

**Adult  
Bible Study  
in  
Simplified  
English**



**Teaching  
Guide**



# Revelation

*VISIONS THAT ENCOURAGE AND CHALLENGE*

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Wrotenbery**

BAPTISTWAY PRESS  
Dallas, Texas

# **ADULT BIBLE STUDY IN SIMPLIFIED ENGLISH**

## **Teaching Guide**

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### **Revelation: Visions That Encourage and Challenge**

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# Introduction for Teachers

The purpose of this teaching guide is to provide teachers with a plan for teaching a quality Bible lesson while helping participants improve their English language skills. Use of this material is suggested for International Sunday School classes or any Bible study group taught at a Basic English level.

The teaching guide begins with listings of the Lesson Focus, Focal/Background Text, and Memory Verse, all of which provide the premise for the lesson. This information is followed by a teaching plan under headings of Connect with Life, Guide the Study, and Encourage Application. At the end of each lesson, Supplemental Teaching Ideas are provided under those same headings. As the teacher, you may pick and choose from these helps to use along with the student's Study Guide to fit the lesson to your class members' abilities and needs.

The Bible text printed in the lesson material is from the NEW LIFE Version of the Bible (NLV), an inexpensive translation (not a paraphrase) which uses only an 850-word vocabulary. The NLV is available from Christian Literature International, P. O. Box 777, Canby, Oregon 97013; e-mail christian@canby.com; telephone (orders only) 1-800-324-9734.

The NLV Bible often uses simplified phrases to express terms generally familiar to anyone raised in a Christian environment. In the Teaching Guide, these terms will usually be expressed using the NLV terminology, followed by the more common term in parentheses; for example, "proud religious law-keeper (Pharisee)" or "early preacher (prophet)." The teacher has the option of using the NLV term for new Christians or beginning students, or the common term where it will be better understood and less cumbersome in teaching. Once a word or phrase has been introduced in the Word List or teaching procedures, however, the familiar expression may be used to help students add it to their vocabulary.

Prayer is sometimes specifically suggested in the teaching procedures. It should be an integral part of your lesson plan. Use your own judgment as to where it best fits into the teaching session.

The writers and editors wish you success and give you prayerful support in your teaching of this Adult Bible Study in Simplified English.

**Adult Bible Study in Simplified English is published by the Baptist General Convention of Texas and follows the same curriculum plan as the Bible Study for Texas materials, but has no Texas emphasis. Teachers may wish to purchase Bible Study for Texas lesson comments and teaching guides as additional resources. These may be ordered through your church or directly from the Sunday School/Discipleship Division, Baptist General Convention of Texas, 333 North Washington, Dallas, TX 75246-1798, e-mail baptistway@bgct.org; FAX 214-828-5187; or toll-free telephone 1-800-355-5285.**

## About the writer

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# Suggestions for Teaching

## General Suggestions

1. Provide language edition Bibles so students can read the focal passage in their native languages.
2. Beginning students may require three sessions to complete one lesson.
3. Review the Word Study before beginning the study. Provide page (see resources) for class to keep vocabulary studies in their notebooks.
4. Prepare 9-12 core sentences which tell the most important part of the Bible focal text. Illustrate each sentence with stick figures and symbols in *picture sequence* form (see details below).
5. Prepare lesson outlines or written materials before class—make your own cling sheets by cutting apart white plastic garbage bags and writing on them with markers. The plastic bags will cling to the wall.

## Bible Comments/Focal Text

1. Help students hear English and practice their pronunciation by modeling phrases and sentence. Allow the entire class to repeat. Be consistent with stress and intonation. Speak naturally.
2. Allow individual students to read a sentence or paragraph at a time. For further practice, ask students to tell sections from Bible comments in their own words.
3. When time allows, pairs may read the lesson again to each other.
4. Class may close books and listen as a native speaker reads the section again.
5. Discuss lesson using “Things to Think About.”

## Memory Verse

1. Challenge class members to say the Memory Verse several times each day.
2. Provide Study Sheets for students to write Memory Verses.
3. Write phrases or individual words on separate pieces of paper. Give to students to place in order.
4. Write entire verse on board. Read in unison. Erase key words a few at a time. Recite verse until entire verse is erased and class can repeat by memory.
5. Make a symbol for each word or phrase of the verse.
6. Use the symbols as a reminder for saying the verse.

## Picture Sequencing (Lipson Method)

This method is especially suited for teaching beginners. It consists of a series of pictures with accompanying sentences that tell a story. It may be used solely for oral production (using pictures alone) or for integrated skills (engaging students in reading and writing the story). You may use real pictures, videotape, pictures that are professionally drawn, or stick figures

Other benefits include the following:

1. Relaxed, low-anxiety atmosphere as students focus on the pictures and create their own sentences to tell the story
  - Focus on fluency, not just accuracy
  - Focus on a message or task rather than form or grammar
  - Minimal error-correction as students tell the story
2. Pictures (even stick figures) convey meaning in every language.
3. The same set of pictures can be used with more than one level of students by making the sentences easier or more difficult.
4. The use of pictures helps students learn the language in “chunks” rather than words in isolation.
5. The only item needed is a piece of chalk—or a marker, if using a cling sheet or overhead cell.

## Preparation

1. Put a story into sentences that are suitable for the level of your students. Try to tell the story with a maximum of ten sentences. For low beginners, choose the simplest and fewest words possible. Keep sentences in their most basic form, so students can combine sentences later.
2. Draw simple pictures or stick figures to illustrate key points in the story. These serve as prompts for the telling of the story. Other drawing tips:
  - An “x” in a small square beside a picture enables you to cue for a negative as you tell the story.
  - Direct quotations may be indicated with a cartoon-type bubble.

## Procedure

1. Introduce the story by following your prepared script of sentences (for consistency) and pointing to the pictures as you speak. This will give students the main idea and help them think in chunks of language (as in real-life language use).
2. Introduce the new words as you again reference the pictures. Use props and/or dramatization as needed to establish understanding. Work on individual sounds and word stress as students repeat new words.
3. Lead students in repetition of the story, one sentence at a time, working on sentence stress and intonation.
4. Lead the class in one more repetition of the story (going straight through and continuing to refer to the pictures throughout the story).
5. Ask the class to tell you the story as you cue the story sequence by pointing to the pictures. (You become “stage prompter” at this point.)
6. Then ask for a single volunteer to tell the story. (This may open the door for several more proficient students to use what they know.)
7. Divide the class into small groups of 3-5 students to

give each person practice in telling the story. (Inevitably, the most eager student will go first, followed by another “semi”-eager student. By the time it is the least proficient student’s turn, he/she will have learned a lot by listening, will have observed a good model at least a couple of times, and will have bolstered courage for risk-taking.)

8. Follow with questions to review story (begin by naming the setting, the characters, etc.—easy questions).

9. Conclude with life application questions that require some thought and give students opportunity to express opinion, emotion, and their own ideas.

**Lesson Expansion**

If the setting and circumstances permit, use these ideas:

- Sequencing pictures (a set for each pair of students) while listening to you or to a taped voice tell the story
- Picture sequencing without hearing the story told
- Matching pictures and sentences
- Scrambled sentences to arrange in order (writing numbers or letters in front of sentences to show sequence; cutting up sentences and moving around to position correct order)
- Strip story (cutting up sentences, issuing one strip per student, asking students to arrange themselves in order, having them retell the story by contributing the portion on their paper strip)
- Cloze (supplying a written copy with every n<sup>th</sup> word blank; students work in pairs to fill in the missing words)
- Dictation (teacher or student telling the story while students write what they hear)
- Provide a copy of the sentences for each student. Ask that they read the story to a partner.
- Ask students to write the story in their own words.

**Bible passage as content for reading**

*Procedure:*

1. Tell the parable or story using pictures. Use animation and simple sentences.
2. Ask questions about the main idea of the story.
3. Read story aloud while students follow along and underline unknown words. Go over the meaning of these words with the whole class.
4. Intermediate or advanced students: Have students read silently a second time to look for answers to two or three questions about details that you have written on the board. Ask students to discuss their answers with a partner. Then go over answers with the whole class.
5. Beginning or low-intermediate students: Read story again and ask students to repeat it with you line by line.
6. Invite the class to read the story with you in unison.
7. Ask pairs to read the story to each other.
8. Ask for volunteers to tell the story in their own words.
9. Make drawings large enough for the back row to see.
10. Select a list of new words in the story—unfamiliar words that the students would not likely be able to figure out from context (generally 8-10 new words per lesson).
11. List the new words in categories: verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs. When listing verbs, you may write both

simple present and past tense forms (e.g., eat/ate, walk/walked). Basic beginners would do well to tell the story in present tense, but high beginners could work in present tense, then retell the story in past tense.

**Checklist for Successful Classrooms**

*Right Kind of Input*

1. New language in every lesson
2. Input that is slightly above the students' current level of proficiency
3. Content relevant to the students' real-life needs and interests
4. Language learned in meaningful chunks, not words in isolation
5. Comprehensibility achieved by use of the following:
  - Realia or authentic materials
  - Simplified language (rephrasing, repeating, clear enunciation)
  - Demonstration and multiple examples rather than explanation
  - Lots of gestures and nonverbal language

*Low Anxiety Environment*

Students should not be afraid to make mistakes or take risks in language learning. The following factors contribute to a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere and build a sense of community:

- Personally greeting and bidding farewell to students
- Sincere and frequent affirmation
- Minimal error correction from the teacher
- Frequent reference to the culture(s) of the students
- Smiles and laughter that are commonplace
- Connecting with students through eye contact and positioning yourself on students’ eye level
- Calling students by name

*Checklist for Real-Life Interaction*

1. Pace activities with a balance of noisy/quiet and still/active
2. Attention to different learning styles (visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic)
3. Variety in grouping (predominately pairs and small groups of three or five; using whole class in initial presentation and again for feedback and wrap-up at the end)
4. A focus on a task or message rather than form (grammar)
5. Provision for all four skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing)
6. Avoidance of questions for which answers are known
7. Use of information gap activity in which partners have different pieces of information and must ask each other questions in order to fill in their gaps of understanding
8. Other useful activities: surveys, interviews, role-play, problem-solving, and interactive games
9. Review previous material.

Some suggestions based on material developed for the EFL Training Manual—Beyond our Borders.

# Teaching Guide

Revelation: Visions That Encourage and Challenge

Unit 1: Visions of Christ, Our Ruler and Redeemer

## Lesson 1: Christ, Lord of All

### Lesson Focus

Jesus is Lord over all for all time.

### Focal Text

Revelation 1:1-19

### Background Text

Revelation 1

### 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)

### Connect with Life

1. Tell the class: *There have been many times through history when men have suffered difficulties and even death because of their religious beliefs. In many places it still happens even today. Try to imagine what that must be like. Perhaps some of you have had that experience or know those who have. When the book of Revelation was written between 90 and 96 AD, the Roman Empire had become such a place. The emperor Domitian required that all his subjects proclaim him a god. Every year, on pain of death, they must declare that the emperor was the supreme god. They could also worship lesser gods, but they must make this public statement and burn a pinch of incense to Domitian. Being a Christian was dangerous. The book of Revelation was to encourage and comfort those early Christians. Because Christianity was an illegal religion, names of real people and places aren't used. He uses other things to represent people and places in his writing. He does this to protect both the writer and the reader. That is why the book is hard for us to understand today. Some of the symbolism is obscure to us now. The writer,*

*John, was in danger because he was already recognized as a traitor. He was in exile on a barren island called Patmos, about 40 miles off the coast of Asia Minor near Ephesus. Some of what John tells us concerns events in his time, some in the future, and some in the end times.*

### Guide the Study

2. Read to the class Revelation 1:1-3. Explain that we need to know several things to begin the study.

Ask:

—*Who is John? (A willing servant or slave of Jesus Christ)*

—*Where does John get his information? (God reveals this to Jesus who tells John. )*

Point out that John insists it is all true. Ask: *What promise is in verse 3?(The man who reads this book, the persons who hear him read it, and all who obey it will be happy or blessed.)* Point out that when Jesus says it must happen soon, His time is not the same as ours.

3. Ask a student to read Revelation 1:4-8. Ask: *To whom is John writing? (The 7 churches in Asia.)*

These churches are in Asia Minor, not the continent of Asia. They seem to be in towns of each district so that the word can easily be circulated to other churches in their area. Tell the class: *The seven Spirits from the seven churches are thought by some scholars to be their pastors, spiritual leaders, or ministers. Others consider them actual angels who watch over the church. When John tells us in verse 5 that Christ is the first to be raised from the dead, he is saying that Jesus is the prototype or the first of His kind. In other words, Jesus' followers will be resurrected also. John tells us three other things in verse 5.*

Ask the class these questions:

—*What are they? (First, Jesus is head over all the earthly kings. Second, He loves us. Third, He has set us free from sin by His blood.)*

—*What does verse 7 tell us about how Jesus will*

come back? (He will come in the clouds and every person, even those who killed Jesus, will see Him.)  
—In verse 8 how does Jesus identify himself? (He is the first and last, the beginning and the end of all things, the All powerful One, Who was and is and is to come.)

4. Ask a student to read Revelation 1:9-11. Ask:  
—How does John identify himself to his readers? (A Christian brother who shared with you in suffering because of Christ and shared in the holy nation)  
—What suffering does John tell of? (Exiled to Patmos because he preached Jesus.)  
—How and when did John receive this prophecy? (It was the Lord's Day. John was worshiping in the Spirit's power. A loud voice like a horn or trumpet spoke behind him.)  
—What did the voice instruct him to do? (Write down what I tell you and show you.)  
—Where are the churches? (At Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea) Show these on a map to see that they can form a loop of churches fairly close together.

5. Have someone read Revelation 1:12-16. Tell the class: *What John is trying to describe is a vision not to be taken entirely literally. It is his effort to show the glory of what he saw.* Ask: *What does John see first? (Seven golden lights or lamp stands)* Describe the one who is in the midst of the lights: *One who looks like the Son of Man, wearing a long robe with a band of gold tied around His chest. His head and hair were white as snow and His eyes like fire. His feet were like brass heated in a fire. He held seven stars in his right hand. A sharp two-edged sword was in his mouth. His face was as bright as noontday sun.*

6. Ask a student to read Revelation 1:17-20. Then ask:  
—How does John react? (He falls at the feet of the person.)  
—What does the One do? (He laid His right hand on John and told him not to be afraid because He was the First and the Last, the Living One. He was dead but is now alive forever.)  
—What was John told to do? (Write down what he

saw and heard. Some of the things were present in John's day and some were to come later.)  
—In verse 20 what further explanation was given? (The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lights are the churches themselves.)

7. Ask a student to read from the study guide the section which discusses Revelation 1:14-19. Check to see if there are any questions about this.

## Encourage Application

8. Ask the students to begin a word list of new and difficult words.

9. Have the group look at the "Things to Think About" in the study guide. Ask for members to answer the questions aloud. Discuss. Close with a prayer for all who need Jesus' encouraging words about what happens after this life.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

1. Ask students to read aloud the four introductory paragraphs in the study guide. Explain that this provides a background for the study of this book which is set in the last years of the first century. These events caused God to provide these prophecies to His people. They needed encouragement and hope since their life was dangerous and difficult. Also point out that there is much hope and encouragement for today's Christian to be found here.

## Encourage Application

2. Ask the group: *What do you feel are the major teachings of this chapter?* Write these on a poster, chart, or erasable board. Here are some possible answers:

—Jesus has always existed.

—He is Lord of all earth and heaven.

—He loves us and wants to comfort us.

—God guides and sustains Christians through problems.

—There is a glorious life after this one for those who believe in and follow Jesus.

# Teaching Guide

Revelation: Visions That Encourage and Challenge

Unit 1: Visions of Christ, Our Ruler and Redeemer

## Lesson 2: Christ, Lord of the Churches

### Lesson Focus

Christ encourages the churches and calls for repentance and faithfulness.

### Focal Text

Revelation 2:1-11, 3:14-21

### Background Text

Revelation 2-3

### Memory Verse

“See! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and we will eat together.” (Revelation 3:20)

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### Connect with Life

1. Ask the class to imagine what it might be like to look in the mailbox one day and find a letter from Jesus. Imagine what kind of things He might write: praise, blame, forgiveness, encouragement. Tell the class: *Our lesson today examines three of the seven letters John was told to write to the churches—the letters to the churches at Ephesus, Smyrna, and Laodicea. These letters offer all the kinds of things you imagined in the letter you might receive: praise, blame, love, encouragement, advice.*

### Guide the Study

2. Choose a student to read Revelation 2:2-3. These verses list the things that Ephesian Christians were doing that pleased Jesus. Ask the group to list these as you record them on the board or on a chart or poster:

- They have worked hard.*
- They have been patient.*
- They do not tolerate sinful men.*
- They have tested the traveling missionaries and found them false.*
- They have suffered but not given up.*

The beginning of the letter in biblical times identified the person sending the message. Ask how this person was described. Say: *He is the One Who holds the seven stars in His right hand and the One who walks among the seven lights made of gold.*

Point out how carefully the name of Jesus is concealed here.

3. Now ask someone to read Revelation 2:4-7.

After the praise comes the blame for the weaknesses which Jesus sees. Then ask:

—*What are the Ephesians being blamed for? (Jesus feels that they do not have the intense love which they once had.)*

—*What might account for that? (They have lost their enthusiasm from too many difficulties and much suffering. Or perhaps they have begun to take their salvation for granted. Perhaps Jesus sees that they need a re-commitment of that intense love they first felt when their salvation was new.)*

—*What does He tell them? (Repent and return to your former feeling. He threatens to remove their light if they do not. In verse 6 He also praises the Ephesians for hating the actions of the Nicolaitans.)*

Read the last paragraph in the study guide under the heading “The Letter to the Church at Ephesus.”

4. Ask someone to read Revelation 2:8-11. Ask the class: *How is the greeting different? (The letter to Ephesus refers to One Who holds the seven stars and Who walks among the seven lights. The Letter to Smyrna refers to One Who is, the First and the Last and the One Who died and came to life again.)*

Tell the class: *Jesus offered sympathy to the church at Smyrna. They were poor and much abused by the Jews of the city who Jesus says belong to the devil rather than to God. Jesus urges them not to be afraid to face prison and death. He promises the suffering will not be continuous. The ten days was used to signify a short time. Ask:*

—*What reward are they promised? (A crown of life)*



—*What protection is offered? (They will not be harmed by the second death by which Jesus seems to mean the final judgment.)*

5. Have a student read aloud the section of the study guide called “The Letter to the Church at Smyrna.” Ask for comments or questions.

6. Select someone to read Revelation 3:14-21. Choose another student to read that section from the study guide. Ask:

—*How is this greeting different? (It is from the One Who says, “Let it be so,” the faithful One, the One Who tells the truth, the One who made everything. Then He tells them that He knows what they are doing—the sins they commit.)*

—*What fault does He find? (They are lukewarm and should be spit out of the mouth.)*

Point out in verses 7 and 8 that Jesus says they are not rich like they think they are but poor, that is spiritually poor although they have much money. Explain that they are told to buy from Jesus gold that has been tested in fire. Ask:

—*Why do they need to buy white clothing? (White represents purity, but they are really naked and do not know it. They should feel shame.)*

—*Why does He make reference to eye salve? (Laodicea is famous for making an eye salve to cure medical eyeproblems. They are very proud of their product, but Jesus says they are blind.)*

—*Why does He speak so harshly? (He loves them and wants them to repent and be true followers.)*

Point out that verse 20 shows Him knocking at their door, not forcing His way in. Ask: *What promise is made in verse 21? (Those who repent and truly follow Him can win and join Him on His throne as He sits with His Father in heaven.)*

### Encourage Application

7. Discuss “Things to Think About” from the study guide with the class. Try to get the class to show how Jesus expects the same kind of things from us in our churches and in our daily lives. Close with prayer.

### Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

1. Collect pictures of crowns and pictures of ancient uses of crowns such as those used in the early Olympics. Display these and talk about what people do to earn them. You might want to include pictures of trophies of various kinds as the same kind of thing. The victor’s crown awarded at the Olympics was made of laurel leaves. Other ancient crowns were made of flowers. The royal crown indicates a king. Most trophies for winning sports matches are of little monetary value and only of passing significance as were the laurel wreaths. Contrast these with Jesus’ promise of a crown of life. Seek reactions and testimonies from the class about this idea.

### Encourage Application

2. Add words to the word list. See the study guide for suggested words.

3. Work in groups to learn the memory verse and recite it. Review last week’s verse.

4. Have the students write—for their own use only—the letter Jesus might write *them* with their own rebukes and praises. Close with a prayer that everyone might work on their shortcomings to please Jesus.

# Teaching Guide

Revelation: Visions That Encourage and Challenge

Unit 1: Visions of Christ, Our Ruler and Redeemer

## Lesson 3: Christ, the Key to Life's Meaning

### Lesson Focus

Christ is the key to the meaning of life and of all history.

### Focal Text

Revelation 4:1-3; 5:1-11

### Background Text

Revelation 4-5

### Memory Verse

“Your blood has bought men for God from every family and from every language and from every kind of people and from every nation.” (Revelation 5:9b)

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### Connect with Life

1. Ask: *Have you ever had a dream so real and so pleasant that you did not want to wake up and leave it?* Allow a short time for someone to recount their dream, or the teacher might tell of one. Then ask someone to read the introductory remarks in the study guide. Tell the group: *John's dream or vision began in the same way; although, later some of it was painful. It unfolds like a pageant or drama. It is very pictorial, and the pictures are full of symbols which protected him and the readers. This is what John wanted to share with the churches.*

### Guide the Study

2. Ask a student to read Revelation 4:1-3. Ask:  
—*How did John's vision begin? (A door opened in heaven, and John was invited in. He was told that he was about to learn what was to come.)*  
—*What happened to John then? (He fell under the Spirit's power.)*  
—*What did he see? (He saw a throne and on it someone was sitting.)*  
—*Describe what it looked like. (The One looked as*

*bright as jasper and sardius stones. Colors like an emerald were all around.)*

Possibly the jasper was a clear stone which reflected light. The sardius was apparently red, and the emerald may have been what we call an emerald today. This seems to be more like the idea of a rainbow.

It might be helpful here to summarize the remainder of the chapter. Tell the class: *Around the throne are twenty-four smaller thrones seating twenty-four elders or leaders who were dressed in white clothes, denoting purity. On their heads were crowns of gold. Lightning and noise came from the throne. There were seven lights of fire burning which were the seven Spirits of God. A sea like glass was before the throne. There were four living beings around the throne who resembled animals. These beings or creatures praised God and the elders fell down before God to worship. They attribute all honor and power to Him.)*

3. Ask one of the students to read Revelation 5: 4-5. Ask:

—*What did John see in the right hand of the One on the throne? (A book)* Note: Since books as we know them had not yet been invented, this was likely a scroll. It would have been made of papyrus and rolled on two spindles to be read from left to right.

—*What two things were noted about this book or scroll? (It was written on both sides, and it was locked with seven locks.)* Note: It was customary for important documents to be tied with strings with a wax seal over each knot. These locks were more likely seals which legally could be broken only by an authorized person. Papyrus was the forerunner of our modern paper. It was made of layers of beaten reeds laid in opposite directions.

—Ask: *What does John see now? (A powerful angel who called with a loud voice for someone able to open the seals)*

—*What happens next? (No one could be found to open the seals, and John began to cry because no one was good enough to open and read the book.*

*Then John is told that the Lion of Judah can open the scroll.)*

4. Choose someone to read Revelation 5:6-12. Point out that Jesus was called the Lamb of God. Only those familiar with scripture would understand this symbol. Ask the class to describe the Lamb as John saw Him. (*He looked as if He had been killed. He had seven horns and seven eyes representing the spirits of God who have gone out into the world.*)

Ask:

—*What happens next? (The Lamb took the book from the right hand of God. Then the four living creatures and twenty-four elders fell before the Lamb playing harps and offering incense which was the prayers of the persecuted. They sang a new song in praise.)*

—*What did the song say? (The Lamb is worthy to break the seals because He gave His life to buy the salvation of people of all nations. These believers will be a holy nation and leaders on earth.)*

—*What happens next? (John heard the voices of the thousands of angels who stood around the throne and the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders. They sang that the Lamb Who was killed has the right to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and thanks.)*

### **Encourage Application**

5. Discuss “Things to Think About” in the study guide. Add this question: *How does Jesus hold the key to understanding today's world and your life?* Close with prayer.

### **Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life**

1. Play a recording of “Worthy Is the Lamb” from the *Messiah*, explaining that though it was written many years ago it has remained a favorite piece of sacred music as it voices some of the events in Revelation. Then indicate that we will read about this vision in these lessons.

### **Encourage Application**

2. Review the word lists from the study guide lessons. Encourage students to keep a list of these. Check to see if there are other words to be added.

3. Work on the memory verse in groups. Recite it together. Be sure the students understand the context. Close with prayer.

# Teaching Guide

## Revelation: Visions That Encourage and Challenge Unit 2: Visions of God's Purpose—Seals and Trumpets Lesson 4: Opening the Seals of God's Scrolls

### Lesson Focus

However terrible the events of history, God is in ultimate control.

### Focal Text

Revelation 6:1-17

### Background Text

Revelation 6

### Memory Verse

“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.’” (Revelation 5:13)

### Connect with Life

1. Ask: *Have you ever seen a movie or read a book where the most important clue was in a code that couldn't be identified?* Pause to see if you can encourage a few students to tell of experiences. If not, perhaps you could share one. Continue: *If you have, you know that the plot requires someone to be able to break the code. Today's lesson has a similar situation. John sees a book telling the future, but no one is worthy to open it.*

### Guide the Study

2. Tell the class: *John's vision in these verses recalls a somewhat similar passage from Zechariah 6:1-4. Since the people who heard or read Revelation in the time of John would be familiar with the Old Testament, it was not hard for them to make the connection when four horses appear.* Choose a person to read Zechariah 6:1-8 and another to read Revelation 6:1-2. Then ask:  
—*What happens when the Lamb breaks the first*

*seal? (One of the creatures calls something to come, and John sees a white horse appear.)*  
—*Who is riding the horse? (One with a crown and carrying a bow)*

Tell the class that the crown represents a king or head of government, and the bow is the chief weapon of war. This horse represents military conquest and war. Ask: *When the second seal is broken, what happens? (A similar vision, but this is a red horse. The horseman is given a long sword and the power to take peace from the world so men would kill each other.)* This horse seems to denote a more personal enmity—family against other family members, lawlessness and riots in the streets, criminal activities.

Ask someone to describe the events of the third seal. Explain: *Again the creature says “Come.” A black horse appears. The rider is carrying a scale. Another creature reveals that food will become scarce and very expensive. A day's pay will not buy a family enough food. There will be oil and wine, however, for those rich enough to buy.*

Then ask someone to recount the events of the opening for the fourth seal. Say: *Again the voice and a horse. This one is light colored. The rider is death. Hell or Hades followed him. They were given permission to kill one-fourth of the people on earth. They were to use the sword, famine, sickness, and wild animals for this.* Some versions call this a pale horse or a green horse or a corpse-colored horse.

Tell the class that there now comes an interlude where other ideas are revealed by opening the next three seals.

3. Select a person to read Revelation 6:9-11. Tell the class: *This reveals an entirely different kind of event.* Ask:  
—*What is it? (John sees under the altar the souls of those who were killed for preaching of Jesus. They are crying out asking how long before the end when the wicked are punished.)*  
—*What have they been given? (White robes symbolizing purity)*

—How was their question answered? (They were told to rest a little longer until all who were going to die for God had been killed.)

4. Choose someone to read Revelation 6:12-17. Tell the class: *Keep in mind that while we see God as loving and kind, He is also a God of wrath who has given mankind multiple chances through the centuries to repent and turn to Him. He warns all through the Bible that there will come a day of judgment and punishment which will end the world as we know it.*

Now ask:

—Name the event which began when the sixth seal is broken. (Severe earthquakes, sun darkens, moon looks like blood, stars fall, sky seems to roll up like a scroll, mountains and islands move)

—What do the people do? (Kings and peasants and slaves alike try to hide in caves and fallen rocks. They begged the rocks to fall on them to hide them from God and His wrath. No one can stand against that wrath.)

### Encourage Application

5. Guide the class to look at “Things to Think About” in the study guide. Discuss these, particularly by asking what we can learn from this passage. Ask: *Which of these things are already known upon the earth? (War, enmity between groups and individuals, persecution, suffering, death, natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods)*

Tell the class: *Try to imagine a time when all these come at once everywhere in the world. Only repentance and turning to God can carry us through those last days.* Close with prayer that we may be ready.

### Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

1. Tell the group: *At the end of 2004 the world saw a violent and deadly tsunami, a giant tidal wave caused by an underwater earthquake. It traveled for many miles at great speeds and spread in many directions. The earthquake was the strongest ever recorded. As it spread, it destroyed cities and homes and people. It was too fast to run from, and it came*

*with little warning. As many as 200,000 people are thought to have lost their lives. The ones who escaped lost homes, businesses, and family. Try to imagine this on a worldwide scale with even more destruction. This is the vision John sees of the last days of the earth. We can die in the catastrophe or be rescued. The book of Revelation tells us how.*

### Encourage Application

2. Add new words to the word list. See the study guide for suggestions.

3. In groups of two or three have the students work together to learn the memory verse. Discuss what it means in light of this lesson. Recite it. Close with prayer that the world might learn to follow the Lamb who sits on the throne.

# Teaching Guide

## Revelation: Visions That Encourage and Challenge Unit 2: Visions of God's Purpose—Seals and Trumpets Lesson 5: First Interlude: Security for God's People

### Lesson Focus

God gives assurance, comfort, and security to His people as He goes with them through troubles and trials.

### Focal Text

Revelation 7:1-14

### Background Text

Revelation 7

### Memory Verse

“For the Lamb Who is in the center of the throne will be their Shepherd. He will lead them to the wells of the water of life. God will take away all tears from their eyes.” (Revelation 7:17)

### Connect with Life

1. Say to the class: *Think of the worst times in your life. Did you feel despair and hopelessness? To whom did you turn for comfort and reassurance?* Ask one or two of the students, perhaps ahead of time, to share one of these experiences and to tell how he or she was able to survive the time. Then say: *Today's lesson assures us that God is with us through all our difficulties and He will sustain us. Chapter 6 in Revelation tells of dreadful things that will happen in the world before the end comes. The opening of the first six seals signals the beginning of the man-made and natural disasters which will befall the earth. God will be with His people through all of it, and they will win their place in heaven.*

### Guide the Study

2. Choose a student to read Revelation 7:1-3. Then ask another one or two to read from the study guide the section called “God Marks His Servants” (7:1-3).

Ask:

—*What were the four angels doing? (They were holding back the winds of the earth.)*  
—*What was the angel from the east carrying? (A mark of the living God)*  
—*What did He tell the four? (Do not hurt the earth or the sea or the trees until the mark of God is placed on the foreheads of the servants He owns.)*

Say: *We do not know the nature of this mark. Some think it refers to the seal of the Holy Spirit. It was customary in Bible times for slaves to be marked in some visible way. Whatever it was, it was for the protection of those God claimed as His own.*

3. Now have someone read Revelation 7:4-8. If you prefer, you as the teacher might wish to read portions of this scripture and summarize the rest. Explain: *This should not be taken as a literal number. The 144,000 is a number made up of 12, a perfect number indicating completion, times 12, times 1000, another significant number. The 144,000 indicates a great host. The reference to the tribes of Israel is likely referring to all those who are saved through Jesus, both Jews and Gentiles. Paul tells us in Romans 8:16 that Christians are the children of God and in Galatians 3:7 that we are all children of God through faith and that “if we are Christ's, then [we] are Abraham's children.” These are the people who will come safely through the terrible tribulations that John saw in chapter 6.*

4. Select a student to read Revelation 7:9-12. Point out that John now sees a great multitude of people wearing white robes. Ask:  
—*Who do these people claim to be? (Those who are saved from their sins by God and by the Lamb)*  
—*What happens next? (The angels and the leaders and the four creatures got down on their faces before God and worshiped Him. They say that God deserves worship and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength.)*

5. Ask for a volunteer to read Revelation 7:13-17. Indicate to the group that one of the leaders asks if John knows who these people are, but he does not.

Ask:

—*What explanation does the leader give? (They are those who have passed through the tribulation mentioned in chapter 6.)*

—*What is unusual about their clothing? (They have made their robes white by washing them in the blood of the Lamb.)*

Point out that this is symbolic, not literal.

Blood will not make cloth white. Also point out that this has to be a picture of the future, since the great tribulations are yet to come in John’s time. Ask:

—*What is the function of these people? (They help God day and night before the throne.)*

—*What promises are made to these people? (God is with them, He will care for them, they will never hunger or thirst again, the sun will not hurt them... The Lamb will be their shepherd and will lead them to the water of life. God will wipe away all their tears.)*

## Encourage Application

6. Look at “Things to Think About” in the study guide. Discuss these. Then ask for the class to think about the pictures shown in this section of scripture. Ask them to verbalize whether they feel assurance and comfort. Close with prayer.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

1. Select one or two students to read the introductory remarks from the study guide. Discuss how common these stressful events are. Ask for volunteers to list other disasters which can happen to people. Tell an event from your own life about how God supported you through sorrow. Say: *Today’s lesson reveals how God cares for and supports His people.*

## Encourage Application

2. Ask the students to add the new words to their word list. Discuss as necessary. Add others if need be.

3. Work together on the memory verse. Recite it. Close with prayer that we will let God be our shepherd to guide us daily.

# Teaching Guide

## Revelation: Visions That Encourage and Challenge Unit 2: Visions of God's Purpose—Seals and Trumpets Lesson 6: Trumpets of God's Judgments

### Lesson Focus

God's judgment is certain to come.

### Focal Text

Revelation 8:1-9:6, 13-15, 20-21

### Background Text

Revelation 8-9

### Memory Verse

"When the Lamb broke the seventh lock, there was not a sound in heaven for about one-half hour." (Revelation 8:1)

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### Connect with Life

1. Ask a student or students to read aloud the introductory material from the study guide. Say: *The judgment of the sinful world will surely come. It may leave devastation like the tsunami or wars or hurricanes all over the globe at the same time. We have trouble even imagining such a thing, but in Revelation 8 John paints us a word picture of what it will be like.*

### Guide the Study

2. Choose someone to read Revelation 8:1. Ask: *How does your study guide describe this? (It was the silence of mystery as all waited for God to begin the end process.)*

3. Ask a person to read Revelation 8:3-4. Ask the class:  
—*What does John see next? (Seven angels were given seven horns, or trumpets. Another angel stood at the altar with a gold cup, called today in some churches a censer, full of a special perfume, called incense. This was to mix with the prayers of God's faithful.)*  
—*What was done with the golden bowl? (It was put*

*on the golden altar.)*

—*What was the function of the burning perfume? (It mingled with the prayers which went up to God.)*

4. Select one of the group to read Revelation 8:5-6. Ask:

—*What does the angel do next? (He filled the bowl, presumably now empty, with fire from the altar and threw it down on the earth.)*

—*What effect did this action have? (It produced thunder, lightning, and noise. The earth shook.)*

—*What additional thing had to happen? (The seven angels got ready to blow their seven horns.)*

5. Have a volunteer read Revelation 8:7. Ask: *What is the result of the blowing of the first horn? (Hail and fire mixed with blood fell on the earth. One-third of the earth was burned up, and one-third of the trees, and all the green grass.)* Point out that this picture would fit the experience of a desert people where droughts might produce such a scene.

6. Ask someone to read Revelation 8:8-9 about the second trumpet. Inquire if someone would volunteer to describe this result. Explain: *Something like a large mountain burned with fire and was thrown into the sea. One-third part of the sea turned to blood. One-third part of sea life died, and one-third part of all ships were destroyed.* Explain that the burning mountain sounds like an erupting volcano pouring burning lava down its sides and into the sea.

7. Select a student to read Revelation 8:10-11 about the blowing of the third horn. Ask: *Would one of you summarize these two verses? (A large star fell on the rivers and water sources of the earth. It burned with a bright light and poisoned the water. The star is called Wormwood. Many died from drinking the poisoned water.)*

Explain: *Today we think of wormwood as being a bitter oil from a plant called artemisia. It can also mean the results of an experience which is*



*mortifying or bitter.*

8. Now have someone read Revelation 8:12-13 about the blowing of the fourth horn. Ask: *Can one of you summarize these verses? (At this time a third part of the sun and a third part of the moon and a third part of the stars were hurt so that they became dark and kept a third of the day and night completely dark. At this point John saw a large bird flying in the sky. The bird said, “It is bad for those who live on the earth when the sound comes from the horn that the other three angels blow.”)*

Explain: *The word used in most versions of the Bible is woe, meaning something is seriously wrong which will bring a bad experience.*

9. Choose two of your best students and ask them ahead of time to be prepared to read Revelation 9:1-6 and 9:13-16 and explain to the class what happens in those verses. Here is a possible answer they might give: *In 9:1-6, the fifth angel blew his horn. John saw another fallen star. The angel was given a key to the hole in the earth which had no bottom. He opened it, and smoke streamed out to darken everything. Locusts came out of the smoke which could sting and hurt men who did not have the mark of God on them, but they were not to hurt the plants or trees. They could not kill but could cause great pain for a time.*

Verses 7-12 describe the locusts, which did not resemble the insects which we call locusts today. Their king was the head angel of the bottomless pit. His name means one who is a destroyer. More trouble is coming.

In the remainder of this chapter, the sixth horn is blown. A summary of verses 13-16 might be as follows: *At the blowing of the sixth horn John heard a voice from the four corners of the altar instructing the sixth angel to loose the four angels who were chained near the Euphrates River. They were kept ready so that they could kill one-third part of all men that were living. John said he heard them say that they had 200 million soldiers.*

10. In verses 17-21 John describes this fearsome army and their horses. John says that even after all these things have happened the unbelievers on earth still would not forsake their false gods and repent.

Read to the class Revelation 9:20-21.

## Encourage Application

11. Add new words to the word list. See the study guide for suggestions. Discuss the meanings as necessary and add any others that seem needed. Consider adding: *wormwood, censer, incense, volcano, lava.*

12. Recite the memory verse together. Work on memorizing it. Close with prayer that we will be ready for the judgment when it comes.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

1. Ask the class:

—*Does anyone know when these end times will come? (No, but many people think they do.)*

—*Do you know what Jesus said about the time? (Look in Mark 14:4-8. Read these verses together and then read Mark 13:32-33.)*

If even Jesus did not know the exact time, though He was aware of many of the events that must happen first, how can any man or woman know? John gives us the pictures which God wants us to know.

## Encourage Application

2. Discuss “Things to Think About” from the study guide. List what the class says we can learn from John’s writings to use in other lessons. Close with prayer that God will help us tell of His love and His salvation so that no one need suffer as John has just described.

# Teaching Guide

Revelation: Visions That Encourage and Challenge  
Unit 2: Visions of God's Purpose—Seals and Trumpets  
**Lesson 7: Second Interlude: Continue to Witness Faithfully**

## Lesson Focus

No matter how hard, God's people must bear witness to their faith.

## Focal Text

Revelation 10:1-7; 11:1-15

## Background Text

Revelation 10-11

## Memory Verse

"The nations of the world have become the holy nation of our Lord and of His Christ. He will be the leader forever." (Revelation 11:15b)

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## Connect with Life

1. Ask someone to read the introductory remarks in the study guide. Discuss how these things can be used in our own lives.

## Guide the Study

2. Select a student to read Revelation 10:1. Tell the class: *The verses we are studying today represent a pause between the sixth and seventh horns. This is called an interlude. We are getting ready for even worse things to happen.*

Ask: *How is this angel described? (He is mighty, and he comes from heaven in a cloud. He has something like a rainbow around his head. His face is like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire.)*

This description indicates the angel had come directly from contact with God.

3. Choose a person to read Revelation 10:2-4. Ask:  
—*What is the angel carrying? (A small scroll which was open on his hand)*  
—*What does he do? (He places one foot on the sea and the other on the land. Then he speaks or cries out in a loud voice like the roar of a lion.)*

—*What happens when he cries out? (There were seven loud thunders.)*

—*When John would write down the message of the seven thunders, what was he told? (Do not write this down. They are not to be told.)*

4. Ask for a volunteer to read Revelation 10:5-7. Ask for another volunteer to summarize what these three verses have to say. A possible summary might state the following: *The angel lifted his right hand to heaven and made a promise in the name of God Who lives forever and Who made the heaven and the earth and everything else. He promised that there would be no more waiting. It was time to blow the seventh horn. When that happens God will put into action His plan, which He had revealed in part to His prophets and those who served Him.*

In the rest of chapter 10, John is instructed to take the scroll from the angel and eat it, meaning that he should study it thoroughly. When he eats it, the scroll will taste sweet but leave his stomach sour. John must find it sweet to have a message from God, but the content of the message is very disturbing. In the last verse he is urged to tell what will happen to the whole world.

5. Select a student to read Revelation 11:1-2. Ask:  
—*What is given to John? (A measuring stick)*  
—*What is he to measure? (The house of God)*  
—*What was he told to omit? (The porch of the Temple)*  
—*Why? (It has been given over to the Gentiles, or those who do not believe in God and His Christ.)*  
—*What will these people do? (They will wreck it, that is, the church, for a time. Forty-two months is the time given.)*

Remember that numbers are often symbolic in John's writing about the future. Now have a student read the remarks in the study guide concerning these verses. Explain that the house of God is the body of believers; it is God's church.

6. Choose a person to read Revelation 11: 3-6.

Explain: *God is sending two witnesses to earth with instructions to tell what they know. Ask:*

—*How long will they witness? (1,260 days, which is the same as forty-two months or three and a half years.)*

—*How will they be dressed? (In clothes made of animal hair, probably camel’s hair)*

—*What symbols does God apply to the two men? (Two olive trees and the two lights that stand before the Lord of the earth)*

—*What protection are they given? (If anyone tries to hurt them, the men breathe out fire which kills their attackers.)*

—*What other powers do they have? (They can shut up the sky so that it will not rain. They can change water into blood. They can send every kind of trouble to the earth if they need to.)*

7. Ask someone to read Revelation 11: 7-10. Ask:

—*When the time of witnessing is over, what happens? (A wild animal will come out of the bottomless pit and kill them.)*

—*Where does this occur? (In the place where Jesus was crucified, a hill outside Jerusalem called Golgotha.)* Note: When the city is called Sodom and Egypt, it is the vilest of insults. Sodom was so wicked that God destroyed it completely. Egypt was where the pharaoh made slaves of the Israelites and persecuted them.

—*What happens to the bodies? (They are left in the street for three and one-half days while people from every nation come to look at them. The people would not allow the bodies to be buried.)*

—*What is the reaction of the people? (They are happy and celebrate by sending gifts to each other because they felt these men had brought them troubles.)*

8. Have a person read Revelation 11: 13. Ask:

—*After the three and a half days what happens? (The men are restored to life, and the people are very frightened.)*

—*Now what happens? (A loud voice told the men to come up to heaven. They ascended in a cloud while the people watched. At the same time there was an earthquake.)*

—*What damage did the earthquake cause? (One-tenth of the buildings in the city fell, killing 7,000*

*people. The rest of the people were so afraid that they repented and turned to God.)*

9. Read Revelation 11:14-15. Tell the class: *This is the end of the second interlude, but John is warned that a third time is about to begin. Ask:*

—*What begins this trouble? (The seventh angel blew his horn.)*

—*What change for the future is told about here? (The loud voices tell John that the believers of the world will be the holy nation of God and Christ who will lead forever.)*

## Encourage Application

10. Ask the class to look in the study guide under “Things to Think About.” Discuss these. Close with a prayer that God would enable us to be faithful in our witness even it becomes dangerous.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

1. Tell the class: *One of England’s famous novels was John Bunyan’s Pilgrim’s Progress. The book was written in the 1600’s while Bunyan spent twelve years in prison because he disagreed with some of the teachings of the state church. This story uses symbols just like Revelation. The main character is Christian. He dreamt that the City of Destruction where he lived would be destroyed by fire from heaven. He must journey to the Celestial City to escape. Many terrible things happened to him as he traveled. One of his companions was called Faithful. When they came to the city of Vanity, they were arrested for their beliefs. Christian eventually escaped, but Faithful was burned at the stake because he continued to witness. Today’s scripture deals with the need to witness faithfully whatever the cost.*

## Encourage Application

12. Add new words to your word list. See the study guide for suggestions. Consider adding: *scholar, plague, Gentile, interlude.*

13. In pairs, recite and discuss the memory verse. Close with prayer that we will witness faithfully so that others may join the holy nation of God.

# Teaching Guide

Revelation: Visions That Encourage and Challenge

Unit 3: Scenes of Conflict and Judgment

**Lesson 8: Fighting the Powers of Evil**

## Lesson Focus

As God's people, we must face the powers of evil, but we can be confident of God's ultimate victory.

## Focal Text

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

## Background Text

Revelation 12-13

## Memory Verse

"Now is when God's people must have faith and not give up." (Revelation 13:10b)

## Connect with Life

1. Say to the class: *The opening scene does not seem to be taken from Jewish . Remember that many Christians in the area were Gentiles. This scene is probably based on the common idea of a divine child whose destruction was important to those he might replace. One Greek myth tells about Leto giving birth to Zeus' son Apollo. She is chased by a dragon who wants to kill her son. Zeus arranges for Poseidon to provide her refuge on an island where she gives birth. Egyptian mythology also tells of a similar situation with the goddess Isis who is about to give birth to Horus. The father, the sun god Osiris, is killed by a red crocodile of the Nile who then chases Isis. She escapes in a papyrus boat and with the use of wings. John knew the people would identify these stories in Revelation 12 where our lesson begins.*

## Guide the Study

2. Ask one of the students to read Revelation 12:1-2. Tell the class: *Two amazing things are seen in the next few verses. The first one is lovely, and the next one is hideous and dangerous. What is the lovely vision? (John sees a woman dressed with the sun and with the moon under her feet. On her head is a crown with twelve stars. She is about to give birth.)*

3. Have someone read Revelation 12:3-4. Ask:

*—Will one of you describe the hideous creature? (It was an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns. A crown is on each head. It is so big that the lashing of its tail destroyed one-third of the stars in the sky.)*

*—What was the dragon's intention? (It was waiting to eat the child as soon as he was born.)*

4. Choose one of the members to read Revelation 12:5-6. Ask: *What has happened here? (The child is born, but God rescues him. The woman escapes to a place of safety God has prepared for her for 1,260 days.)*

Explain to the class: *We have determined that the vision is full of symbols. Our problem is deciding what they represent. The woman is thought by some to be Mary, the mother of Jesus. The baby is the Messiah, Jesus, who will rule the world with a rod of iron. The dragon is identified in verse 9 as Satan. The word Satan means adversary. The crowns are symbols of power. John does not tell about any of Jesus' life here. The verses following this portion tell of a war in heaven where the angel Michael leads the angelic army in a battle against Satan and his followers. Satan is given only a short time on earth. Keep in mind that God's time is different than human time. Heaven rejoices even at this point because God's faithful followers have salvation through the Lamb's sacrificial blood.*

5. Select someone to read Revelation 12:13-18. Ask: *—Now that he is on earth, what does Satan, the dragon, do? (He tries to find the woman to punish her in his rage.)*

*—How has God helped the woman? (She has been given wings to fly to safety. She will be protected for three and a half years.)*

Explain: *Many scholars feel that the woman becomes at this point a different symbol. Now she represents the church of God. God is providing for the life of His followers. Whatever happens to individuals, God's church will endure. In any war, there will be a victor, but many soldiers die to achieve that victory. God promises ultimate life eternal for the fallen.*

6. Ask for a volunteer to read Revelation 13:1-4. Tell the

class: *Now we have another creature to fear. Ask: —Where does this one come from? (Out of the sea) —What does it look like? ( It had seven heads and ten horns with a crown on each horn. On its head were written blasphemies against God. It had spots like a leopard, feet like a bear, and a mouth like a lion. The dragon gave it power. One of the heads had a wound which was then healed.)*

*—What reaction does the world have to the dragon and the beast? (They were impressed and followed their teachings. They worshiped the dragon and the beast.)*

*Explain: There are many interpretations of the beast. Most scholars seem to feel that it represents the Roman Empire. Remember that the book of Revelation was set in the time of Roman persecution. The seven horns are the emperors who have been declared to be gods: Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero, Vespasian, Titus, Domitian. The wounded head referred to Nero who claimed to have died and been resurrected. Other scholars present other theories, but certainly in the context in which John is writing it would fit the situation for the reference to be Rome. Rome could not be mentioned openly. Symbols were necessary. The blasphemies written on the heads were possibly the emperors' claims to be divine. That is the point at which the Christians were persecuted. Notice that the rest of the world conformed. They worshiped the emperor as instructed. In verses 5-9 there is the description of how the Roman Empire prevailed over most of the known world. It was very powerful. Verse 8 tells us that all worshiped except those whose names are written in the book of life of the Lamb who was killed.*

7. Invite someone to read Revelation 13:11-15. Then ask:  
*—Where does the second wild beast come from? (The earth, rather than the sea)  
 —Describe this beast. (It had two horns like a lamb, but his voice was like the dragon.)  
 —What did the beast do? (He used the power of the first beast to make everyone worship the first beast. This second beast was very powerful and could have those who did not worship killed. He forced the people to make a god that looked like the first beast. He fooled people by doing powerful works. The second beast was even able to give a voice to the first beast, the one from the sea with ten horns.)* Note: If the first beast is the Roman emperor, the second beast may be those who carried out the orders.

8. Have a student read Revelation 13:16-18. Ask: *What*

*does the second beast do now? (It makes everyone, rich and poor, have a mark on his right hand or on his forehead.)* Remind the class that in the earlier lessons, a mark was given those who worshiped the emperor. Those without the mark could not buy or sell and some were killed. Ask:

*—What was the mark: (The name of the first wild animal or some designation of that name)*

*—What is that substitute name? (666)*

With number symbols, the six is an imperfect number because it is one less than seven. Three imperfect numbers would reflect major imperfection or evil. The 666 then would mean to the early Christians that this person is totally evil. Refer to the study guide, under the last section of the scripture references. Ask the class how the second beast is identified. *(These were the people who enforced the worship of Caesar in each area.)*

## Encourage Application

9. Discuss “Things to Think About” in the study guide. Close with prayer that we might remain faithful even when persecuted.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

1. Say to the class: *Today we tend to think of dragons as fictional, frightening, terrible monsters. Early literature is full of monsters and dragons. Even the Bible tells of them in Daniel 3:7-8 and other references. The British have a myth about a knight named St. George who kills a dragon which is threatening the country. Ask: Can you think of other appearances of dragon stories in folk tales, books, movies, or television?* If they need help, remind them of the dragon which seems to be connected with the Chinese New Year, of Anne McCaffrey’s *The Dragons of Pern*, or Tolkien’s *The Hobbit* and *Lord of the Rings*. Tell the class: *Our Bible text today depicts a dragon and other monsters as a code to warn and encourage Christians.*

## Encourage Application

2. Add new words to your word list. Refer to your study guide for suggestions. You might also add: *myth* and *mark of the beast*.

3. Work together to learn the memory verse. Emphasize that it is true today. Close with prayer that we not give up our Christian faith when trouble comes.

# Teaching Guide

Revelation: Visions That Encourage and Challenge

Unit 3: Scenes of Conflict and Judgment

## Lesson 9: Judgment on the Powers of Evil

### Lesson Focus

God's people may feel that evil is not punished, but God promises that it will be.

### Focal Text

Revelation 14:1-13

### Background Text

Revelation 14

### Memory Verse

"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." (Revelation 14:6)

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### Connect with Life

1. Select a student to read the introduction to lesson nine in the study guide. Discuss.

### Guide the Study

2. Choose one of the students to read Revelation 14:1. Ask:

—What does John see? (He sees Jesus as the Lamb. He also sees the 144,000, meaning the great multitude, of those who have believed in Jesus and followed Him. That includes the whole of the redeemed—men, women, children, both Jews and Gentiles.)

—Where are the Lamb and the followers? (They are standing on Mount Zion.) Note: Some consider this the New Jerusalem from heaven.

—What distinguishes these people? (They have the Lamb's and the Father's name written on their foreheads. They bear the mark of their faithfulness to God.)

Ask someone to read the explanation from the study guide about this verse.

3. Ask someone to read Revelation 14:2-3. Ask:  
—Describe the voice John hears. (It was from heaven. It sounded like the rush of water, perhaps of the tide rushing on the shore or a tremendous waterfall. It was also as loud as peals of thunder. However, it was also sweet like the playing of a harp.)

—What was unusual about the song the people sing? (It was new. Only the redeemed could learn and understand the song because they had been bought by the blood of Christ.)

—For whom did they sing? (They sang for God and the Lamb before the throne, for the four living beings, and for the twenty-four elders.)

4. Have a person read Revelation 14:6-7. Tell the class: John sees three angels who seem to be arranging for the end to come. Ask:

—Where was the first angel? (He was flying in the heavens.)

—What was he carrying? (The Gospel, or Good News, which is eternal.)

—What is the angel doing? (He is sharing that gospel with all the world, in every language.)

—What does he say to the people? (Honor God with love and fear. Worship Him wherever there are people.)

—Why? (God is giving the unsaved one last chance to repent and turn to Him. Soon it will be too late.)

5. Ask someone to read Revelation 14:8. Tell the class: The second angel reports that Babylon has fallen. This has not yet happened in John's time. It is true that the original Babylon is ancient history in the Roman times. That empire destroyed much of Palestine, enslaved the people, and desecrated the Temple in Jerusalem. All Jews and Gentiles in this part of Asia Minor would recognize this as a code word for Rome. John is assuring them that Rome will one day no longer be a threat or cause them to sin on pain of death.

6. Choose a volunteer to read Revelation 14: 9-12.

Ask: *Against what does the third angel warn? (Worshiping the beast or his false god or bearing his mark on forehead or hand)*

Explain: *This is the beast from chapter 13 who represents Rome. The false god is emperor worship, and the mark is the one given to those who would admit that the emperor was god. Ask: What punishment is promised to those people who follow the false god? (They will receive the full anger of God. They will be punished with fire and burning sulphur. The punishment will last forever. There will be no rest day or night. These things will happen to all who do not remain faithful to God.)*

7. Select a volunteer to read Revelation 14:13. Ask: *What words of comfort are given here for God's faithful followers? (Those who have already died belonging to the Lord will be happy. They can rest and know that all their faithfulness will be recognized by God.)*

8. The rest of the chapter tells of the future battle of Armageddon when the end will truly come and the guilty will be punished. If you feel that this needs to be explained, here is a possible summary of those verses: *Jesus appears on a white cloud. He is wearing a crown. In His hand is a sickle, or scythe. This is an implement for harvesting grain. Jesus receives the signal to begin from an angel who comes from God. Jesus uses His sickle, and the grain is gathered. Another angel comes from the Temple with tools for harvesting grapes. Still another angel gives the signal to harvest the grapes. He places the grapes in the winepress outside the city where they are trampled. God's anger causes these to be trampled. Not juice of grapes, but blood, ran from the press in a huge torrent. The grapes harvested and trampled are the unbelievers.*

### Encourage Application

9. Discuss "Things to Think About" from the study guide. Add this question: *How can I be sure that I am counted faithful to God?* Close with prayer that we may be found faithful and that we may try to witness to those who still do not believe.

## Supplemental Teaching Guide Connect With Life

1. Ask: *Have you ever felt that the ungodly managed to escape punishment for their sins all too often? Say: Murders, robbery, fraud, extortion, drug traffic—we read of these in the papers or hear them on TV news. Many crimes are unsolved; some are never even discovered. Trials are held, and guilty people sometimes go free on a technicality. People who practice small everyday meanness manage to prosper. Does it anger you? The book of Revelation assures us that punishment may be deferred, but it will come. God will see justice done.*

### Encourage Application

2. Add new words to your word list. Discuss these and add others as needed. These may include the following: *eternity, brand, technicality, defer, fraud, extortion.*

3. Work together to memorize the memory verse. Ask individuals to recite it. Then have the group recite it together.

4. Have the group look back over Revelation 14:1-4. Ask them to look for characteristics which should be present in all Christians. Explain: *They bear the identification of God and Jesus. They rejoice or even sing songs of praise. They are morally pure. They constantly follow the Lamb. They have been bought by the blood of Christ. They do not lie.* Close with a prayer that all may achieve these characteristics as they try to follow Jesus Christ.

# Teaching Guide

Revelation: Visions That Encourage and Challenge

Unit 4: Revealing the Victory

Lesson 10: The Bowls—Vindication of God’s Way

## Lesson Focus

God’s people can rejoice, knowing that God’s way is the right way.

## Focal Text

Revelation 15:1-8; 16:12-21

## Background Text

Revelation 15-16

## Memory Verse

“Who will not honor you, Lord, with love and fear? Who will not tell of the greatness of your name? For You are the One Who is holy. All nations will come and worship before You. Everyone sees that You do the right things.” (Revelation 15:4)

## Connect with Life

1. Tell this story: *A navy chaplain was accused of sexual misconduct with one of the enlisted women on the base. He denied the story and claimed innocence. He secured a competent lawyer to defend him on the charges in court. The trial was long and posed a great hardship for the chaplain and his family. The lawyer found evidence which cast doubt on the woman’s story. Eventually, the woman admitted that she had made up the charge. The chaplain was guilty of no wrong-doing. The chaplain was vindicated. Perhaps this will help us to understand what it will mean for God’s way to be vindicated.*

## Guide the Study

2. Choose someone to read Revelation 15:1. Ask: *What does John see? (Seven angels with bowls or vials containing what John calls the last kinds of trouble)* Explain: *These are not the last of the bad things which God will send to the world. They are, more likely, the last warnings and the last chance*

*for the unbelievers to repent and turn to God.*

3. Now have someone read Revelation 15:2-4. Invite a volunteer to describe what John saw in these verses. Explain: *The sea of glass is described in chapter 4, but this time it is mixed with fire. The multitude from chapter 14 stands beside it. They are holding harps which God has given them. They are singing a song like Moses and Miriam sang after crossing the Red Sea safely.*

Summarize the song: *The song testifies of God’s greatness and power. It says God is right and true in everything He does. He is king of all nations. Only God is holy. Eventually all nations will see that God does the right things, and they will worship Him.*

Many scholars feel that the multitude was on the throne side of the sea of glass as a symbol of God’s bringing them to safety as He had brought the Israelites safely out of Egypt by performing a miracle. He did the same kind of miracle forty years later when He parted the Jordan so the people could cross into the Promised Land. The song of Moses is made up of pieces from the Old Testament which praise God. It is written like Old Testament poetry with repetition and parallelism. John’s audience in the churches would have understood where these words came from and would have associated them with God’s leadership and rescue.

4. Ask for a volunteer to read Revelation 15:5-8. Ask: *What does John see now in his vision? (He is looking into the Holiest Place of All in the House of God. The seven angels with the bowls came out of this place. They wore white linen robes and a golden belt around their chests. John sees the bowls were given to the angels by the four living beings. These bowls, or jars, were made of gold and were filled with God’s anger. The House of God, or Tabernacle, was filled with smoke. No one could enter until the wrath from the bowls was emptied.)*

5. Explain to the group: *There is a loud voice in*



*chapter 16 which tells the angels to pour out the wrath one at a time. There is no way to know how much time elapses during or between these things. The first angel pours painful sores and malignant tumors; the second angel poisons what earlier chapters had left of the sea so that all the rest of the marine life died. The third angel poured out wrath into the rivers which represented the blood of God’s people shed by the wicked of the world. Here a voice is heard from the altar that says what God does is right and fair. The fourth angel pours on the sun something which makes it burn hotter so that men and plants began to die. The people still did not repent. The fifth angel caused darkness which also seemed to cause great pain.)*

6. Choose someone to read Revelation 16:12-16. Indicate that the class should summarize these verses. Explain: *The sixth angel dried up the Euphrates River which had protected Rome from the Parthian to the East. From the mouths of the dragon and of the two beasts from sea and land there came frog-like demons who can bring together all the wicked kings of the earth to a place called Armageddon where a battle will eventually take place. In verse 15 there is a set of parentheses. Ask: What is meant by this message? (This is a last warning to people to be ready for when Christ comes.)*

7. Ask for a volunteer to read Revelation 16:17-21. Pose this question: *What happens when the seventh angel pours out his jar? (A loud voice comes from the throne. It says, “It is done!” Then there were voices and lightning and thunder. The whole earth shook as in an earthquake. Babylon is split into three parts. Other cities collapsed. Babylon drank from the cup of God’s anger. Islands were swallowed in the ocean and mountains leveled. Huge, heavy hail fell, and men blasphemed God.)*

Explain to the class that these things have not happened yet. They are still to come, although in a few centuries the Roman Empire would be powerless.

### Encourage Application

8. Add these words to the word list: *vindication,*

*martyrs, Parthians, blaspheme.*

9. Learn together the memory verse. Recite it, and discuss what it means in the lives of the class members. Close with prayer.

### Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

1. Tell the class: *We hear a great deal today about martyrs. Terrorists recognize suicide bombers as martyrs because they are dying for their faith. How do these martyrs differ from the early Christian martyrs? (Today’s martyrs in the terrorist movement are taking the lives of many others, even people who are innocent of any wrong. The Christian martyrs, then as now, are willing to forfeit their own lives for their principles so that they will not be forced to deny Jesus Christ. Today’s terrorists are motivated by hatred; the Christian martyrs were motivated by love for God.)*

Ask the group to think about these differences as we study today’s biblical passages.

### Encourage Application

2. Discuss “Things to Think About” from the study guide. Close with prayer that we might recognize that God’s way is always the right way.

# Teaching Guide

Revelation: Visions That Encourage and Challenge

Unit 4: Revealing the Victory

## Lesson 11: “Fallen Is Babylon the Great”

### Lesson Focus

Wealth and power do not protect against God’s judgment.

### Focal Text

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

### Background Text

Revelation 17-19:5

### Memory Verse

“These kings will fight and make war with the Lamb. But the Lamb will win the war because He is the Lord of lords and the King of kings. His people are the called and chosen and faithful ones.” (Revelation 17:14)

### Connect with Life

1. Ask one of the members to read from the study guide the introductory remarks for Lesson 11. Check to see that everyone understands the context of today’s lesson.

### Guide the Study

2. Select someone to read Revelation 17:1-2.

Inquire:

—Who speaks to John? (One of the seven angels who had the jars or bowls.)

—What is his invitation? (“Come! I will show you.”)

—What is it that John is to see? (A woman the angel calls an adulteress. She sits on the many waters of the world, and the kings of the nations commit adultery with her so that they are drunk with the wine of her sin.)

—Who is the woman? (She represents Rome although John does not seem to understand this until he sees more.)

3. Let a volunteer read Revelation 17:3-4. Pose these questions:

—Where does the angel take John? (To a desert place)

—What does he see there? (The same woman)

—How is this vision different? (Now the woman is seated on a red beast which had seven heads and ten horns. The beast is covered with blasphemous writing.)

—Describe the woman. (She wears purple and red clothes. She has on gold, pearls, and precious stones. In her hand is a gold cup filled with evil things.)

4. Have a person read Revelation 17:5-6a. Tell the class that other Bible versions list the word mystery as one of the words written on her forehead, as well as Babylon the Great and The Mother of Prostitutes and of all the sinful things on the Earth. These identify her to the Christian readers of Revelation as Rome. It was common for prostitutes in Rome to wear a headband which labeled them as prostitutes. Some of these were priestesses of pagan religions, and sexual acts were part of their worship. Ask: *How else is she described? (She is drunk with the blood of the saints who bore testimony to Jesus.)*

Explain to the group: *The emperor Nero was noted for his cruelty to Christians. He blamed them for the great fire which destroyed much of Rome in 64 AD; although, Nero may very well have set it himself to destroy some of the buildings so that he could build new ones. John is not writing during Nero’s reign probably, but during the reign of Domitian who some called a reincarnation of Nero. He was even more cruel. He punished anyone who disagreed with him in horrible ways, not just Christians. He seemed to enjoy inflicting pain.*

5. Ask one of the members to read Revelation 18:1-3. Introduce these questions:

—Now who does John see? (Still another angel. He was very powerful and seemed to be encircled with light.)

—*What does this angel say? (He cried out in a loud voice that the city of Babylon was destroyed. Only demons dwell there now. The excesses of Rome had poisoned the whole known world of that time. Nations made money from Rome’s sins, and merchants became wealthy through her excess.)*

Explain that the demons are those spirits of evil which still persist even after the destruction. Furthermore, even though the angel announces to John that Babylon has fallen, he is referring to a future event. There is still more suffering for Christians, but there is hope for the future and reassurance that God will punish.

6. Now choose a person to read Revelation 18:4-8 and others to read the sections from the study guide under the headings “Come Out!” and “Rome Is Guilty.” Ask:

—*What does John hear next? (Another voice from heaven)*

—*What is the message of the voice? ( It spoke to God’s people urging them to stay away from those wicked acts of Rome. God would punish Rome because He has judged her guilty.)*

—*How does John indicate Rome’s attitude before God’s judgment? (She is proud and arrogant and claims that she is a queen and will never know sorrow.)*

—*How is the punishment characterized in verse 8? (Because of her attitude, death, sorrow, and hunger will come to her. She will be burned with fire.)*

Read to the class the last sentence of verse 8. Remind the class of the focus of the lesson: Wealth and power do not protect against God’s judgment.

## Encourage Application

7. Add new words to the word list. Refer to the study guide for suggestions. Also consider adding: *arrogant, adulteress, abomination, mystery*. Review the whole list. Be sure everyone has a good idea of the meaning of the words.

8. Work together on memorizing the memory verse. Recite it. Make sure everyone understands it. Close with prayer that all the group might rejoice in knowing that God will prevail and His enemies will lose the battle for all time.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

1. Ask the class: *If you were asked to paint a picture representing evil influences which are opposed to God and His will, what would you include in your painting?* Discuss these ideas. Be prepared to contribute some ideas of your own.

## Encourage Application

2. Have the group discuss the “Things to Think About” in the study guide. Close with prayer.

# Teaching Guide

Revelation: Visions That Encourage and Challenge

Unit 4: Revealing the Victory

## Lesson 12: King of Kings and Lord of Lords

### Lesson Focus

God will completely defeat Satan at the end of time.

### Focal Text

Revelation 19:11-20:10

### Background Text

Revelation 19:6-20:15

### Memory Verse

“On His coat and on His leg are written, ‘King of kings and Lord of lords.’” (Revelation 19:16)

### Connect with Life

1. Tell the class: *Ever since the end of World War II the speculation about how the earth would eventually end has grown more widespread. The explosion of the atomic bombs in Japan made people more afraid. Many feel the world will end in such explosions. Some who espouse the Big Bang theory of the origin of the earth, feel that similar explosions will disintegrate the whole planet at some time. English poet T. S. Eliot claimed that it would end “not with a bang, but a whimper.” American poet Robert Frost said, “Some say the earth will end in fire, some in ice.” Jesus told us we would not know when it would come. John in his Revelation gives us a picture of how it will end.*

### Guide the Study

2. Tell the class: *In the first verses of chapter 19 John hears voices rejoicing that God has punished those who deserve it. Then the picture switches to the wedding supper of the Lamb. Now the voices call for rejoicing because the Lamb is to receive His bride, the redeemed church. The angel tells John that those invited are especially blessed. When John falls down as if in worship, the angel reminds him that angels are fellow servants of God. Only God is*

*to be worshiped.*

Then have someone read Revelation 19:11. Ask: *What vision does John see when the heaven opens? (He sees a white horse. On the horse is One called Faithful and True. He has the power to punish and to make a just war.)* Appoint someone or perhaps several students to read from the study guide the material on “The Second Coming of Christ.” Be sure everyone understands these comments before moving on.

3. Ask one of the group to read Revelation 19:12-16. Then have another to read Revelation 1:14. Ask: *—How do verses 1:14 and 19:12 relate to each other. (Both describe Jesus who had eyes like a flame of fire.)*

*—What else does verse 12 tell us? (He is wearing many crowns as Lord of all the countries of the earth. His name is written on Him, but its meaning is secret, known only to Jesus.)*

*—In verse 13 what are we told about His robe? (It has been dipped in blood.)*

*—What name are we given for Him in this verse? (The Word of God)*

*—Describe the armies which follow Him. (They are dressed in clean, white linen. They ride white horses also.)*

*—The strangest part of the description is in verse 15. What is it? (Out of His mouth is a sharp, two-edged sword. That is His weapon to punish the wicked.)*

*—What other symbol of rulership does He have? (A rod of iron, like the scepters carried by kings)*

*—Another picture we have seen earlier has to do with the grapes. What is it? (He is walking on them and pressing out the anger of God toward them.)*

*—In verse 16 we find another set of names. Where and what are they? (On His robe and on His leg are written King of kings and Lord of lords.)*

4. Choose a person to read Revelation 19:17-21. Say to the class: *John sees another vision of an angel standing in the sun.* Ask:

—What does he invite the birds to do in verses 17 and 18? (These must be scavenger birds who attack dead bodies. The angel invites the birds to come and feast on the dead.)

—In verses 19-21, what does John see? (The beast and the kings of the earth were ready to fight, but the beast and the false preacher were captured and thrown into the lake of fire because they had fooled the people with lies. The rest were killed.)

Some commentaries interpret this as being symbolic. The sword is referred to in the Bible as the Word of God. It is the gospel of salvation. The only thing that could stop the destruction at this time was to turn in repentance and trust in Jesus.

5. Ask for a volunteer to read Revelation 20:1-3. Ask: *What does John see now? (He sees an angel coming down from heaven carrying a key to the bottomless pit and a chain. The dragon, Satan, is chained and locked in the pit for 1,000 years. He would then be free for a while.)* Remember that this is a book of symbols. Elsewhere in the scripture 1,000 is used to indicate a complete unit of time, not necessarily to be taken literally. Remember that other numbers and items are used symbolically. There are different interpretations of this picture.

6. Have someone read Revelation 20:4-6. Ask someone to describe this new scene. Explain: *John sees seated upon thrones all those who had been killed for their faith. They had not worshiped the beast or his false god. They did not have the mark of the beast on them. They have been resurrected to be leaders with Christ for 1,000 years. They had the power to judge. John sees that they are happy. The second death will not touch them.*

7. Select a student to read Revelation 20: 7-10. Ask someone to explain what comes after the 1,000 years. Say: *Satan will be free to leave his prison. He has the opportunity to try to fool the people again. Satan has not repented, nor have many of the unbelievers who lived through the 1,000 years. This opposing army is referred to as Gog and Magog. They will fight God's people and be defeated. God will send fire from heaven to destroy them. Then Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire with the beasts and the false gods. There they will be*

*punished forever.*

## Encourage Application

8. Discuss “Things to Think About” from your study guide.

9. These verses have shown us how God will ultimately defeat the forces of evil. Truly Jesus will be known as Lord of lords and King of kings. In pairs learn the memory verse. Recite it together. Close with prayer that we might remain ready for that day.

## Supplemental Teaching Guide Connect with Life

1. Tell the class: *Much of modern literature is concerned with the battle between good and evil. Some of this can be found in such things as C. S. Lewis's Narnia series which ends with a battle similar to the one in Revelation in which Aslan, the Christ figure in the fantasy, finally overcomes the forces of evil in Narnia. The Star Wars books and movies picture an ongoing conflict between good and evil in which The Force, the good, battles against the evil Empire in a futuristic story. War movies have been popular where the “good guys” defeat the “bad guys.” The western movies and books pit the hero in the white hat on his white horse against the outlaws on the black horses. Why are these types of tales so popular? Most people, religious or not, see good and evil struggling for mastery. They long for the good side to defeat the bad. The book of Revelation has no need for fiction. John sees real events in a symbolic way. He is comforted to be assured that God is King of kings and Lord of lords. He shares his visions of what will some day be for the comfort of his fellow Christians, many of whom are persecuted for their faith in God.*

## Encourage Application

2. Add new words to your word list.

3. List on the board what we need to do and to avoid in order to be ready. Close with prayer that we might continue to think about these things and make a real effort to prepare ourselves.

# Teaching Guide

Revelation: Visions That Encourage and Challenge

Unit 4: Revealing the Victory

Lesson 13: All Things New

## Lesson Focus

God will make everything new and good again for all who receive the life Christ offers.

## Focal Text

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

## Background Text

Revelation 21-22

## Memory Verse

“I heard a 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.’” (Revelation 21:3)

## Connect with Life

1. Have a student read the introductory remarks to the lesson in the study guide. Discuss.

## Guide the Study

2. Select someone to read Revelation 21:1-2. Ask: *What is the new vision John sees here? (He sees a new heaven and a new earth. The first heaven and earth had passed away. The sea had disappeared. A new Jerusalem seemed to be coming down from above. It was as beautiful as a bride ready for her wedding.)*

Explain: *This vision seems to show the end of earth as we know it and the blending of heaven with a new Jerusalem in place of earth. We need to remember that this is a vision to be interpreted. To John the sight is incredibly lovely. Since he has already pictured God’s redeemed people as the bride of Christ, he continues with that symbol. The city is as lovely as a bride at her wedding.*

3. Enlist one of the students to read Revelation 21:3-5. Ask for volunteers to describe what John heard

in this scene. Explain: *John heard a loud voice from heaven. It said that God will no be at home with men, that He will live with them. There will be no need for tears, death, sorrow, or pain. God Himself spoke that everything is to be made new. Everything old is gone.*

4. God continues to speak to John in verses 6-8. Ask a person to read Revelation 21:6-8. Ask:

—*What else does God say in verse 6? (“I am the First and the Last. I am the beginning and the end.” He also speaks of the water of life which is a free gift available to any who are thirsty for God’s salvation.)*

—*In verse 7 what is required of man to receive this? (He must be faithful and continue to cling to God and His promise. That person will be a child of God.)*

—*In verse 8 God reminds us of those who will not be considered a child of God. What does God say about this? (If a person fails to have faith and prefers a life of sin, such as murder, sexual sins, witchcraft, worship of false gods, and lying, he will be thrown into the lake of fire. This is called the second death.)*

5. In the remainder of chapter 21 we find a description of the Holy City, or the new Jerusalem. You may wish to summarize this for the group, or you may ask someone ahead of time to read and be ready to summarize the passage. Here is a possible summary: *One of the seven angels who poured the troubles on earth earlier took John to a high mountain where he could see the Holy City coming down from God. It glittered like expensive jewels. The city is surrounded by a very high wall. The wall is 1,500 miles long and wide, and apparently 1,500 miles high. An angel measures it with a gold rod as John watches. There are three gates on each wall, making twelve in all. The foundation was made of twelve layers of precious stones, each different. The thickness of the wall is about 200 feet. The gates are made of twelve pearls. On the twelve layers of*

*foundation are the names of the twelve apostles. On the gates are the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. John says the streets were of pure gold, but it was perfectly clear. There is no church or temple since God is there in the city. There is no sun nor moon since the Lamb supplies the light. There is no night. The gates are open, but only those whose names are in the Lamb's book of life may enter.)*

6. In the next passage the angel shows John more of the interior of the Holy City. Ask someone to read Revelation 22:1-2. Ask: *What does John see? (He sees the river of the water of life, clear as glass, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb. It runs down the center street. On each side of the river are trees of life. These bear fruit continuously, a different kind each month. There is no sickness there because the leaves of the tree of life give healing.)*

7. Have someone read Revelation 22: 3-5. Ask: *What else is added about the city? (No sin can enter the city. God and the Lamb will be there. All God's servants, both angels and Christians, will serve Him. They will be able to see God's face, and His name will be written on their foreheads. There is no night and no need for light because God will be there to lead them forever.)*

8. Enlist a volunteer to read Revelation 22:6-7. An angel speaks to John. Ask: *What does he say? (The words given are faithful and true. The God of the early prophets has sent angels to show what must happen soon. Then he adds that the one who obeys what is written in the book of Revelation will be happy, or blessed.)* Note: The key word to understand is soon. We know that these things have not all happened yet; therefore, 2000 years is still considered soon. We do not know what God means by soon.

9. Ask a person to read Revelation 22:16-17. In the intervening verses we find that John is instructed not to lock up what is written. It is to be shared. We also find that people will keep on with their own free will to sin or to obey God in during this time. However, only those whose garments are washed white by belief in Jesus Christ will have the right to

enter heaven and to eat of the fruit of the tree of life. Ask:

—*In verses 16 and 17 what claims are made for Jesus? (He has sent the angel to tell people what they need to know. Jesus is the head of the redeemed. He calls himself the bright Morning Star.)*

—*What invitation is given? (The Holy Spirit and the Bride both say, "Come!" God's people also give this invitation. Anyone who wishes may drink of the water of life. It is a free gift.)*

### Encourage Application

10. Ask a class member to read the "Things to Think About" from the study guide. Discuss these. Close with prayer that we might be ready to answer the invitation and that we would try to help others be ready as well.

### Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

1. Ask the class: *What are some of the views of heaven which you have heard?* Discuss these. Then say: *John's last chapters in his vision give us some images to help us visualize what heaven might be like and what happiness will be ours when we get there.*

### Encourage Application

2. Add new words to the word list: *persecution, destroy, restore, intervening.*

3. Work in pairs to learn the memory verse. Recite it together. Close with prayer rejoicing in the hope we have of an eternal home in heaven.