

Class Member Reading: Revelation 1 – 3; 12

Outline:

- I. Prologue (1:1-8)
 - a. Title, transmission, promise of blessing (1:-1-3)
 - b. Epistolary opening (1:4-6)
 - c. Announcement of the coming King (1:7-8)
- II. Body (1:9-22:5)
 - a. “Things that are”: Christ’s presence with and knowledge of his churches (1:9-3:22)
 - i. The Son of Man among his churches (1:9-20)
 - ii. Christ’s edict-letters to his seven churches (2:1-3:22)
 1. To Ephesus (2:1-7)
 2. To Smyrna (2:8-11)
 3. To Pergamum (2:12-17)
 4. To Thyatira (2:18-29)
 5. To Sardis (3:1-6)
 6. To Philadelphia (3:7-13)
 7. To Laodicea (3:14-22)
 - b. “Things that shall take place after this”: Christ’s defense of his church and destruction of its enemies (4:1-22:5)
 - i. The Lamb and the scroll: current and coming woes, precursors of the end (4:1-8:1)
 1. Heaven opened: the Lamb receives the scroll (4:1-5:14)
 2. The Lamb opens the scroll’s seven seals (6:1-8:1)
(*Interlude*: the sealing of God’s international Israel, 7:1-17)
 - ii. The angels and the trumpets: warnings of the coming wrath (8:2-11:18)
 1. Heaven’s incense altar: the saints’ prayers, and fire flung to earth (8:2-5)
 2. Angels sound seven trumpets (8:6-11:18)
(*Interlude*: the safety and suffering of God’s city-sanctuary, his witnessing church, 10:1-11:14)
 - iii. The woman, her son, the dragon, and the beasts: the cosmic conflict between Christ and Satan (11:19-14:20)
 1. Heaven’s temple opened (11:19)
 2. The woman’s son defeats the dragon (12:1-6)
 3. Michael and heaven’s armies defeat the dragon (12:7-17)
 4. The beast from the sea (13:1-10)
 5. The false prophet from the land (13:11-18)
 6. The Lamb and his sealed victors (14:1-5)
 7. Angelic announcements of judgment (14:6-13)
 8. Harvests of earth and vine (14:14-20)
 - iv. The bowls of God’s final wrath (15:1-16:21)
 1. Heaven’s sanctuary filled with glory (15:1-8)
 2. Angels pour out seven bowls (16:1-21)

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- v. Babylon the prostitute (17:1-19:10)
 - 1. Babylon’s power and luxury (17:1-15)
 - 2. Babylon’s fall lamented and celebrated (17:16-19:10)
- vi. The defeat and destruction of the beasts, the dragon, and death (19:11-20:15)
 - 1. Christ defeats and destroys the beast, the false prophet, and their gathered armies (19:11-21)
(*Interlude*: the thousand years of the dragon’s binding and the martyrs’ reign, 20:1-6)
 - 2. God defeats and destroys the dragon and its gathered armies (20:7-10)
 - 3. The last judgment and the destruction of death, the last enemy (20:11-15)
- vii. “All things new” (21:1-22:5)
 - 1. The new heaven and earth, home of the Lamb’s bride (21:1-8)
 - 2. The new Jerusalem, the Lamb’s pure bride (21:9-22:5)

III. Epilogue (22:6-21)

- a. Transmission and trustworthiness of the Revelation, promise that Jesus is coming soon, promise of blessing (22:6-9)
- b. Prohibition of sealing the book, promise that Jesus is coming soon, promise of blessing (22:10-15)
- c. Transmission of the Revelation (22:16-17)
- d. Prohibition of altering the book, promise that Jesus is coming soon, and final pronouncement of blessing (22:18-21)

Revelation NRSV Chapter 1

1 The revelation (*always singular! Never “Revelations”*) of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants **what must soon take place**; he made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, 2 who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw.

3 Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear and who keep what is written in it; for the time is near.

4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

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

To him who **loves us and freed us from our sins** by his blood, 6 and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

7 Look! He is coming with the clouds;
every eye will see him,
even those who pierced him;

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and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail.

So it is to be. Amen.

8 “I am the **Alpha and the Omega**,” says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

9 I, John, your brother who share with you in Jesus **the persecution and the kingdom and the patient endurance** ([provocative juxtaposition](#)), was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. 10 I was **in the spirit** on the Lord’s day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet 11 saying, “Write in a book what you see and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamum, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.”

12 Then I turned to see whose voice it was that spoke to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 and in the midst of the lampstands I saw one like the Son of Man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash across his chest. 14 His head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like a flame of fire, 15 his feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters. 16 In his right hand he held seven stars, and from his mouth came a **sharp, two-edged sword**, and his face was like the sun shining with full force. [Read over this carefully with fresh eyes. This is CRAZY. This description should definitely tip us off that this book is not intended to be read literally.](#)

17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he placed his right hand on me, saying, “Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, 18 and **the living one** ([I love the idea of God as the embodiment of life](#)). I was dead, and see, I am **alive forever and ever**; and I have the keys of Death and of Hades ([translating the Greek word for the underworld/hell more directly](#)). 19 Now write what you have seen, what is, and what is to take place after this. 20 As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: the seven stars are the angels ([the angels symbolize the heavenly counterparts of the earthly Christian communities, Harper Collins Study Bible, 2311](#)) of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

Chapter 2

1 “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands:

2 “I know your works, your toil and your **patient endurance**. I know that you cannot tolerate evildoers; you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them to be false ([interesting historical point](#)). 3 I also know that you are enduring patiently and bearing up for the sake of my name, and that you have not grown weary. 4 But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. 5 Remember then from what you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. 6 Yet this is to your credit: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans ([otherwise unknown Christian sect](#)), which I also hate. 7 Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To everyone who **conquers** ([this is the word where we get “Nike”, and it means “win in the face of obstacles, overcome](#)), I will give permission to eat from the tree of life that is in the paradise of God.

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8 “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These are the words of the first and the last, who was dead and came to life:

9 “I know your affliction and your poverty, even though you are rich. I know the slander on the part of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 10 Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Beware, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison so that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have affliction. **Be faithful until death**, and I will give you the crown of life. 11 Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. Whoever **conquers** will not be harmed by the second death.

12 “And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: These are the words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword:

13 “I know where you are living, where Satan’s throne is ([Confusing reference, but could refer to a center of worship of the emperor or Zeus](#)). Yet you are holding fast to my name, and you did not deny your faith in me even in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan lives. 14 But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the people of Israel, so that they would eat food sacrificed to idols and practice fornication. 15 So you also have some who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. 16 **Repent** then. If not, I will come to you soon and make war against them with the sword of my mouth. 17 Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To everyone who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give a white stone, and on the **white stone is written a new name that no one knows except the one who receives it**. ([Note how the Lord *praises* the communities before critiquing them. That is a very important principle. This is effective communication: 1\) praise what is good; 2\) comment on what needs to be changed; 3\) provide opportunity for change; 4\) explain the consequences if change does not happen](#)) I love the idea of the “new name”; that part of the temple has always been meaningful for me. I think we can ritually claim names for ourselves as well, characters or traits we relate to deeply.

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

19 “I know your works—your love, faith, service, and patient endurance. I know that your last works are greater than the first. 20 But I have this against you: you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophet and is teaching and beguiling my servants to practice fornication and to eat food sacrificed to idols. 21 **I gave her time to repent**, but she refuses to repent of her fornication. 22 Beware, I am throwing her on a bed ([Interesting wording, the Greek means “couch”, ESV extrapolates “sickbed”; “bed” is parallel to “great distress”](#)), and those who commit adultery with her I am throwing into great distress, unless they repent of her doings; 23 and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am the one who **searches minds and hearts**, and I will **give to each of you as your works deserve**. 24 But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call ‘the deep things of Satan,’ ([again, interesting wording](#)) to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden; 25 only **hold fast to what you have** until I come.

26 To everyone who conquers and continues to do my works to the end,

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I will give authority over the nations;
27 to rule them with an iron rod,
as when clay pots are shattered—

28 even as I also received authority from my Father. To the one who conquers I will also give the morning star. 29 Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

Chapter 3

1 “And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars:

“I know your works; you have a name of being alive, but you are dead. 2 **Wake up**, and **strengthen** what remains and is on the point of death (There is a hopeful firmness about this...God tells us we can come to ourselves, repent and change, even if we are “on the point of death), for I have not found your works perfect in the sight of my God. 3 Remember then what you received and heard; obey it, and repent. If you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you. 4 Yet you have still a few persons in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes; they will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. 5 If you conquer, you will be clothed like them in **white robes**, and I will not blot your name out of the **book of life** (another incredibly powerful symbol); I will **confess your name** before my Father and before his angels. 6 Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

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

8 “I know your works. Look, I have **set before you an open door**, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. 9 I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but are lying (Very harsh view toward Judaism)—I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you. 10 Because **you have kept my word of patient endurance**, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth. 11 I am coming soon; **hold fast to what you have** (repetition), so that no one may seize your crown. 12 If you **conquer**, I will make you a pillar in the temple of my God; you will never go out of it. I will **write on you the name of my God**, and the **name of the city of my God**, the new Jerusalem that comes down from my God out of heaven, and **my own new name**. I find these ideas very powerful and meaningful, the idea of God writing names on us, claiming us, calling us to align with the Divine. 13 Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

14 “And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The words of **the Amen** (Love this name for Jesus. “Amen” means something like “faithful” or “let it be”, which is why we use it at the end of prayers), the **faithful and true witness**, the **origin of God’s creation**:

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15 “I know your works; **you are neither cold nor hot**. I wish that you were either cold or hot. 16 So, because you are **lukewarm**, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of my mouth Fascinating point worth discussing. We should be passionately, earnestly engaged. I don’t think chill is the same thing as lukewarm ;) . 17 For you say, ‘I am rich, I have prospered, and **I need nothing.**’ **You do not realize** that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. (Makes me think of all the Catholics on my mission “I’m all set, thanks”. If we are not aware of our spiritual needs, we are impoverished indeed) 18 Therefore I counsel you to **buy from me** gold refined by fire so that you may be rich; and white robes to clothe you and to keep the shame of your nakedness from being seen; and **salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see**. Spiritual luxuries.. or are they necessities? 19 **I reprove and discipline those whom I love** (because the purpose of life is not comfort, but exaltation). Be **earnest**, therefore, and **repent**. 20 Listen! **I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door,** (I like this idea—God is there, wanting to be in our lives, but we need to invite them in). I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me. 21 To the one who conquers I will give a place with me on my throne, just as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. 22 Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

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Chapter 12

1 A great portent appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars (Notes from the Harper Collins Study Bible: adaptation of the myth of Apollo’s birth; the woman is described like Isis and represents Israel and the Church, thus twelves stars). 2 She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pangs, in the agony of giving birth. 3 Then another portent appeared in heaven: a great red dragon (Satan), with seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads (successive rulers). 4 His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. Then the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bear a child, so that he might devour her child as soon as it was born. 5 And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron (Messiah/Jesus). But her child was snatched away and taken to God and to his throne (Death/resurrection/exaltation of Jesus); 6 and the woman fled into the wilderness (place of refuge based on the Exodus tradition), where she has a place prepared by God, so that there she can be nourished for one thousand two hundred sixty days (3 ½ years, half of seven, which symbolizes perfection, the “stereotypical length of a period of eschatological distress). Wow... this is chock full of symbolism.

7 And war broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought back, 8 but they were defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. 9 The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. (I think the idea that the War in Heaven was over agency, as described in Moses 4, to be one of the more powerful ideas in Mormonism)

10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, proclaiming,
“Now have come the salvation and the power
and the kingdom of our God
and the authority of his Messiah,

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for the accuser of our comrades has been thrown down,
who accuses them day and night before our God.

11 But they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb
and by the word of their testimony,
for they did not cling to life even in the face of death.

12 Rejoice then, you heavens
and those who dwell in them!

But woe to the earth and the sea,
for the devil has come down to you
with great wrath,
because he knows that his time is short!”

13 So when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. 14 But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle, so that she could fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to her place where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. 15 Then from his mouth the serpent poured water like a river after the woman, to sweep her away with the flood. 16 But the earth came to the help of the woman; it opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his mouth. 17 Then the dragon was angry with the woman, and went off to make war on the rest of her children, those who keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus.

18 Then the dragon took his stand on the sand of the seashore

Additional Reading: [Revelation 21:7](#); [Bible Dictionary](#), “[Revelation of John](#),” 762–63.

Revelation 21:7 NRSV

7 Those who **conquer** will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children

Revelation of John

Also known as the Apocalypse, a Greek word meaning revealed or uncovered. The message of Revelation is the same as that of all scripture: there will be an eventual triumph on this earth of God over the devil; a permanent victory of good over evil, of the Saints over their persecutors, of the kingdom of God over the kingdoms of men and of Satan. This is the subject on which Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Paul, Peter, and all the prophets have written. They spoke of a day of victory that would come, and that the end would be better (more glorious) than the beginning. The victory would be achieved through Jesus Christ.

Such is the theme of the Revelation. The details about the beasts, the wars, the angels, the men, etc., contribute to the development of this theme. By a little study, the theme can be perceived even if the details are not completely identified. It may be in this sense that the Prophet Joseph Smith said that Revelation was “one of the plainest books God ever caused to be written” (HC 5:342). However, the more fully the details are understood, the greater will be the appreciation of the theme. If we fail to catch a glimpse of the theme, we fail in our comprehension, no matter how many details we are able to understand.

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Some Guidelines to Understanding:

The Revelation seems to be divided into two parts. The first, [Rev. 1–3](#), deals with things at the time the Revelation was given, and is addressed to branches of the Church in seven cities of Asia. Note [Rev. 1:3](#): “the time is at hand.” These three chapters show clearly that the Church in that day was rapidly going into apostasy. The second part, [Rev. 4–22](#), deals with things yet future for John, things that had not yet come to pass. It begins with John’s time and continues to the end of the world. Note [Rev. 4:1](#): “I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.” Accordingly, it offers a sort of panoramic view of events through the ages—of Apostasy, Restoration, Judgment, and Millennium.

Apostasy and Restoration. Apostasy and Restoration are relatively gradual events. Compare the setting and the rising of the sun. It does not become dark or light all at once (see [D&C 45:29](#)).

A guided tour. An interesting circumstance in the Revelation is that an angel comes to John and explains things to him—a sort of guided tour. This is consistent with the visions given to Nephi, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Enoch, who had similar guided tours. It appears to be a typical visionary experience.

- 1 Some Points of Doctrine:
- 2 A description of the resurrected and glorified Savior ([1:13–15](#)).
- 3 The importance of overcoming the world ([3:21](#); [21:7](#)).
- 4 The faithful are to be kings and priests unto God and will reign on the earth ([1:6](#); [5:10](#); [20:6](#); [21:7](#)).
- 5 Animals are resurrected from the dead, and there are animals in heaven, redeemed by the blood of Christ ([5:11–14](#); [D&C 77:3](#); HC 5:343).
- 6 Two prophets will lie dead in the streets of Jerusalem in the last days and then be raised ([11:1–11](#)).
- 7 The woman driven into the wilderness, and the man child ([Rev. 12](#)). The woman is the Church; the man child is the political kingdom of God growing out of the Church.
- 8 The angel with the everlasting gospel. This being is generally identified in the Church as the resurrected angel Moroni ([JS—H 1:33](#)) but may be representative of all the angels involved in the Restoration.
- 9 All people shall be judged by their works out of the books that are written both on earth and in heaven ([20:11–13](#); see [D&C 128:6–7](#)).
- 10 The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy ([19:10](#)).

The New Jerusalem, the city foursquare ([3:12](#); [21:1–22:7](#); see [Ether 13:2–10](#); [Moses 7:62–63](#)). The Revelation was received on the Lord’s day by John on the isle of Patmos ([Rev. 1:9–10](#)), off the coast of Asia, not far from Ephesus. The exact date is not known. The Book of Mormon confirms that the recipient was John, one of the Twelve ([1 Ne. 14:18–27](#); see [D&C 20:35](#); [77](#)).

Scripture Chain: **Revelation 2:7; Revelation 2:11; Revelation 2:17; Revelation 3:5;
Revelation 3:12; Revelation 3:21**

Revelation 2:7 NRSV

Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To everyone who conquers, I will give permission to eat from the tree of life that is in the paradise of God

Revelation 2:11 NRSV

11 Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. Whoever conquers will not be harmed by the second death

Revelation 2:17 NRSV

17 Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To everyone who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give a white stone, and on the white stone is written a new name that no one knows except the one who receives it.

Revelation 3:5 NRSV

5 If you conquer, you will be clothed like them in white robes, and I will not blot your name out of the book of life; I will confess your name before my Father and before his angels.

Revelation 3:12 NRSV

12 If you conquer, I will make you a pillar in the temple of my God; you will never go out of it. I will write on you the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem that comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.

Revelation 3:21 NRSV

21 To the one who conquers I will give a place with me on my throne, just as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne.
