Christians hope. They will endure because they know the final victory belongs to Christ.

### **Jars of Trouble (Revelation 16:1-11)**

God told the angels to go and pour out His anger on the earth. The jars of trouble were like the **plagues** God brought on the Egyptians at the time of Moses. Each angel had a different target. One target received sores. Another target was the sea, which turned into blood. A third target was the rivers and streams. They turned to blood, too. The angel told that the evil doers that they are getting pay-back for **shedding** the blood of Christ's followers. The fourth jar of trouble made the sun hotter so the earth had **drought**. The fifth angel targeted Satan's throne and turned it to darkness. He no longer had power.

But even after these troubles, many people still refused to worship God.

People who follow Satan and do evil will face God's judgment in the end. The jars of trouble reminded Christians of God's protection in Egypt. It gave them confidence that God would protect them from His anger in the end. Their confidence (and ours) is in Jesus, who took our judgment on Himself.

### **The Sixth and Seventh Jars (Revelation 16:12-16)**

The sixth jar of troubles targeted the Euphrates River. The final battle between good and evil was called Armageddon. Demons came out of the mouth of frogs. They gathered the kings of the earth, the armies of Satan. They prepared for battle. In this final battle, God destroys Satan completely.

After this battle, Jesus will return to earth. This is the promise we have from

Jesus. He says He will "come like a robber." He will come when we do not expect Him. Followers of Jesus must stay watchful and prepared to welcome the Lord.

The seventh angel poured the jar of trouble into the air. Satan cannot hide in the air because God is Lord over everything on earth and in the air. The lightning, thunder, and earthquake show God's glory. After the seventh jar was poured out, God said, "It is done." These were the last words of Jesus before He died on the cross. God, the Alpha and Omega, knows when the end time will come. He will say when His anger will be poured out. He is the beginning and the end. He is in control of all things.

The big and strong cities of Babylon and Rome will experience God's anger. All empires that have not worshiped the Lamb will experience God's anger. Every person who bears the mark of Satan will experience God's anger. But all who bear the mark of Christ will be victorious.

### **Things to Think About**

1. What action does the study of this passage make you want to take?
2. What has God done in your life that makes you want to praise Him?
3. Is there a praise song you could sing to express your joy and hope in the Lord?
4. What is your response to people who refuse to worship Christ? How could you warn them that the end time is coming?

### **Things to Remember**

The end of time is coming. God has promised a final victory over Satan. God, who is right and true, will judge everyone. As Christians, we await Christ's return to the earth. In hope, we endure hardship and persecution in this life. One day we will experience complete victory. There will be a

new creation. Christ will rule forever and ever. This fills our hearts with joy and puts a song on our lips!

### Revelation 15

1 Then I saw something else special in heaven that was great and made me wonder. There were seven angels with the seven last kinds of trouble. With these, God's anger is finished.

2 Then I saw something that looked like a sea of glass mixed with fire. I saw many standing on the sea of glass. They were those who had won their fight with the wild animal and his false god and with his mark. All of them were holding harps that God had given to them.

3 They were singing the song of Moses, who was a servant owned by God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "The things You do are great and powerful. You are the All-powerful Lord God. You are always right and true in everything You do. You are King of all nations.

4 Who will not honor You, Lord, with love and fear? Who will not tell of the greatness of Your name? For You are the only One Who is holy. All nations will come and worship before You. Everyone sees that You do the right things."

5 After this I looked and saw that the Holiest Place of All in the house of God was opened.

6 The seven angels who had the seven last

kinds of trouble came out of the house of God. They were wearing clothes made of clean white linen. They were wearing belts made of gold around their chests.

7 Then one of the four living beings gave to each of the seven angels a jar made of gold. These jars were filled with the anger of God Who lives forever.

8 The house of God was filled with smoke from the shining-greatness and power of God. No one was able to go into the house of God until the seven angels had completed the seven kinds of trouble.

### Revelation 16:1-21

1 Then I heard a loud voice coming from the house of God. The voice said to the seven angels, "Go and pour out the seven jars of God's anger onto the earth!"

2 The first angel poured out his jar of God's anger onto the earth. Painful sores were given to everyone who had the mark of the wild animal and who worshiped his god.

3 The second angel poured out his jar of God's anger onto the sea. The water became like the blood of a dead man. Every living thing in the sea died.

4 The third angel poured out his jar of God's anger onto the rivers and places where water comes out of the earth. The water turned to blood.

5 I heard the angel of the waters saying, "You

are right in punishing by sending this trouble. You are the Holy One Who was and is and will be.

6 They have poured out the blood of God's people and of the early preachers. You have given them blood to drink. They are getting the pay that is coming to them."

7 I heard a voice from the altar saying, "Lord God, the All-powerful One! What You decide about people is right and true."

8 The fourth angel poured out his jar of God's anger onto the sun. It was allowed to burn men with its fire.

9 Men were burned with the heat of this fire and they called God bad names even when He had the power over these kinds of trouble. They were not sorry for their sins and did not turn from them and honor Him.

10 The fifth angel poured out his jar of God's anger upon the throne of the wild animal. The whole nation of the wild animal was turned into darkness. Those who worshiped him bit their tongues because of the pain.

11 They called the God of heaven bad names because of their pain and their sores. They were not sorry for what they had done.

12 The sixth angel poured out his jar of God's anger onto the great Euphrates River. The water dried up. In this way, the kings of the countries of the east could cross over.

13 Then I saw three demons that looked like frogs. They came out of the mouths of the

dragon and the second wild animal and the false preacher.

14 These are demons that do powerful works. These demons go to all the kings of all the earth. They bring them together for the war of the great day of the All-powerful God.

15 (See! I will come like a robber. The man is happy who stays awake and keeps his clothes ready. He will not be walking around without clothes and be ashamed.)

16 Then the demons brought the kings together in the place called Armageddon in the Hebrew language.

17 The seventh angel poured out his jar of God's anger into the air. A loud voice came from the throne in the house of God, saying, "It is all done!"

18 Then there were voices and lightning and thunder and the earth shook. The earth shook much more than it had ever shaken before.

19 The big and strong city of Babylon was split in three parts. The cities of other nations fell to the ground. Then God remembered the strong city of Babylon. He made her drink the wine from His cup of much anger.

20 Every island went down into the sea. No mountain could be found.

21 Large pieces of hail fell from heaven on men. These pieces were about as heavy as an older child. But men called God bad names because of so much trouble from the hail.

# Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Revelation:  
Strong Hope for Fearful Times*

## Lesson 11: Babylon Falls

### Bible Text

Revelation 17:1-6; 18:1-8

### Memory Verse

“The love of money is the beginning of all kinds of sin.” (1 Timothy 6:10a)

### Word List

**corrupt:** dishonest, immoral

**greed:** a selfish desire to have more

**immoral:** evil or wrong

**promote:** make people aware

**take advantage of:** use in a way that is harmful

**thriving:** succeeding

**underprivileged:** poor or disadvantaged

On the shelves of our grocery stores are items labeled “Fair Trade.” We can find fair trade coffee, tea, chocolate, sugar, wine, and more. In the 1940s, American and European organizations began the fair trade movement. They wanted to reach out to poor communities in our world. Over time, a network of fair trade organizations grew.

These organizations **promote** respect for people and the planet. They promote safe and healthy working conditions. They

empower communities to build strong, **thriving** businesses. So, when we buy fair trade items at our grocery store, we are helping. We are helping improve the day-to-day lives of entire communities.

Today, there are governments, large corporations, and land owners that **take advantage of** the poor. They push to increase their own wealth. During the first century, the Roman Empire misused its wealth and power. The Book of Revelation pronounces judgment on Rome. Our study today calls us to examine our own use of wealth and power. Are we using them well? Are we doing what we can to help the **underprivileged** in our world?

### A Corrupt Empire (Revelation 17:1-6)

In Revelation 16, we learned that the seventh jar of God’s anger destroyed the evil empire of Babylon. In Revelation 17, John gave more details about Babylon’s fall. The angel said Babylon was like a person who sells the use of her body, a prostitute. This image contrasts with the image Revelation uses for the church. The true church of Christ is pure, like a bride. Babylon was immoral like a prostitute. Rome was the “Babylon” of John’s day. Rome did many immoral acts.

In John’s vision, the prostitute was sitting on many waters. The angel explained

in verse 15 that “the waters” were “people and large groups of people and nations and languages.” They followed Rome and the evil practices of Rome. Both kings and peoples joined in the immorality of Rome.

The angel carried John to the desert. He saw a woman sitting on a red, wild animal. It was the prostitute of verse 1. The animal she was riding was the snake-like animal, the serpent of chapter 12. He was red and had seven heads and ten horns. The animal was also like the wild animal, the beast of chapter 13. The beast, like Rome, spoke bad words against God. He demanded worship. He tried to appear like Jesus.

Here in Revelation, John used more symbols. A symbol is a picture of one thing that represents another thing. The seven heads may have been a symbol for all the emperors of Rome, past and present, and one to come. The Roman empire was continuing, but it would come to an end. The ten horns were a symbol for ten kings who received their power from Rome. They did what Rome said. But later they would turn against Rome (17:16-17). History reveals that the empire of Rome fell from within. It fell from corruption within, not from foreign armies.

The woman prostitute wore clothing like a queen. They were made with expensive red and purple dyes. Her jewelry of gold, pearls, and precious stones displayed her

wealth. Everything about the woman was too much. It showed her **greed**. Her clothes and jewels did not make her look beautiful. She was **immoral**.

She was holding a cup full of the sinful things she had done. The name on her forehead boldly announced who she was: The mother of everything sinful on the earth.

In Israel’s earlier history, Babylon destroyed Jerusalem. Babylon forced the people into exile. John saw Rome as a second Babylon. Rome demanded worship by its citizens. Rome practiced immorality. It oppressed God’s people. Rome was the mother of all evil. She used her power and wealth for evil. Her most serious evil was persecuting followers of Christ.

Revelation clearly shows that all who do evil will face judgment. All who use their wealth and power to persecute God’s people will be punished.

### **Come Out, My People (Revelation 18:1-5)**

The angel made a big announcement about Babylon. He announced that “the big and powerful city of Babylon is destroyed.” The angel spoke in the past tense. But the final destruction of Babylon is in the future. Babylon is no longer a great and beautiful city. The angel said she was full of demons and unclean spirits. Birds that eat dead things lived there.

The Roman empire was a vast empire. It was also an evil empire. It conquered other nations with its mighty armies. It conquered other nations with its wealth. Rome's economy was strong! But the Romans used their wealth only for themselves. They oppressed the poor. They took food from poor nations to use for themselves.

God's voice from heaven called His people to come out from Rome. He did not want His people to be part of her sin. He did not want His people to oppress others. He did not want them to worship wealth. John knew his readers faced temptation to follow Rome's ways. He told them to stand firm in their faith.

### **Judgment on Babylon's Pride (Revelation 18:6-8)**

God's voice from heaven declared that Rome must be paid back for what she had

#### **Things to Think About**

1. Have you ever been in a tight place financially when you were tempted to compromise your morals?
2. How would you compare our nation's morality today to the idolatry and oppression of Rome?
3. Each person has some power and wealth. (Consider a mother's power over the home and her children.) How do you keep from misusing your power and wealth?
4. How can you as a Christ-follower be a voice for the underprivileged?

done. Rome had caused others to suffer. Now she must suffer. She must drink the jar of troubles. She must receive trouble and suffering as much as the fun and the rich living she chose for herself.

The Book of Revelation describes Rome as a prostitute. Full of pride, she believed she was a queen. But her expensive clothes did not cover her sin. She was guilty of immorality, oppression, and pride. She believed she would not face judgment. But she could not escape the power of God. God would judge her evil. He would judge her oppression of others.

#### **Things to Remember**

Babylon and Rome represent all empires who oppose God's ways. These empires demand worship. They oppress people. They use wealth and power to do evil. The first-century Christians probably never thought Rome would fall. But a misuse of power and wealth always leads to God's justice.

If we as Christians use power and wealth for ourselves, we are like Babylon. We participate in Babylon's sins. God's judgment on Babylon warns Christians to stand against oppression and pride.

We can do that by refusing to do evil. We can speak for the underprivileged who

have no voice. We can use our money to work for the kingdom of God.

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### Revelation 17:1-6

1 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven jars came to me. He said, “Come! I will show you how the powerful woman who sells the use of her body will be punished. She sits on the many waters of the world.

2 The kings of the earth have done sex sins with her. People of the world have been made drunk with the wine of her sex sins.”

3 I was carried away in the Spirit by the angel to a desert. I saw a woman sitting on a red wild animal. It had seven heads and ten horns. All over the red wild animal was written bad names which spoke against God.

4 The woman was wearing purple and red clothes. She was wearing gold and pearls and stones worth much money. She had in her hand a gold cup full of sinful things from her sex sins.

5 There was a name written on her forehead which had a secret meaning. It said, “The big and powerful Babylon, mother of all women who sell the use of their bodies and mother of everything sinful of the earth.”

6 I looked at the woman. She was drunk with the blood of God’s people and those who had been killed for telling about Jesus. When I saw her, I wondered very much.

### Revelation 18:1-8

1 Then I saw another angel coming down from heaven. He had much power. The earth was made bright with his shining-greatness.

2 He cried out with a loud voice, “The big and powerful city of Babylon is destroyed. Demons and every kind of unclean spirit live there.

Unclean birds that are hated are there.

3 For she gave her wine to the nations of the world. It was the wine of her desire for sex sins.

The kings of the earth have done these sex sins with her. The men of the earth who buy and sell have become rich from the riches she received while living in sin.”

4 I heard another voice from heaven saying, “Come out from her, my people. Do not be a part of her sins so you will not share her troubles.

5 For her sins are as high as heaven. God is ready to punish her for her sins.

6 Pay her back for what she has paid you. Give back to her twice as much for what she has done. In her own cup give her twice as much as she gave.

7 Give her as much trouble and suffering as the fun and the rich living she chose for herself. In her heart she says, ‘I sit here like a queen. I am not a woman whose husband has died. I will never have sorrow.’

8 Because of this, troubles of death and sorrow and no food will come to her in one day. She will be burned with fire. For the Lord God is powerful. He is the One Who says she is guilty.

# Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Revelation:  
Strong Hope for Fearful Times*

## Lesson 12: The Return of the King

### Bible Text

Revelation 19:11-21; 20:1-10

### Memory Verse

“Thanks to our God. For the Lord our God is King. He is the All-powerful One.” (Revelation 19:6b)

### Word List

**authority:** power to give orders and make decisions

**certain:** having no doubt

**lyrics:** words to a song

**mercy:** forgiving treatment of someone who could be treated harshly

**parade:** march in way that attracts attention, celebrate

**sequence:** order in which things happen

**warrior:** a courageous fighter in battles

During the Christmas holidays, choirs around the world sing the “Hallelujah Chorus” from Handel’s *Messiah*. The **lyrics** proclaim that Christ will return. He will reign forever and ever. He is King of kings and Lord of lords. These words from the Book of Revelation remind us that there is a great day coming. It is a day when Christ will return to

defeat Satan completely. He will reign as victorious King forever and ever. Christians will rejoice when Jesus the King returns.

Our lesson today asks a question of us: Will we be ready to rejoice at His coming? This question is an important one. Christ has the authority over life and death. He offers salvation through His death and resurrection. One day, Jesus will return to earth as King. He will pronounce judgment. He will judge everyone who has not accepted Jesus as Savior. He will crush the enemies of God as grapes are crushed to make wine. How terrifying it will be for those who stand against this King!

### The King is Coming

**(Revelation 19:11-16)**

The Book of Revelation pictures Jesus as both a Lamb and a **warrior** King. In his vision, John saw Jesus riding on a white horse. Roman generals **paraded** in chariots pulled by white horses. This was the way they celebrated after a victory in battle. Their armies followed. The enemies came behind in chains.

Here, Jesus is the victor. He alone was riding on a white horse. He alone will defeat His enemy Satan. Jesus is faithful and true. We can trust Him to keep His promises. We can trust Him to return. We can trust Him to

defeat Satan. As warrior King, Jesus will punish in the right way at the end time. His judgments are right.

Jesus' eyes were a "flame of fire" to see through to a person's heart. On His head are many crowns. The beast in chapter 13 had 10 crowns, but Jesus has many. He is the true King who rules rightly. He has absolute authority. He has a name on Him but only He knows what it is. He has knowledge that is above human knowledge.

Jesus was wearing clothes soaked in blood. This image may refer to Christ's blood spilled on the cross. His name is called "The Word of God." Christ's word will pronounce judgment on sin and evil. By His word alone, He will defeat His enemies. Jesus is the warrior King who is greater than Rome and Roman oppression.

In John's vision, people dressed in clean, white clothes were following Jesus. This group of people may be the church. They are called the armies in heaven. But this army didn't fight in the battle. In fact, there was no battle. Jesus defeated His enemies with His sword. He alone has power over life and death. He will rule all nations with a "piece of iron." He will crush all enemies of God, like grapes are crushed when they are walked on. Christ can do this because He has all authority and power. He is King of kings and Lord of lords.

### **Jesus Binds Satan and the 1,000-Year Reign (Revelation 19:17-20:6)**

John's next vision describes the "great supper of God." It was very different from the happy "wedding supper of the Lamb" (chapter 19). This supper was sickening. Here, an angel called on birds to gather. He called them to come and eat the flesh of the dead. The dead included kings, captains of soldiers, strong men, horses, and riders. The list means all people—small and great, free and slave—who are enemies of God.

John saw the wild animal (the beast) and the kings of the earth come together. They were ready to fight against the One on the horse and His army. But there was no battle. Christ did not have to go to war against His enemies to defeat them. The word of His mouth was enough. He used the word of His mouth to pronounce judgment. The beast and the false prophet were taken. The false prophet deceived others. He led people to take the mark of the beast and worship his image.

Next, Christ threw the beast and false prophet into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is a place of punishment. He defeated Satan's armies. The birds feasted on the dead flesh.

Then in John's vision, an angel came down from heaven carrying a key and a strong chain. He grabbed the snake-like animal, the serpent Satan, and chained him up. Then he

threw him into a bottomless hole. There is no way for Satan to escape from this hole for 1,000 years. Satan had been deceiving people on earth. In the hole, he cannot fool people any more. After 1,000 years, Satan must be freed for a while.

People call this 1,000-year period of time the “millennium.” During this time, Satan cannot fool people. It is a time when saints will come back to life. They will be leaders with Christ in victory. Saints are people who told about Jesus and were killed. They are people who did not worship the beast. They are people who did not take the mark of the beast on their foreheads or hands. These are happy and holy people.

Bible teachers don’t agree on the **sequence** of events of the end time. But they all agree that God knows both the right

order and the right time. God wants His people to be faithful and ready.

### **Satan’s Final Defeat (Revelation 20:7-10)**

At the end of the millennium, Satan is let out of his prison. He will go about his old work of fooling people all over the world. He will gather a huge army of people who believe his lies. They will go to war against God’s people. They will gather around the loved city, Jerusalem. Then suddenly, fire from heaven will come down and destroy them. God throws Satan into the lake of fire. He joins the beast and the false prophet who are already there. At this time, God will sit on His throne and pronounce the final judgment on all mankind. All who refuse Christ’s offer of salvation will perish. All who accept Christ as King and Lord will enter eternal life with Jesus.

### **Things to Think About**

1. John describes Jesus as Lamb, Judge, and warrior King. Which of these pictures do you find most comforting?
2. How does knowing that one day Satan will be defeated encourage you today?
3. What are the ways Satan most often deceives you? How are you resisting his lies?
4. When Christ returns to earth, will you be ready to welcome Him?
5. What message from today’s study could you share with unbelieving family members and friends?

### **Things to Remember**

Every person who lives deserves God’s judgment. “For all men have sinned and have missed the shining-greatness of God” (Romans 3:23). But Jesus offers **mercy**. As a merciful Savior, He offers salvation to all who will receive it. Jesus is also a righteous judge and a warrior King. In the end, He will defeat Satan and those who join with Satan.

No one knows the day when Christ will return and judge mankind. But His return is **certain**. His judgment is right. His mercy is real. Christ's offer of mercy is for all. Now is the time to accept His mercy.

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### **Revelation 19:11-21**

11 Then I saw heaven opened. A white horse was standing there. The One Who was sitting on the horse is called Faithful and True. He is the One Who punishes in the right way. He makes war.

12 His eyes are a flame of fire. He has many crowns on His head. His name is written on Him but He is the only One Who knows what it says.

13 The coat He wears has been put in blood. His name is The Word of God.

14 The armies in heaven were dressed in clean, white, fine linen. They were following Him on white horses.

15 Out of His mouth comes a sharp sword to punish the nations. He will be the Leader over them using a piece of iron. He walks on the grapes where wine is made, pressing out the anger of God, the All-powerful One.

16 On His coat and on His leg is the name written, "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."

17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun. He cried out with a loud voice to all the birds

flying in the sky, "Come and gather together for the great supper of God!

18 Come and eat the flesh of kings and of captains of soldiers and of strong men and of the flesh of horses and of those sitting on them. Come and eat the flesh of all men, small and great. Some are free and some are not free."

19 Then I saw the wild animal and the kings of the earth and their armies gather together. They were ready to fight against the One Who is sitting on the white horse and against His army.

20 The wild animal was taken. The false preacher was taken with it. It was the false preacher who had done powerful works in front of the wild animal. In this way, he fooled those who had received the mark of the wild animal and those who worshiped his false god. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulphur.

21 The rest were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the One Who sat on the horse. All the birds were filled by eating the flesh of these who were killed.

### **Revelation 20:1-10**

1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven. He had in his hand a key to the hole without a bottom. He also had a strong chain.

2 He took hold of the dragon, that old snake, who is the Devil, or Satan, and chained him for 1,000 years.

3 The angel threw the devil into the hole without a bottom. He shut it and locked him in it. He could not fool the nations anymore until the 1,000 years were completed. After this he must be free for awhile.

4 Then I saw thrones. Those who were sitting there were given the power to judge. I saw the souls of those who had been killed because they told about Jesus and preached the Word of God. They had not worshiped the wild animal or his false god. They had not received his mark on their foreheads or hands. They lived again and were leaders along with Christ for 1,000 years.

5 The rest of the dead did not come to life again until the 1,000 years were finished. This is the first time many people are raised from the dead at the same time.

6 Those who are raised from the dead during this first time are happy and holy. The second death has no power over them. They will be religious leaders of God and of Christ. They will be leaders with Him for 1,000 years.

7 When the 1,000 years are finished, Satan will be free to leave his prison.

8 He will go out and fool the nations who are over all the world. They are Gog and Magog. He will gather them all together for war.

There will be as many as the sand along the sea-shore.

9 They will spread out over the earth and all around the place where God's people are and around the city that is loved. Fire will come down from God out of heaven and destroy them.

10 Then the devil who fooled them will be thrown into the lake of fire burning with sulphur. The wild animal and the false preacher are already there. They will all be punished day and night forever.

# Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Revelation:  
Strong Hope for Fearful Times*

## Lesson 13: A New Heaven and a New Earth

### Bible Text

Revelation 21:1-8; 22:1-7, 16-17

### Memory Verse

“Then the One sitting on the throne said, ‘See! I am making all things new. Write, for these words are true and faithful.’” (Revelation 21:5)

### Word List

**fulfilled:** made true or real

**varmints:** animals that are considered a problem

**witchcraft:** magical powers gotten from evil spirits

As a beginner gardener, I struggled to keep weeds, insects, and **varmints** out of my garden. I worked hard, but I didn't mind. I hoped to harvest beautiful tomatoes, squash, and beans. I often thought about the very first garden, the Garden of Eden. It was easy for me to blame Adam and Eve. Their sinning caused the hard work for me in my garden! Then I thought of God's promise: One day He will make a new creation. The new heaven and new earth will be perfect. It will not have

the curse of sin. It will be a home for God to enjoy with His people.

Our studies in Revelation give a picture of the end times. At that time God will judge Satan and his followers. But those who trust Christ will receive mercy. Today's study shows what the future after judgment will be like. God will bring a new heaven and new earth. It will be perfect, like the Garden of Eden. All who trust Christ have a beautiful future to look forward to.

### All Things New (Revelation 21:1-8)

John sees the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven. It was coming down to the new earth. This city would be the home of God and God's people. God has been preparing the city, waiting for this time. The city is like a bride being made ready for her bridegroom.

In the vision, John heard a loud voice. The voice was God's voice. He announced that He will make His home with men on earth. God will again walk and talk with people like He did in the Garden of Eden. Everyone in the New Jerusalem will enjoy the blessing of God's presence.

We long for a life with no suffering. We wish there were no death, sorrow, crying, or pain. In the new heaven and new earth, God will take away these things. There will be no more tears.

This was very good news for the early Christians. They were living in difficult times. Christians were persecuted and often killed. Many of them lacked enough food. This message brings encouragement to Christians who suffer today, too. We also long for the new heaven and new earth to come.

In the vision, God instructed John to write. God said that His words are true and faithful. He said “these things have happened!” He said He is the first and the last, the beginning and the end. He said He will give the water of life to anyone who is thirsty. It is a free gift.

We can believe all the things God says. He is faithful and true. In the beginning, God created the world and the first human beings. In the end, He will bring the old world to an end. He will bring a new heaven and new earth. God invites everyone who thirsts for His presence to come drink of His life. A person who receives the gift of life becomes a son of God. This is life’s greatest blessing!

Even so, people still refuse to receive the water of life. These are people who do bad things. They do sex sins, murder, follow **witchcraft**, worship idols, and tell lies. Their minds are always on sinful things. They refuse to trust in Christ. None of these people will enter the New Jerusalem. Instead, they will face God’s judgment.

## The River and the Tree

(Revelation 22:1-7)

What will the main street in the New Jerusalem be like? Picture a street with a river flowing down the middle! It is the river of the “water of life.” It flows from the throne of God. In this new city, people will have free access to this life-giving water.

In John’s vision, the tree of life was growing on each side of the river. In the Garden of Eden, there was only one tree of life growing. Here, there were trees growing on both sides of the river. And they produced a new kind of fruit every month! Who would not want to sample this fruit? In Eden, Adam and Eve lost the right to eat of the tree of life. In the New Jerusalem, we will feast upon the abundant, luscious fruit.

The greatest blessing of the New Jerusalem will be seeing Christ face to face. Nothing will separate us from Him: no sin or death or time or space. We will be full of joy to simply be in His presence. And we will have all eternity to live in His presence. We will have His name on our foreheads, showing that we belong to Him.

In this new city, there will be no night and no darkness! In our present world, we experience the physical darkness of night. We also experience spiritual darkness caused by sin. In the new heaven, the darkness of sin will be gone. God’s glory will shine brighter

than the sun. In this new, wonderful place, God will allow His people to be leaders with Him. We will share in His victory over Satan and evil.

The angel assured John that what he has said is true. He explained that he was sent to tell what will happen in the future. He was sent to deliver Christ's message: "I am coming soon!" We can trust these things will happen because God always keeps His promises.

Christ promised to return, and we can believe it. We don't know the day or exactly how it will happen. But we know it is certain. We look forward to Christ's return, and we must prepare for it. We prepare by being faithful followers of Christ now. We can be happy knowing there are blessings awaiting us in the new heaven and new earth.

### **The Invitation to Come (Revelation 22:16-17)**

We believe the promises Jesus made because of Who He is. God promised that His

Son would come from the family line of David. Jesus is from the line of David. He **fulfilled** God's promise.

Because Jesus is the promised Savior, He is the "bright Morning Star." He issues an invitation to all: "Come!" This invitation is from the heart of God. The Holy Spirit and the church, the Bride of Christ, call people to come to Christ. The call is for people who thirst. It is for people who want to drink of the water of life. The invitation is a plea: Come! Drink! It is a free gift!

### **Things to Remember**

Our world needs the hope Christ gives. In John's closing words in Revelation, Christ makes all things new. He brings a Holy City. He takes away sin. He turns darkness to light.

This gives hope. In this new city, believers will experience the wonders and blessings of life in the presence of God. There is enough room in this new city for all who will accept the invitation to "Come, drink of the water of life." Will you come? Will you give the invitation to others?

### **Things to Think About**

1. How would you explain to another person that the gospel of Christ is a gift?
2. Which description of heaven do you look forward to the most?
3. How does your hope in heaven affect your decisions today?

**Revelation 21:1-8**

1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The first heaven and the first earth had passed away. There was no more sea.

2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem. It was coming down out of heaven from God. It was made ready like a bride is made ready for her husband.

3 I heard a loud voice coming from heaven. It said, "See! God's home is with men. He will live with them. They will be His people. God Himself will be with them. He will be their God.

4 God will take away all their tears. There will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All the old things have passed away."

5 Then the One sitting on the throne said, "See! I am making all things new. Write, for these words are true and faithful."

6 Then He said to me, "These things have happened! I am the First and the Last. I am the beginning and the end. To anyone who is thirsty, I will give the water of life. It is a free gift.

7 He who has power and wins will receive these things. I will be his God and he will be My son.

8 But those who are afraid and those who do not have faith and the sinful-minded people and those who kill other people and those who do sex sins and those who follow witchcraft and those who worship false gods and all those who tell lies will be put into the lake of fire and sulphur. This is the second death."

**Revelation 22:1-7, 16-17**

1 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life. It was as clear as glass and came from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

2 It runs down the center of the street in the city. On each side of the river was the tree of life. It gives twelve different kinds of fruit. It gives this fruit twelve times a year, new fruit each month. Its leaves are used to heal the nations.

3 There will be nothing in the city that is sinful. The place where God and the Lamb sit will be there. The servants He owns will serve Him.

4 They will see His face and His name will be written on their foreheads.

5 There will be no night there. There will be no need for a light or for the sun. Because the Lord God will be their light. They will be leaders forever.

6 Then the angel said to me, "These words are faithful and true. The Lord God of the early preachers has sent His angel to show the servants He owns what must happen soon."

7 "See! I am coming soon. The one who obeys what is written in this Book is happy!"

...

16 "I am Jesus. I have sent My angel to you with these words to the churches. I am the beginning of David and of his family. I am the bright Morning Star."

17 The Holy Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!" Let the one who hears, say, "Come!" Let the one who is thirsty, come. Let the one who wants to drink of the water of life, drink it. It is a free gift.