

## APOCALYPSE OF JOHN

### Session 14: John's Second Vision of the Future, Part 1 (Revelation 8:2 – 9:21)

#### REVIEW

- A. Structure of John's Apocalypse:
1. Prologue (Rev. 1:1-20)
  2. Part I: The Revelation of "what is "now" (PRESENT) (Rev. 2:1-3:22)
  3. Part II: The Revelation of "what must take place after this" (FUTURE) (Rev. 4:1-22:6)
    - a. Introduction: John's Heavenly Vantage Point (Rev. 4:1-5:14)
    - b. First Vision of the Future (Rev. 6:1-8:1)
    - c. Second Vision of the Future (Rev. 8:2-11:19)
    - d. Third Vision of the Future (Rev. 12:1-22:6)
  4. Epilogue (Rev. 22:7-21)
- B. First Vision of the Future (Rev. 6:1-8:1):

#### STRUCTURE OF THE SECOND VISION OF THE FUTURE (REV 8:2-11:19)

- A. Significance of the Seven Trumpets:
1. Trumpets One through Six = \_\_\_\_\_ (Revelation 8:2-9:21)
  2. The Angel, the Temple, and the Two Witnesses = \_\_\_\_\_ (Rev 10:1-11:14)
  3. Trumpet Seven = \_\_\_\_\_ (Revelation 11:15-19)
- B. Dominant Image: God's Coming Kingship as a \_\_\_\_\_ from Captivity for His Covenant People

<b>POINTS OF COMPARISON</b>	
<b>The Exodus Story (Exodus 1-15)</b>	<b>John's 2<sup>nd</sup> Vision of Future (Rev 8:2-11:19)</b>
1.(Exodus 1-6)	1.(Revelation 8:2-11:14)
2.(Exodus 7-12)	2.(Revelation 8:2-9:21)
3.(Exodus 8:22-23; 9:4-7, 26; 10:23; 12:13, 23, 27)	3.(Revelation 11:1, 11)
4.(Exodus 7:22-23; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7, 12, 34-35; 10:10-11, 20, 27-28; 14:5-23)	4.(Revelation 9:20-21)
5.(Exodus 14:23-15:21, esp. 15:18)	5.(Revelation 11:15-19, esp. 11:15)
6.(Exodus 25-40, esp. 25:22 and 29:44-46)	6.(Revelation 11:19)

C. Other Major Themes in Revelation 8:2-9:21 (Trumpets One Through Six):

1. The "labor pains" as eschatological \_\_\_\_\_ (see Revelation 9:18, 20; compare Exodus 7-12):

- a. Introduction (Revelation 8:2-5):

**<sup>8:2</sup>And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets.**

**<sup>3</sup>Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of all the saints, on the golden altar before the throne. <sup>4</sup>The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of the saints, went up before God from the angel's hand. <sup>5</sup>Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and hurled it on the earth; and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake.**

**<sup>6</sup>Then the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to sound them.**

- b. The First Trumpet (Revelation 8:7; compare Exodus 9:13-35):

**<sup>7</sup>The first angel sounded his trumpet, and there came hail and fire mixed with blood, and it was hurled down upon the earth. A third of the earth was burned up, a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up.**

- c. The Second Trumpet (Revelation 8:8-9; compare Exodus 7:14-24; Jeremiah 51:24-25; Amos 7:4; 1 Enoch 18:13):

**<sup>8</sup>The second angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a huge mountain, all ablaze, was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea turned into blood, <sup>9</sup>a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.**

- d. The Third Trumpet (Revelation 8:10-11; compare Exodus 7:14-24 and Exodus 11-12; Isaiah 14:12; Jeremiah 9:15; 23:15; Amos 5:6-7; 6:12; ):

**<sup>10</sup>The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a great star, blazing like a torch, fell from the sky on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water—<sup>11</sup>the name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters turned bitter, and many people died from the waters that had become bitter.**

- e. The Fourth Trumpet (Revelation 8:12; compare Exodus 10:21-29):

**<sup>12</sup>The fourth angel sounded his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them turned dark. A third of the day was without light, and also a third of the night.**

- f. The Eagle and Three "Woes" (Revelation 8:13; 9:12; 11:14; compare 18:10, 16, 19):

**<sup>13</sup>As I watched, I heard an eagle that was flying in midair call out in a loud voice: "Woe! Woe! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the trumpet blasts about to be sounded by the other three angels!"**

- g. The Fifth Trumpet (Revelation 9:1-12; compare Exodus 9:8-12 and Exodus 10:1-20; Amos 5:18-20; 8:9):

<sup>9:1</sup>The fifth angel sounded his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from the sky to the earth. The star was given the key to the shaft of the Abyss. <sup>2</sup>When he opened the Abyss, smoke rose from it like the smoke from a gigantic furnace. The sun and sky were darkened by the smoke from the Abyss. <sup>3</sup>And out of the smoke locusts came down upon the earth and were given power like that of scorpions of the earth. <sup>4</sup>They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any plant or tree, but only those people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads. <sup>5</sup>They were not given power to kill them, but only to torture them for five months. And the agony they suffered was like that of the sting of a scorpion when it strikes a man. <sup>6</sup>During those days men will seek death, but will not find it; they will long to die, but death will elude them.

<sup>7</sup>The locusts looked like horses prepared for battle. On their heads they wore something like crowns of gold, and their faces resembled human faces. <sup>8</sup>Their hair was like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. <sup>9</sup>They had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the thundering of many horses and chariots rushing into battle. <sup>10</sup>They had tails and stings like scorpions, and in their tails they had power to torment people for five months. <sup>11</sup>They had as king over them the angel of the Abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek, Apollyon.

<sup>12</sup>The first woe is past; two other woes are yet to come.

- h. The Sixth Trumpet (Revelation 9:13-21; compare Exodus 11-12):

<sup>13</sup>The sixth angel sounded his trumpet, and I heard a voice coming from the horns of the golden altar that is before God. <sup>14</sup>It said to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." <sup>15</sup>And the four angels who had been kept ready for this very hour and day and month and year were released to kill a third of mankind. <sup>16</sup>The number of the mounted troops was two hundred million. I heard their number.

<sup>17</sup>The horses and riders I saw in my vision looked like this: Their breastplates were fiery red, dark blue, and yellow as sulfur. The heads of the horses resembled the heads of lions, and out of their mouths came fire, smoke and sulfur. <sup>18</sup>A third of mankind was killed by the three plagues of fire, smoke and sulfur that came out of their mouths. <sup>19</sup>The power of the horses was in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails were like snakes, having heads with which they inflict injury.

<sup>20</sup>The rest of mankind that were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the work of their hands; they did not stop worshiping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood—idols that cannot see or hear or walk. <sup>21</sup>Nor did they repent of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts.

2. In apocalyptic literature, heightened imagery portrays \_\_\_\_\_ events (compare Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21):

3. \_\_\_\_\_ destruction versus \_\_\_\_\_ destruction (contrast Rev 11:13):

4. The "labor pains" as God's judgment on human \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_—and a call to \_\_\_\_\_:

<sup>9</sup>The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. <sup>10</sup>But the Day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. (2 Peter 3:9-10)

<sup>20</sup>The rest of mankind that were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the work of their hands; they did not stop worshiping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood—idols that cannot see or hear or walk. <sup>21</sup>Nor did they repent of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts. (Revelation 9:20)

5. The "labor pains" as God unleashing \_\_\_\_\_ powers on the earth (see Revelation 8-9; compare Job 1-2):

6. The effect of the "present evil age" and "labor pains" on \_\_\_\_\_ (see Revelation 8:7, 9, 11; compare Genesis 3:17-18; Isaiah 24:4-6):

<sup>18</sup>I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. <sup>19</sup>The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. <sup>20</sup>For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup>that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom [from decay] of the children of God.

<sup>22</sup>We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth [the labor pains/tribulation/messianic woes] right up to the present time [*ho nyn kairos*]. (Romans 8:18-22)

<sup>17</sup>"See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. . . . <sup>25</sup>The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, and dust will be the serpent's food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain," says the LORD. (Isaiah 65:17, 25)

<sup>18</sup>The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great—and for destroying those who destroy the earth. (Revelation 11:18)

7. The "labor pains" as a source of \_\_\_\_\_:

<sup>28</sup>When these things [the "Labor Pains"] begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near

<sup>29</sup>...Look at the fig tree and all the trees. <sup>30</sup>When they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. <sup>31</sup>Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near. (Luke 21:28-31)

8. The "labor pains" as an \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_ of the saints:

<sup>9</sup>When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. <sup>10</sup>They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?" (Revelation 6:9-10)

<sup>8:2</sup>And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets.

<sup>3</sup>Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of all the saints, on the golden altar before the throne. <sup>4</sup>The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of the saints, went up before God from the angel's hand. <sup>5</sup>Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and hurled it on the earth; and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake.

<sup>7</sup>The first angel sounded his trumpet, and there came hail and fire mixed with blood, and it was hurled down upon the earth. (Revelation 8:7a)

<sup>8</sup>The second angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a huge mountain, all ablaze, was thrown into the sea. (Revelation 8:8a)

<sup>10</sup>The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a great star, blazing like a torch, fell from the sky on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water . . . . (Revelation 8:10)

9. Why present the "labor pains" as the sounding of seven trumpets?

a. Some possibilities:

- (1) A call to celebration (like church bells ringing, Numbers 10:10)—John invites us to view the present time, when the trumpets are being sounded, as the call to a coming celebration.
- (2) A signal warning of danger (Ezekiel 33:3; Amos 3:6; cf. Joel 2:15)—John invites us to view the troubles of the present time as a warning of impending judgment, calling for us to "take shelter" in Christ.
- (3) Part of the theophany (sign of God's presence and activity; Exodus 19:16)—John invites us to view the troubles of the present not as a time when God has abandoned his people, but as a time when God is present and active.
- (4) Announcement of the crowning of a king (e.g. 2 Kings 11:14)—John invites us to "hear" the long "trumpet blast" that is going on right now, announcing that God's Rule/Reign/Kingdom is about to come in all its fullness.
- (5) Proclamation of New Year's Day (cf. Numbers 10:10, New Moon festival)—John invites us to view the troubles of the present as the dawning of a new "Day", the "New Creation," the consummated Kingship of God.

b. Most likely: The "labor pains" as the announcement of the \_\_\_\_\_:

<sup>1</sup>Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy hill. Let all who live in the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming. It is close at hand—<sup>2</sup>a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness. Like dawn spreading across the mountains a large and mighty army comes, such as never was of old nor ever will be in ages to come...<sup>10</sup>Before them the earth shakes, the sky trembles, the sun and moon are darkened, and the stars no longer shine. <sup>11</sup>The LORD thunders at the head of his army; his forces are beyond number, and mighty are those who obey his command. The day of the LORD is great; it is dreadful. Who can endure it? (Joel 2:1-11)

Jesus in Matthew 24: <sup>29</sup>Immediately after the distress of those days "the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken."

<sup>30</sup>At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. <sup>31</sup>And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other. (Matthew 24:29-31)

Paul in 1 Corinthians 15: <sup>50</sup>I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. <sup>51</sup>Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed —<sup>52</sup>in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. <sup>53</sup>For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. <sup>54</sup>When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." (1 Corinthians 15:50-54)

Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4: <sup>13</sup>Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. <sup>14</sup>We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. <sup>15</sup>According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. <sup>16</sup>For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup>After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. <sup>18</sup>Therefore encourage each other with these words. (1 Thes 4:13-18)