

Chapter 46: They Shall Be His People

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1. Revelation Continued

As we began our study of the book of Revelation, we were introduced to the Lord's use of symbolic imagery. We first found this means of communication in the writings of Isaiah in the Old Testament. As we proceed to further understand the book of Revelation, we will continue to draw upon modern revelation as well as insight gained by other scholars in order to further our understanding of the meaning of the symbols the Apostle John described.

When:	Continuation of revelation to John the Beloved from Jesus Christ while John was on the Isle of Patmos about A.D. 95.
Whom:	While it was surely circulated to all the saints living at the time, it was written especially for the members of the Church of Jesus Christ who would live during the time period of the sixth seal.

Joseph Smith states,

“The things which John saw had no allusion to the scenes of the days of Adam, Enoch, Abraham, or Jesus, only so far as is plainly represented by John...John saw that only which was lying in futurity and which was shortly to come to pass.”¹

New Testament Gospel Doctrine Teachers Manual states,

“The first five seals [a thousand-year time period] of the earth's temporal existence is covered in 11 verses [Rev. 6:1-11], the sixth seal [our day] is covered in 14 verses [Rev. 6:12-7:10], and the seventh seal is covered in 216 verses...[Jesus Christ through John's vision] gave the most attention to the events of our time period

and the one to come...[so that our lives may] be blessed as we study and prepare for the Second Coming of the Savior.”²

Themes:	Taylor Halverson states, “(1) Satan attacks the work of God and the saints of God; (2) The suffering righteous endure through faith until the end; (3) The Lord comes triumphant to the destruction of the forces of evil and the justification and sanctification of the saints; and, (4)...there is final peace and joy in the righteous with God in the New Jerusalem on earth.” ³
Focus:	(1) Satan fights against the righteous; (2) Satan will be bound and Christ will reign triumphantly during the Millennium; and, (3) After the last judgment, the righteous will dwell with God.

We learned of six time periods identified in this world’s history. Through the use of symbolic imagery, Satan’s battle against the righteous has been continuous and unrelenting. There have been many martyrs of righteousness. Before this battle concludes--we learned it commenced during our pre-mortal existence--there will yet be causalities among the righteous.

In Chapters 19-20, Satan is finally bound, not by the righteousness of the saints, but by the power of God.

Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet state,

“Satan is to be bound by the power of God. It will not be a state of righteousness, purity, or goodness that will bind Satan at the beginning of the millennial era. Near countless passages of scripture assure us that the return of Christ will be a day of wickedness and corruption and that he will come to take vengeance upon a wicked world.”⁴

During the Millennium, that will last for 1000 years, while not all citizens will be members of the Church of Jesus Christ, the earth will be governed under Christ’s direction, and a spirit of peace and cooperation will be manifest. Satan and his minions will be bound and have no power over the earth’s inhabitants.

In Chapters 21-22, we will learn further about the final judgment. The final judgment, it has been said, will be a day of rejoicing for the righteous, while it will be a day of great sadness and sorrow for the wicked. At this time, the righteous will be blessed with the opportunity to live with God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, while the wicked will go to another place of lesser glory. One thing is certain, the judgment of God will be determined by all to be fair and generous.

2. Symbols and Interpretations

We were introduced to the Lord’s teaching by the use of symbols during the previous lesson. The Lord spoke to John, as He did to Isaiah, using the language of symbols in order to express this vision. There may be three possible reasons: (1) To help the learner to understand and remember by comparing unfamiliar ideas or things to those that are more familiar; (2) To provide different levels of meaning based upon the individual’s spiritual level of understanding; and, (3) To encourage the learner to think more deeply (inquire) about what is being taught.

The following symbols are noted with their possible interpretation and reference.

	Symbol	Interpretation	Scripture Reference
1.	Seven Seals	Seven one-thousand-year periods	D&C 77:7
2.	Book with Seven Seals	Contains God's will, mysteries, and works.	D&C 77:6
3.	A Lamb	Christ	John 1:29, 36
4.	Twelve horns/Twelve eyes of Lamb	Twelve servants of God	JST, John 5:6
5.	Golden bowl of incense	Prayers of the Saints	Rev. 5:8
6.	Horses	Representative of events of thousand-year period	Rev. 6:2, 4-5, 8*
7.	Marriage of the Lamb	The Second coming	Rev. 19:7
8.	Fine linen	Righteousness of the Saints	Rev. 19:8
9.	Rod of iron	Word of God	1 Ne. 15:23-24
10.	Bottomless pit	Hell	Rev. 9:1; 20:1
11.	Gog and Magog	Great battle after the Millennium	Rev. 20:8
12.	Lake of fire and brimstone	Torment of Disappointment (hell)	Rev. 20:10
13.	Another book (for judgment)	Heavenly book of life	Rev. 20:12
14.	New heaven and new earth (twice)	Terrestrial and then Celestial earth	Rev. 21:1*
15.	The bride, the Lamb's wife	The Church; The New Jerusalem	D&C 109:73-74; Rev. 21:2
16.	Twelve names on twelve gates	Twelve tribes	Rev. 21:12
17.	Twelve names on twelve foundations	Twelve apostles	Rev. 22:14
18.	The tree of life and its fruit	Love of God; celestial glory	Rev. 22:2
19.	Root of David	Christ	Rev. 22:16
20.	Morning star	Christ	Rev. 22:16

Reference⁵

It is important that each of us strive to gain an increased understanding of the various symbols in the vision John received with the understanding that the same symbol may have multiple meanings.

3. Revelation Chapters 12-22

3.1. Revelation 12

Revelation 12:1-5	JST, Revelation 12:1-4
<p>1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:</p>	<p>1 And there appeared a great <u>sign</u> in heaven, <u>in the likeness of things on the earth</u>, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.</p>
<p>2 And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.</p>	<p>2 And <u>the woman</u> being with child, cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.</p>
<p>3 And their appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.</p>	<p>3 And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up unto God and his throne.</p>
<p>4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.</p>	<p>4 And their appeared another <u>sign</u> in heaven; and behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.</p>
<p>5 And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.</p>	<p>And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman which was <u>delivered</u>, ready to devour her child after it was born.</p>

The additions and changed sequence in the Joseph Smith Translation in comparison to the King James Bible offer us further insight regarding the vision that John is experiencing. The woman, whom we will later learn (JST, Revelations 12:7), symbolizes “the church of God.”

Bruce R. McConkie states,

John sees “the Church in all its glory, beauty, power and perfection—a glory like the sun in the firmament; the Church in which there is power to prepare men to attain that celestial world whose glory is typified by the brightness of that same heavenly luminary.”⁶

Bryan Richards states,

“The pain and difficulty with which the church must bring forth the kingdom of God on the earth is like childbirth—painful and difficult but glorious and miraculous! The Fall has brought upon the world the consequences of mortality and the curse of Satan’s temptations. Bringing forth the kingdom of God in the absence of Satan’s influence would be so much easier. It would be like painless childbirth. Such was the case.

The war against Satan would only be won with the pain, blood, sweat and tears which only childbirth can represent.”⁷

In JST, Revelation 12:3, the woman, in great pain and travail, delivers a man child. He will “rule all nations with a rod of iron [the word of God]. We ask the question, “Who does the man child represent?

Gerald N. Lund states,

“One simple phrase added by the Prophet in this chapter brings the whole matter into perfect clearness. In fact, it becomes a key to our understanding of this whole section on the kingdoms of the world and of Christ.

JST, Revelation 12:7

7 And the dragon prevailed not against Michael, neither the child, nor the woman which was the church of God, who had been delivered of her pains, and brought forth the kingdom of our God and his Christ.

“Eventually there will be a political kingdom led by Jesus Christ which will rule all nations with the word of God. That political kingdom will grow out of, and is made possible by (that is, is given birth by) the Church of Jesus Christ. And since the creation of the political kingdom of Christ signals the end of the kingdoms of the world, it is little wonder that Satan seeks to destroy the man child. During the meridian of time, the Church was not able to bring forth that political kingdom, but itself was taken into the wilderness, or went into apostasy (see JST Revelation 12:14; D&C 86:3). The man child, or the political kingdom was thus taken to heaven to await the day of the Restoration.”⁸

Joseph Fielding Smith states,

“After Christ comes, all the people of the earth will be subject to him, but there will be multitudes of people on the face of the earth who will not be members of the Church; yet all will have to be obedient to the law of the kingdom of God, for it will have dominion upon the whole face of the earth. These people will be subject to the political government, even though they are not members of the ecclesiastical kingdom which is the Church.

“This government which embraces all the peoples of the earth, both in and out of the Church, is also sometimes spoken of as the kingdom of God, because the people are subject to the kingdom of God which Christ will set up.”⁹

The second event in these initial verses makes reference to a “great red dragon” (Revelations 12:3). We also learn that this dragon “drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth.” (Revelations 12:4). We will learn in the following verses the identity of the dragon and what occurred that led to his drawing away “stars of heaven.”

Revelation 12:7-9	JST, Revelation 12:6-8
7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,	6 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and his angels <u>fought against Michael</u>
8 And prevailed not;	7 And <u>the dragon prevailed not against Michael, neither the child, nor the woman which was the church of God, who had been delivered of her</u>

<p>neither was their place found any more in heaven. 9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.</p>	<p><u>pains, and brought forth the kingdom of our God and his Christ.</u></p> <p>8 Neither was there place found in heaven <u>for</u> the great dragon, <u>who</u> was cast out; that old serpent called the devil, and <u>also called Satan</u>, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth; and his angels were cast out with him.</p>
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With the additions provided by the Joseph Smith Translation, we are better able to understand the events that occurred in the vision that John experienced.

We learn there was a war in heaven between the forces led by Michael (Adam) and the dragon (devil). From the Joseph Smith Translation, we learn “the dragon prevailed not against Michael” (JST, Revelation 12:7). We also learn that “neither was there place found in heaven for the great dragon, who was cast out” (JST, Revelation 12:8). We also learn that “the third part of the stars [spirits/angels] in heaven,” who were those spirits that followed the devil, “were cast out with him” (JST, Revelation 12:8).

In order to gain further information regarding the war in heaven and why it was fought, we turn to latter-day revelation for further understanding.

PGP, Moses 4:1-4

- 1** And I, the Lord God, spake unto Moses saying: That Satan...is the same which was from the beginning, and he came before me, saying—Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor.
- 2** But, behold my Beloved Son...Chosen from the beginning, said unto me—Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever.
- 3** Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I, the Lord God, had given him, and also, that I should give unto him mine own power; by the power of mine Only Begotten, I caused that he should be cast down;
- 4** And he became Satan, yea, even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice.

The additional understanding, we gain from this revelation is that Satan offered himself to be the Redeemer of the world prior to our coming to this earth. The Father’s plan involved the free agency of all spirits which Satan sought to destroy. In his pride, he also sought to usurp the power of the Father. A battle ensued, not of weapons, but words of ideology and expressions of faith and testimony. One-third of the spirits in heaven rebelled against the plan of our Father and for their rebellion, along with Satan, were cast out of heaven.

Revelation 12:10-11

- 10** And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.
- 11** And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

Stephen E. Robinson states,

“Satan is an inquisitor; he finds fault, and where he finds no actual fault, he cleverly creates the appearance of fault. This is what Satan is; it’s what he does; it is his essence to lie and to accuse, and his lying accusations *will often seem correct* to most honest, objective observers. He accused Jesus of blasphemy and treason and got most of the people to believe it. He accused the Lord’s anointed falsely and got away with it...That is what Satan does, what he has done from the beginning.”¹⁰

Here we see an example of Satan’s accusatory actions manifest prior to his being cast out of heaven. The scriptures note that he brought accusations toward others “before our God day and night” (Revelations 12:10). We might guess these accusations were directed toward the sure failure of the mission of the Savior; toward us who would never be obedient to the commandments when we were no longer in the spirit world; and, even his plan was better than the plan of the Father!

Revelation 12:12	JST, Revelation 12:12
12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.	12 <u>And after these things I heard another voice saying, Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, ye, and they that dwell upon the islands of the sea!</u> for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he <u>hath</u> but a short time.

The devil and those of his servants travel the length of this world seeking to tempt her inhabitants to pursue a course of wickedness and evil. The battle begun in heaven continues today. The forces for good and righteousness, led by Jesus Christ and His representatives on earth, and the forces of evil, directed by the devil and his followers, continue to strive to win the hearts and souls of mankind.

Revelation 12:13

13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.

Gordon B. Hinckley states,

“That war, so bitter, so intense, has gone on, and it has never ceased. It is the war between truth and error, between agency and compulsion, between the followers of Christ and those who have denied Him. His enemies have used every stratagem in the conflict. They’ve indulged in lying and deceit. They’ve employed money and wealth. They’ve tricked the minds of men. They’ve murdered and destroyed and engaged in every other unholy and impure practice to thwart the work of Christ.”¹¹

Revelation 12:15

15 And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

Jay A. and Donald W. Parry state,

“Before the woman (or the Church) actually departed into the wilderness (meaning the safety of heaven) the serpent (the devil) tried to destroy her with a flood. The flood from Satan’s mouth could have been a torrent of lies against the Church, the flow of evil that he sent forth, seeking to overwhelm the Church; ceaseless

persecution and tribulation; or the attacks of a wicked nation (Rome)—or each of these in turn...The real point, of course, is that Satan made great efforts to destroy the Church, and that the true power and authority of the Church survived in God's care."¹²

Revelation 12:17

17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

This verse may have application to the persecution and false teachings that eventually resulted in the death of the Apostles and brought about the apostasy that followed. It may also have reference to the attacks that have occurred since the restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ upon the earth in 1830. Whether in the meridian of time or in these latter-days, the battle continues between the forces of good and evil.

Gordon B. Hinckley states,

“Notwithstanding the present strength of the Church, it seems that we are constantly under attack from one quarter or another. But we go on. We must go on. We have gone forward, and we will continue to go forward. In some seasons the issues are major. At other times they are only local skirmishes. But they are all part of a pattern.”¹³

3.2. Revelation 13

Chapter Thirteen of Revelation has often been neglected due to the various interpretations that have been offered regarding the beasts which are noted. We will proceed for it is important that we have a scriptural understanding of these animals and their possible symbolic meaning. We will continue to draw upon the insight of others as we seek to expand our spiritual knowledge.

Joseph Smith states,

“Oh, ye elders of Israel, hearken to my voice; and when ye are sent into the world to preach, tell those things you are sent to tell; preach and cry aloud, ‘Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand, repent and believe the Gospel.’ Declare the first principles, and let mysteries alone, lest ye be overthrown. Never meddle with the visions of beasts and subjects you do not understand.”¹⁴

Joseph Smith however does offer some insight regarding John's choice of referring to grotesque beasts.

Joseph Smith states,

“When God made use of the figure of a beast in visions to the prophets He did it to represent those kingdoms which had degenerated and become corrupt, savage and beast-like in their dispositions, even the degenerate kingdoms of the wicked world, but He never made use of the figure of a beast nor any brute kind to represent His kingdom.”¹⁵

Jay A. and Donald W. Parry add,

“The beast has power among nations and peoples in the same way vicious animals have power in their kingdoms, ruling others by fear and force.”¹⁶

Number of Beasts	One Beast (Revelation 13)	Four Beasts (Daniel 7)
Animal imagery	The single beast has body parts of a leopard, bear, and lion.	1 st beast is like a lion. 2 nd beast is like a bear. 3 rd beast is like a leopard. 4 th beast is terrible and strong.
Number of heads = 7	One beast has 7 heads representing 7 kingdoms.	The 1 st , 2 nd , and 4 th beasts have one head each. The 3 rd beast has four heads, making seven heads total. Again, the heads represent 7 earthly kingdoms.
Number of horns = 10	Beast has a total of 10 horns representing 10 latter-day rulers.	All 10 horns come from the fourth beast. “the ten horns...are ten kings that shall arise” (Daniel 7:24).

Reference¹⁷

Revelations 13:5-6

5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

Jay A. and Donald W. Parry state,

“The beast is allowed to exercise its power for forty-two months...The number forty-two may not indicate an actual number of months or other specific period of time but may instead symbolize a general, prolonged, but ultimately limited, time of wickedness...The beast speaks his blasphemy against God himself, against God’s name, against God’s dwelling place (the tabernacle, or temple), and against the angels and gods in heaven. The beast is opposed to all that is good (Dan. 7:8, 20, 25; 11:36) and tries to garner to himself the honor and respect that should be given only to God.”¹⁸

Revelation 13:7

7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

Ezra Taft Benson states,

“We live in a day of great challenge. We live in that time of which the Lord spoke when he said, ‘Peace shall be taken from the earth, and the devil shall have power over his own dominion.’ (D&C 1:35). We live in that day which John the Revelator foresaw when ‘the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.’ (Rev. 12:17). The dragon is Satan; the woman represents the Church of Jesus Christ. Satan is waging war against the members of the Church who have testimonies and are trying to keep the commandments. And while many of our members are remaining faithful and strong, some are wavering. Some are falling. Some are fulfilling John’s prophecy that in the war with Satan, some Saints would be overcome (see Rev. 13:7.)”¹⁹

Joseph Fielding Smith adds,

“Daniel and John each saw the opposition the little horn made against the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This opposition will continue until the grand council is held at Adam-ondi-Aham. The “little horn” (Dan. 7:20-22; Rev. 13) is making a renewed and determined effort to destroy the Church. The Lord has decreed otherwise and while its power will last until Michael comes and the Son of Man receives his rightful place, this great power will endure, it must, however, fall, and according to the scriptures its end will come rather suddenly (D&C 29:21; B/M, 1 Nephi 13:1-9; Rev. Chapters 17-18).”²⁰

Revelation 13:11

11 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

Richard D. Draper states,

“The lamb is Antichrist working miracles and teaching false doctrines in the name of salvation. Later in the revelation this lamb is called the ‘false prophet’ (Rev. 16:13; 19:20; 20:10, KJV) and uses counterfeit prophetic knowledge as a means of deception. The two horns represent feigned benevolent authority. Note John’s words carefully. He says that the beast had horns ‘like a lamb,’ not like *the* Lamb. Therefore, the second beast, the fraudulent Christ, imitates the Lord.”²¹

Satan is the master at imitation. It may be said he has never had an original thought. As the Master deceiver, he consistently seeks to mislead God’s children. Recall the ability of the “magicians of Egypt” to duplicate the miracles of Moses and Aaron. These included the turning of the rods into serpents (Ex. 7:12), and bringing up frogs upon the land (Ex. 8:6). However, when the plague of lice was produced, we read, “the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not... Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God...” (Ex. 8:18-19). The key for us in these turbulent times is to be able to recognize the imitation from the real and for us to be obedient to the commandments so we may always have the discerning gift of the Holy Ghost with us.

Joseph F. Smith said,

“Let it not be forgotten that the evil one has great power in the earth, and that by every possible means he seeks to darken the minds of men, and then offer them falsehoods and deception in the guise of truth. Satan is a skillful imitator, and as genuine gospel truth is given the world in ever-increasing abundance, so he spreads the counterfeit coin of false doctrine. Beware of his spurious currency, it will purchase for you nothing but disappointment, misery and spiritual death. The ‘father of lies’ he has been called, and...[so adept] has he become through the ages of practice in his nefarious work, that were it possible that he would deceive the very elect.

“The gifts of the Spirit and the power of the holy Priesthood are of God, they are given for the blessing of the people, for their encouragement and for the strengthening of their faith. This Satan knows full well, therefore he seeks by imitation-miracles to blind and deceive the children of God. Remember what the magicians of Egypt accomplished in their efforts to deceive Pharaoh as to the divinity of the mission of Moses and Aaron. John the Revelator saw in vision the miracle-working power of the evil one. Note his words. ‘And I beheld another beast coming up out the earth...and he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles,’ etc. (Rev. 13:11-14). Further, John saw three unclean spirits whom he describes as the ‘spirits of devils, working miracles (Rev. 16:13-14).’²²

Russell M. Nelson reminds us,

“...in the coming days, it will not be possible to survive spiritually without the guiding, directing, comforting, and constant influence of the Holy Ghost...Choose to do the spiritual work required to enjoy the gift of the Holy Ghost, and hear the voice of the Spirit more frequently and more clearly.”²³

Revelation 13:11-12, 14-15, 17

11 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth;...

12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him,...

14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

Jay A. and Donald W. Parry state,

“Here we see the extent of the power of the second beast. In [Revelation]13:15 we see that the beast kills those who will not worship the first beast. Now we see that he has another threat: he controls the world economy so much that only those with the mark can engage in the essential economic activities of buying and selling.”²⁴

Revelation 13:16

16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

Gerald N. Lund states,

“Numerous interpretations of [this] passage have been given by various commentators, ranging all the way from saying it is a specific mark placed on the body or a person to wildly spiritualistic interpretations; however, knowledge of an ancient custom and a secondary practice derived from this custom sheds light on what John may have been trying to convey.

“In the Roman empire there were vast numbers of slaves. Often a slave would run away from his master, go to a large city such as Rome, and try to disappear into the population. Since nothing about a human being marks him naturally as either a slave or free man, such runaways could pass as free persons as long as no one could personally identify them. To protect against that practice, slave owners would often brand their slaves with marks to identify them, just as modern stockmen permanently mark their animals for identification. To make this brand impossible to hide under clothing, most slaves were marked either on the palm of the right hand or on the forehead directly above the eyes. Therefore, it would have been common in John’s time to see a person walking down the street with a mark on his right hand or on his forehead and to instantly identify him as a slave.

“Out of the practice grew a secondary custom. Worshippers of various gods in the Roman pantheon, to symbolize the fact that they were totally dedicated to their god—in other words, that they were slaves or servants of their god—would also mark themselves on the right hand or the forehead. In their case they would mark themselves with a symbol of their god. Thus, a person might be seen walking down the street with a

thunderbolt on his forehead, which symbolized that he was totally devoted to—that is a slave to—Juniper. A person marked with a trident said symbolically, ‘I am a servant of Poseidon, the god of the sea,’ and so on. John’s readers, familiar with that concept and its significance, would not have puzzled over what he meant. To say that a person had the mark of the beast suggested that he was a slave of, or totally subservient to, the beast. Note that John uses the same imagery in a positive sense, indicating that there are those who are sealed in their foreheads with the mark of God (see Rev. 7:3). This use clearly signifies that these are people who belong to God; they are God’s servants.”²⁵

3.3. Revelation 14

Revelation 14:1

1 And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads.

We ask, who is the Lamb? where is mount Sion, and who are the hundred and forty-four thousand with Him who are marked with the Father’s name?

Jay A. and Donald W. Parry state,

“Modern revelation clarifies further that Mount Zion ‘shall be the city of New Jerusalem’ (D&C 84:2; 133:18, 56). When the Lord stands on Mount Zion in the latter days, it appears he will be standing at the Mount Zion called New Jerusalem, which will be centered in Jackson County, Missouri.”²⁶

The Lamb is Jesus Christ; the place is the New Jerusalem, in Jackson County, Missouri. Who are the one hundred and forty-four thousand who are with Him?

Doctrine and Covenants 77:11

11 Q. What are we to understand by sealing the one hundred and forty-four thousand, out of all the tribes of Israel—twelve thousand out of every tribe?

A. We are to understand that those who are sealed are high priests, ordained unto the holy order of God, to administer the everlasting gospel; for they are they who are ordained out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, by the angels to whom is given power over the nations of the earth, to bring as many as will come to the church of the Firstborn.

Joseph Fielding Smith states,

“This certainly is a great honor to be one of the 144 thousand who are specially called by the power of ‘the angels to whom is given great power over the earth,’ to bring souls unto Christ. John the Apostle had the great desire to bring souls to Christ. Three of the Nephites disciples likewise sought this great honor and it was granted to them. It is one of the noblest desires that a man can have. It will be a wonderful blessing to those who are called in their great group.”²⁷

We addressed in Revelation, Chapter 13, the meaning of individuals having the Father’s name written on their foreheads. It signifies the “people who belong to God; they are God’s servants” (see Gerald N. Lund, 65).

Jay A. and Donald W. Parry add,

“In Rev. 13:16-17, we saw that the people of the world had the name of the beast written on their foreheads. Here, the righteous have the Father’s name written on their foreheads. We are marked by the name of him to

whom we give our true loyalty. The reception of the Father's name is a fulfillment of the promise made to the valiant in Rev. 3:12, which records that the righteous also have written on them the name of God's holy city, New Jerusalem, as well as the new name of Christ. The Father's name is written on the righteous in a symbolic rather than a literal way."²⁸

Revelation 14:3-4

3 And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

Here we learn that not only the "hundred and forty and four thousand" will sing a song of praise before the throne of God, but they will also be virgins. How can that be?

Jay A. and Donald W. Parry state,

"They are virgins in having refrained from entering into any unlawful sexual intercourse. They are also virgins in having remained true to Christ as their Bridegroom (Rev. 19:7; 21:9, see also Jer. 2:1-4)—in having refrained from entering into spiritual adultery (Ezek. 16; Hosea 1-3). The Lord has often referred to his true people as a virgin (2 Kgs. 19:21; Jer. 18:13; Lam. 2:13; Amos 5:2; 2 Cor. 11:2). These 'virgins' are contrasted with the wicked who worship the beast in Rev. 13 and who join in consort with the 'mother of harlots' that is Babylon (Rev. 17:5)."²⁹

The "hundred and forty and four thousand," were also "redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits."

Bryan Richards states,

"John speaks of this group as having already been redeemed, as 'the firstfruits' of God and the Lamb. This means that they are already resurrected for 'the resurrection of the dead is the redemption of the soul' (D&C 88:16). Furthermore, those who are raised to a celestial resurrection in the morning of the first resurrection are called 'the first fruits, they who shall descent with him first' (D&C 88:98). 'These are they whom he shall bring with him, when he shall come in the clouds of heaven to reign on the earth over his people. These are they who have part in the first resurrection... These are they who are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly place, the holiest of all' (D&C 76:63-66). They are made like unto their Maker, 'And he makes them equal in power, and in might, and in dominion' (D&C 76:95)."³⁰

Revelation 14:6

6 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

Who is the angel whom John spoke of when he said, "having the everlasting gospel to preach?"

Mark E. Peterson states,

"Moroni fulfilled two biblical prophecies in coming to Joseph Smith: the fourteenth chapter of Revelation and the twenty-ninth chapter of Isaiah. He did come to earth as an angel. He did deliver to Joseph Smith the golden record which had been prepared under the direction of Almighty God. It is a new witness for the Lord, Jesus

Christ; it declares, as does the Bible, that Jesus of Nazareth indeed is the Son of God, our Savior and Redeemer. That book is available to all mankind. A million copies are published each year, in more than a score of languages.

“So again, we testify that the Book of Mormon is true. It is the word of Almighty God, restored in this day by angelic ministry and by the direction of God himself. We testify that Moroni came as an angel on September 21, 1823, revealing his ancient record and that he did so as a servant of Jesus Christ.”³¹

Revelation 14:7

7 Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

Joseph Fielding Smith states,

“Beginning with the restoration of the gospel in this dispensation, men once again would be called upon to worship and serve their Creator rather than the false concepts of Deity that prevail in the world.”³²

Revelation 14:8-10

8 And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.
9 And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,
10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

Babylon (Spiritual Babylon) is fallen. The kingdom of the Devil has been destroyed. The inhabitants of the world chose to follow Satan and his minions and to rebel against the God of Heaven.

Bruce R. McConkie states,

“Babylon shall fall after the gospel has been restored, and those in Babylon shall suffer the fires of eternal torment, the burning anguish of cloudy and seared consciences, in that hell which is prepared for the wicked. Why? Their fate befalls them because they worshipped—not the Father in the name of the Son, by the power of the Spirit—but the beast and the image. They sacrificed at the evil altars. Theirs was a worldly way of life. They did not overcome the world, and put off the natural man, and become saints through the atonement of Jesus Christ the Lord. They dwell in Babylon in the day of her fall, in the day when the sword of vengeance fell upon her.

“When will Babylon fall? We have already set forth that which is known about the seven last plagues and shown that they will take place in the beginning of the seventh thousand years.”³³

We need only to look to the Old Testament, Genesis 19:24, 28-29, when the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed or to the Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 9:2-12, and the cities that were destroyed as a result of their wickedness, for confirmation of the fulfillment of the word of the Lord. Will we be wiser than they and repent from our sins, and humble ourselves before the Lord, before it is too late? I truly hope so, or we will also perish in our sins.

Revelation 14:12-13

12 Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

Brigham Young states,

“Blessed are those who have received the Priesthood of the Son of God, and have honored it in their lives. Those who have honored their calling and Priesthood to the end die in the Lord, and their works do follow them.”³⁴

“...Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord,” (Rev. 14:13) refers to those who “keep the commandments and the faith of Jesus,” (Rev. 14:12). They are those who have been steadfast and immovable in keeping their covenants, and helping the work of the Lord to go forward. They have spent their lives doing the will of the Lord.

3.4. Revelation 15

The New Testament (Institute) Student manual states,

“Revelation 15 appears to describe what the righteous—gathered in the first harvest—will experience, whereas Revelation 16 seems to describe what the wicked—gathered in the second harvest—will experience.

“Chapters 15 and 16 work together. In Revelation 15:1, 7 John learned of seven destructive plagues that are to be poured out upon the wicked. Revelation 16 describes these seven plagues. The repeated use of the number seven may suggest that the plagues represent the completion of God’s judgment against the wicked in the last days: “For in [the seven last plagues] is filled up the wrath of God” (Revelation 15:1).”³⁵

Revelation 15:2

2 And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.

We learn through modern revelation, the meaning of the “sea of glass.”

Doctrine and Covenants 130:6-9

6 The angels do not reside on a planet like this earth;

7 But they reside in the presence of God, on a globe like a sea of glass and fire, where all things for their glory are manifest, past, present, and future, and are continually before the Lord.

8 The place where God resides is a great Urim and Thummim.

9 This earth, in its sanctified and immortal state, will be made like unto crystal and will be a Urim and Thummim to the inhabitants who dwell thereon, whereby all things pertaining to an inferior kingdom, or all kingdoms of a lower order, will be manifest to those who dwell on it; and this earth will be Christ’s.

The “sea of glass” is the residence of God the Father, or as we understand, the Celestial kingdom. Paul saw in vision the three kingdoms which he likened to the sun, moon, and stars, based upon their differing glory (see 1 Corinthians 15:40-41). He records the names of the kingdoms of the sun and moon as celestial and terrestrial. While he did not record the name of the lower kingdom of the stars, however, we learned through revelation, it is the telestial (see D&C 76:98).

New Testament (Institute) Student Manual states,

“John saw that the righteous would gain ‘victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name—in short, over all of Satan’s evils and deceptions (Rev. 15:2).”³⁶

Bryan Richards states,

“...the apocalyptic plagues are a repetition of the plagues on Egypt. Even in the scriptures, history repeats itself. The destruction of Egypt in Moses’ day is a type for the destruction of Babylon. God’s demonstration of power before Pharaoh is a type for his demonstration of divine power over the beast and his minions. Moses ministry, in delivering the children of Israel from a formidable enemy, is a type for the Savior’s mission at His Second Coming. Then will the scripture be fulfilled which states, ‘A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me (Moses); him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear the prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.’ (Acts 3:22; Deut. 18:15-20).”³⁷

Revelation 15:3-4

3 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.

4 Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.

New Testament (Institute) Student Manual states,

“The Song of Moses’ was sung by the children of Israel following their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. (see Exodus 15:1-9). Revelation 15:3 tells us that the song of Moses will be sung again by those who inherit the celestial kingdom in celebration of the Lamb of God delivering them from the bondage of sin.”³⁸

It is important to understand this song is different from the song to be sung by the “hundred and forty-four thousand,” addressed in Revelation 14. Music, however, will be an important part of our praising God and His Son, Jesus Christ.

LDS Bible Dictionary states,

Revelation 15:2-4, “...illustrates a major theme in the book of Revelation: ‘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....’

“Such is the theme of the Revelation. . . . If we fail to catch a glimpse of the theme, we fail in our comprehension [of the book], no matter how many details we are able to understand.”³⁹

Revelation 15:6-8

6 And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.

7 And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.

8 And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

Richard D. Draper states,

“God designates seven angels to enforce the judgment. Again, the symbolism is important. All heaven combines in this great moment to see that God’s will is fully executed. The ministers of justice are angels of high rank, as suggested by the golden girdles they wear like that of the Son of Man (see Rev. 1:13). One of the living creatures’ hands each of the angels of doom a vial, or bowl (Greek *phial*), filled with God’s wrath. At the same time John sees God’s glory and power fill the heavenly temple, ‘and no man was able to enter into the temple, till seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled’ (v. 8, KJV). Thus, John depicts the ominous moment. No one can enter the temple. No blood or expiation can be sprinkled as the High Priest had done in the Day of Atonement to bring renewal of the covenant of peace and mercy between God and Israel. No one can enter and make peace until judgment has had its way.”⁴⁰

3.5. Revelation 16

In Revelation, Chapter 15, the events that would occur upon the earth during the last days, occurred in heaven. In Chapter 16, John sees, in vision, the actual occurrence of the events as they will occur on the earth.

The New Testament (Institute) Student Manual states,

“In Revelation 16, John describes the scourges and plagues that will be poured out in the final days, prior to the Second Coming of Christ (see also Revelation 15:1, 7). These plagues are summarized in the following chart.

Revelation 16	Description of the (Seven) Plagues
Verse 2	First, “a noisome and grievous sore” comes upon the wicked. (Similar plagues are described in Exodus 9:8–12 and Zechariah 14:12.)
Verse 3	Second, the waters of the sea turn to blood, and all creatures in the waters die (see also Exodus 7:19–21).
Verse 4	Third, the rivers and fountains of water turn to blood (see also Exodus 7:19–21).
Verses 8–9	Fourth, the sun scorches the wicked with fire and great heat.
Verses 10–11	Fifth, darkness spreads across the kingdom of the devil, and the wicked suffer pains and sores.
Verses 12–16	Sixth, the waters of the Euphrates River dry up to prepare for the gathering of the kings of the world at Armageddon (see also Zechariah 12:11).
Verses 17–21	Seventh, there are voices, thunders, lightnings, and a great earthquake; the cities of the nations fall; Babylon receives the cup of God’s wrath; and great hail falls upon men.

Reference⁴¹

Orson Pratt states,

“We are living in this [Utah] Territory, comparatively at peace, but unless the Latter-day Saints live according to the light which God has revealed to them, they cannot escape. If God sends judgements upon the nations, he will send them upon us...If he visits the inhabitants of the earth with pestilence and blood, he will visit us in a similar manner unless we keep his commandments. If the inhabitants of the earth who know not God are to perish because of their wickedness, how much more will he visit those who have greater light and knowledge if they will not keep his commandments? The Lord sent forth the destroyer in ancient times to lay waste to the firstborn of the Egyptians, pointing out the means by which his people might escape, and those who failed to do so as they were commanded had no promise of being preserved; so in these days when judgments come, they will begin among his Saints, and those who have not attended to the word of wisdom and the laws of life that he has pointed out and have no claim to mercy and favor.”⁴²

Revelation 16:6

6 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.

Wilford Woodruff states,

“I have the consolation of believing, that the innocent blood of the Saints, which has dyed the American soil for the truth’s sake, will cry in the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, until the abettors and perpetrators of such horrid tragedies will have to pay the price of the blood of those righteous men whom they have martyred.

“Should any of the Saints have formed an opinion that the apostles, prophets, or saints of God in the last days would not seal their testimony with their blood, I wish to mark it as an error by citing testimony upon the subject. John the Revelator, while wrapped in the visions of the Almighty, saw events that were to transpire in the last days, before the second advent of the Messiah; and in the opening of the fifth seal, he ‘saw under the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held; and when they asked how long before the Lord would judge and avenge their blood, on those that dwell on the earth, they were informed they must rest for a little season until their fellow-servant and brethren should be killed as they were.’ (Rev. 6:9-11) Again, John said, in pouring out the plagues upon the earth, (Rev. 16:3), that ‘he poured out his phial upon the sea, and it became as blood of a dead man, and every living soul died in the sea: and the third angel poured out his phial upon the rivers and fountains of waters, and they became blood; and the angel said the Lord was righteous in so doing, for they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy.’

“Some may say, it was in the days of Jesus Christ that this was fulfilled—but it was not so; for John lived after, and saw things that should come to pass in the future; and that in the last days the waters were to be turned into blood, because they had shed the blood of prophets and of saints, John also speaks of two other witnesses in Judea that were to be slain; and how many other of the servants of God may be called to seal their testimony with their blood before the coming of Christ is not for me to say.”⁴³

Revelation 16:14-19, has reference to the events associated with the battle of Armageddon we addressed in Revelation, Chapter 11. Half of the city of Jerusalem had been overrun by the conquering armies of the world.

Bruce R. McConkie states,

“...and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city’ (Zech. 14:2). So shall it be with Jerusalem when she falls again.

“But what of the fate of those who fought against her? In spite of her fall, Jerusalem shall be victorious. Though she is taken and pillaged and her women ravished, yet in the end she shall be victorious.”⁴⁴

Revelation 16:21

21 And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

The final destruction extended to the cities of Babylon and her inhabitants involved hailstones the Lord will rain down upon them. They are reminiscent of the “brimstones and fire...the Lord rained down upon Sodom and Gomorrah” (Genesis 19:24).

Richard D. Draper states,

“Associated with the seventh bowl, John sees one last plague of tremendous proportions. As was the earthquake, this one is not directed at the cities and nations under the power of spiritual Babylon. The new threat is directed at the people who inhabit the cities: ‘There fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent’ (v. 21, KJV). From the days Moses brought this plague upon Egypt, hail has served as both the symbol and reality of God’s judgment upon hardened mankind (see, e.g. Ex. 9:18-26; Ps. 78:47; 105:32; Josh. 10:11).

“Here the weight of each stone is between 60 to 80 pounds. Through this symbol, John describes the pounding power that will bring all men to their knees. But it will not bring penitence. Once again John notes how hardened these men have become who can only curse God and wish to die and who never for a second consider repentance. Little wonder that the angels declare that God’s judgments against the wicked were entirely true and just.”⁴⁵

3.6. Revelation 17

Revelation, Chapter 17, addresses the vision John, the Apostle, saw of Babylon, the mother of whores and the beast. It is important to understand while Satan supports the “great and abominable Church,” (B/M, 1 Nephi 13-14, 22), this is not the same referenced in Revelation 17.

Five Characteristics of Babylon described in Revelation	
1.	Babylon is drunk with the blood of the Saints, the martyrs of Jesus, and the prophets. (see Rev. 17:6; Rev. 18:24).
2.	She is known for her enjoyment of great wealth and luxury. (see Rev. 17:4; Rev. 18:3, 11-16).
3.	She is characterized by wanton sexual immorality. (see Rev. 17:1-2, 5).
4.	She had dominion over all nations. (see Rev. 17:15, 18; Rev. 18:3, 23-24).
5.	Her fate is to be consumed by the very kings who, because of her deceptions, have made war on the Lamb. (see Rev. 17:14-16; Rev. 18:23).

Reference⁴⁶

Five Symbols and their meaning as noted in Revelation Chapter 17		
1.	Babylon, the woman...arrayed in purple and scarlet (Rev. 17-18).	False religions
2.	Beast (Rev' 17:12).	Satanic control of earthly kingdoms or governments.
3.	Seven heads – Seven mountains (Rev. 17:9)	Seven continents – everywhere.
4.	Waters (Rev. 17:15).	People, multitudes, natures, and tongues.
5.	Babylon (Rev. 17:5).	Apostate churches (D&C 86:3).

Reference⁴⁷

Revelations 17:7, 16

7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.

16 And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.

Stephen E. Robinson states,

“It appears in Revelation that while the symbol of the unvirtuous woman represents false religion, the beasts, the image of the beast, and the its horn represent other aspects of the devil’s kingdom. The ‘Mother of Harlots’ cannot represent kingdoms or governments—the beast and its horns do that (see Rev. 17:12; also JST, Rev. 13:1)—but she can represent the false beliefs and ideologies that often capture and motivate governments. The same evil genius, Satan the old dragon, is behind both, but the beast and the harlot symbolize separate entities with separate functions in the evil empire.”⁴⁸

Revelation 17:8

8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

Byran Richards states,

“Satan’s kingdom ‘was and is not,’ meaning it persecuted the saints until the time that the archangel Michael casts it into ‘the bottomless pit’ for 1000 years. (Rev. 20:1-3). During the time he is bound, the beast ‘is not’ able to tempt mankind.

The spirits who are to receive a telestial glory and the sons of perdition will spend the Millennium with Satan in the bottomless pit. At the first of the Millennium, their spirits will be brought forth. They ‘are to be judged, and are found under condemnation.’ They remain with the devil and his angels for a day according to the Lord’s time.

“However, the bottomless pit and perdition are different places. After the 1000 years are ended, the telestial spirits will be resurrected and Satan will ascend out of the bottomless pit. During the short season, he will persecute the saints again and gather his armies together for the battle of Gog and Magog (Rev. 20:3-10). The

Lord will then destroy his kingdom for good, sending him and the sons of perdition into their own place. Hence, Satan ‘shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition.’ Such is the fate of ‘the beast that was, and is not, and yet it.’ He *was* until the Millennium; he *is not* during the Millennium, and he *yet is* during the short season.”⁴⁹

Revelation 17:9

9 And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.

Richard D. Draper states,

“The allusion to seven hills best fits Rome, which was called the city of seven hills and certainly manifested the spirit of the great beast in John’s day. However, Rome itself stands as a symbol of the archetypal Babylon. As the number for completeness, seven not only symbolizes the power exercised by Rome in John’s day, but it also denotes the political powers of the latter days.”⁵⁰

Revelation 17:15

15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

Orson Pratt states,

“Who is Babylon? I have already explained that Babylon is a great power that should be in the earth under the name of a church, a woman—that generally represents a church—full of blasphemy. She had the inscription of her name upon her forehead—‘Mystery Babylon, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.’ What is to become of her? Where does she sit? Upon many waters, says John; and to interpret this to the understanding of the people, the waters are many people, nations, kindreds and tongues where the woman hath her seat. These churches are scattered over the wide face of the earth, and this is called Babylon. Another angel is to follow the one that brings the Gospel, after it has been sufficiently preached, and proclaim the downfall of this great and corrupt power of the earth. Well, will all the Christians that are there perish, or will they be gathered out? Hear what John says—‘I heard a great voice from heaven, saying, ‘Come out of her, oh my people, that you partake not of her sins, that you receive not of her plagues, for her sins have reached to the heavens, and God hath remembered her iniquities.’ ‘Then there is only one way to escape, isn’t there? We can’t stay in Babylon and be spared from these judgments, can we? Not at all. Why not? Because her sins have reached to the very heavens. Look at her abominations, her whoredoms, her murders, her priestcraft, her false doctrines, her forms of godliness without any power; look at them, all the nations are following after and consider it popular to follow and embrace these doctrines. ‘Come out of her, oh, my people.’”⁵¹

Revelation 17:14

14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

Gordon B. Hinckley states,

“The war goes on. It is waged across the world over the issues of agency and compulsion. It is waged by an army of missionaries over the issues of truth and error. Is waged in our own lives, day in and day out, in our homes, in our work, in our school associations; it is waged over questions of love and respect, of loyalty and

fidelity, of obedience and integrity. We are all involved in it—men [and women] and boys [and girls], each of us. We are winning, and the future never looked brighter.”⁵²

3.7. Revelation 18

New Testament (Institute) Student manual states,

“Revelation 18 proclaims the fall of wicked Babylon and describes the lamentation of all who are associated with her. In all her ages, the Lord has commanded His people to ‘come out of [Babylon]’ and ‘be not partakers of her sins’ (Revelation 18:4; see D&C 133:5, 7, 14).”⁵³

Bryan Richards adds,

“The story of Revelation 18 is the story of three grand declarations. The first, from a glorified angel (v. 2-3), celebrates the destruction of Babylon. The second, as a voice from heaven (v. 4-20), prophesies that the merchants who have become wealthy through Babylon will mourn as they witness her utter destruction. The last, another mighty angel (v. 21-24), promises that none will be found in Babylon for the city will be wiped off the face of the earth.”⁵⁴

Revelation 18:1

1 And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.

Jay A. and Donald W. Parry state,

“The angel is so brilliant that the very earth is illuminated by his presence. In fact, this angel’s glory is like that of Christ, who will yet return. ‘And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory’ (Ezek. 43:2). ‘For as the light [e]ning [of the sun] cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be’ (Matt. 24:27).”⁵⁵

Revelation 18:4

4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

James A. Talmage states,

“...the purpose for which...[the] work of gathering of the saints from the nations of the earth has been ordained. The Lord would have His people separate themselves from the sins of the world and depart from spiritual Babylon, that they may learn the ways of God and serve Him the more fully.”⁵⁶

Revelation 18:11

11 And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more:

Jay A. and Donald W. Parry state,

“The merchants, symbolizing all those who seek to increase their wealth by association and dealings with a godless culture, will mourn for the loss of that culture, that society, that way of life. Their mourning will be particularly poignant because of their personal loss: they will likely grieve for themselves more than for Babylon.”⁵⁷

Revelation 18:17-19

**17 For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,
18 And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city!
19 And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.**

Richard D. Draper states,

“The Seer shows that without the false values of Babylon, the merchants and sea lords cannot foist their goods upon mankind. The whole of their marketing enterprise is built upon a pretense sustained by the creation of artificial needs. They do this by simple tricks of marketing through which warmth becomes mink; shelter become marble and brass; food becomes escargot and caviar. And when the bottom falls out of the market, the kings are left without taxes, armies, or treasures, and the merchants with rotting cargos and glutted stockpiles that no one will buy.”⁵⁸

Revelation 18:21

21 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

Orson Pratt states,

“The description of this fall of Babylon is given in various places in John’s revelations. Awful and most terrible judgments will fall upon Mystery Babylon the Great. She is to be banished with plagues of various kinds; a grievous sore will fall upon her people, so much so that they will blaspheme God, but they will not repent of their sins. They are to be punished with having the fountains and rivers turned into blood, and the waters of the great ocean are to become as the blood of a dead man, and every living thing that is therein will die, and one of the last plagues and judgments will be poured out upon her with devouring fire, and she will sink as a millstone, and her name will be blotted out from under heaven and all that are connected with her.

“Before these terrible judgments are sent forth upon the nations of the earth, God will save all who receive the everlasting Gospel by gathering them to one place, where they can serve him, and keep his commandments. He will not merely give them some idea, by reading the Scriptures, that he desires them to gather, but John says there will be a great voice from heaven proclaiming—‘Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.’”⁵⁹

3.8. Revelation 19

At this point in John's vision, we are nearing the conclusion of the wars, plagues and desolation. The members of the Church of Jesus Christ, who have been faithful and steadfast during the previous calamities, are anxiously awaiting the return of Jesus Christ to the earth.

Revelation 19:1-2

**1 And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God.
2 For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore [church of the Devil], which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants [JST-saints] at her hand.**

Alleluia is the Greek form of the Hebrew, Hallelujah, meaning, "Praise Jehovah." These words of praise and honor are offered by the members of the Church to the Lord for His judgments upon Satan and those who were responsible for the death of the saints. The deaths of the innocent saints have been avenged.

Revelation 19:7-9

**7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.
8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.
9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.**

Jay A. and Donald W. Perry state,

"The marriage of the Lamb, who is Christ (D&C 33:17-18) to his bride, who is the Church (D&C 109:73-74) as well as the New Jerusalem (D&C 21:2, 9-10), is a metaphor for the union between the Lord and his people, made possible through the atonement of Christ... There is no sweeter or more meaningful relationship on earth than that between a holy husband and a holy wife; that is the kind of relationship (in depth of feeling and completeness of union) that the Lord is inviting us to. That marriage is between Christ and the church—but the Church is not just an organization on the earth, it also individual souls who belong to that organization."⁶⁰

Joseph Smith asks,

"...those who keep the commandments of the Lord and walk in His statutes to the end... are the only individuals permitted to sit at this glorious feast... Reflect for a moment, brethren, and enquire, whether you would consider yourselves worthy to a seat at the marriage feast with Paul and others like him, if you had not been faithful? Had you not fought a good fight, and kept the faith, could you expect to receive?"⁶¹

Revelation 19:11

11 And I saw the heavens opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

Revelation 19:15	JST, Revelation 19:15
15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and the wrath of Almighty God.	15 And out of his mouth <u>proceedth the word of God, and,</u> with it he <u>will</u> smite the nation; and he will rule them with <u>the word of his mouth;</u> and he treadeth the wine-press <u>in</u> the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

Revelation 19:16

16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

Certainly, He that sat on the white horse, who shall rule the nations with the [JST. word of his mouth], and has a name written on his thigh, is Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who will reign during the thousand years of the millennium.

Revelation 19:18	JST, Revelation 19:18
18 That ye [vs.17 all the fowls that fly] may eat the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.	18 That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all <u>who fight against the Lamb,</u> both <u>bond</u> and <u>free</u>, both small and great.

Just prior to the Second coming of the Savior, a great battle will commence in which the forces of evil will be gathered against the Jews. This battle is often referred to as the battle of Armageddon. (See Zechariah 12:9-10; 13:6; 14:2-4; Revelation 11:2-13.) The battle will conclude with deliverance coming through Jesus Christ. As a result of His intervention, the Jews will be victorious and the Holy City of Jerusalem will be spared from destruction. They will ask Him the cause of the wounds in His hands and He will reply, “Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends” (Zechariah 13:6). The Jews will then recognize Jesus as He whom they crucified. The bodies of the dead will lie in the fields. It is at this time that the fowls that fly and the scavengers will come and eat the flesh of all who died in this great battle fighting against the Jews and their supporters.

3.9. Revelation 20

Revelation 20:1-3

- 1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.**
- 2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years,**
- 3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nation no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.**

Bruce R. McConkie states,

“The bottomless pit is the depths of hell. It is not a literal pit without a bottom, for such is a contradiction in terms. But it is a pit or prison where the inhabitants suffer, as mortals view suffering, to an infinite, unlimited, or bottomless extent. Referring to finite inability to comprehend the vastness of the suffering of those reaping the full measure of this status, the revelation says: ‘The end, the width, the height, the depth, and the misery thereof, they understand not, neither any man except those who are ordained unto this condemnation.’ (D&C 76:48).”⁶²

Joseph Fielding Smith states,

“There are many among us who teach that the binding of Satan will be merely the binding which those dwelling on the earth will place upon him by their refusal to hear his enticing. This is not so. He will not have the privilege during that period of time to tempt any man.”⁶³

It is of importance to note at the conclusion of the Millennium, the Devil or Satan, will be released “a little season” (Revelation 20:3). At that time, the forces of good headed by Michael/Adam will battle against the forces of evil, directed by the devil in a final battle referred to as Gog and Magog (see *Teachings of Prophet Joseph Smith*, 280). At the conclusion of this battle, the devil will be cast forever into prison by Jesus Christ.

Revelation 20:4

4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Bruce R. McConkie states,

“Under Christ, selected agents and representatives shall sit in judgment upon specific peoples and nations. Scriptural intimations indicate that there will be a great judicial hierarchy, each judge acting in his own sphere of appointment and in conformity with the eternal principles of judgment which are in Christ.”⁶⁴

Bryan Richards states,

“The Millennial earth will usher in a terrestrial state of glory. Hence, those capable of living a terrestrial law will be spared the associated destruction. However, Christ, the ancient saints, and the righteous latter-day saints will all have been resurrected to a celestial glory. In a way, they don’t belong on a terrestrial earth but on a celestial one. This may be why the prophet said that resurrected saints may not reside on the terrestrial earth the entire time.”⁶⁵

Revelation 20:6	JST, Revelation 20:6
6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.	6 Blessed and holy <u>are they who have</u> part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

We learn from the Joseph Smith Translation there will be many who will be resurrected at the beginning of the Millennium. These are those who were valiant in their service to God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. Those not resurrected will come forth at a later time to receive their eternal reward and glory.

Bruce R. McConkie states regarding the “Second death,”

“After the separation of body and spirit, which is the natural death, the wicked and ungodly die a second death, a spiritual death, meaning they are cast out of the presence of the Lord and are dead as pertaining to the things of righteousness, which are the things of the Spirit. ‘I, the Lord, have said that the fearful, and the unbelieving, and all liars, and whosoever loveth and maketh a life, and the whoremonger, and the sorcerer, shall have their part in that lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. Verily I say, that they shall not have part in the first resurrection.’ (D&C 63:17-18).

“But when those...designated have suffered for their own sins, after they have paid the utmost farthing in hell, after they have suffered ‘the wrath of Almighty God, until the fullness of times, they shall come forth in the second resurrection and receive their inheritance in the telestial kingdom (D&C 76:103-106).”⁶⁶

Revelation 20:7-10

**7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,
8 And [Satan] shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.
9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.
10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.**

The final battle, following the Millennium, as had been noted, is referred to as Gog and Magog. It will be the last great battle prior to the judgment of Satan and his servants. Satan’s defeat by the forces of good, marks the conclusion of the power of Satan.

Revelation 20:12, 14-15

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Bruce R. McConkie states,

“The books were opened. What books? The Standard Works of the Church, the holy scriptures wherein the law of the Lord is recorded and the instructions given as to how men should walk in this mortal probation; also, the records of the Church wherein are recorded the faith and good works of the saints—the records of baptism, celestial marriage, tithing, missionary service, and their acts of devotion and worship.”⁶⁷

Spencer W. Kimball states,

“The wicked may prosper for a time, the rebellious may seem to profit by their transgressions, but the time is coming when, at the bar of justice, all men will be judged, ‘every man according to his works.’ (Rev. 20:13).

No one will 'get by' with anything. On that day no one will escape the penalty of his deeds, no one will fail to receive the blessings he has earned. Again, the parable of the sheep and the goats gives us assurance that there will be total justice. (See Matt. 25:31-46)."⁶⁸

3.10. Revelation 21

Revelation 21:1

1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

Of all the transcendent events to occur, this event will be among the most marvelous and eventful as it involves the transformation of the earth as we know it. It will occur following the Millennium, the judgment, and the battle of Gog and Magog.

Bryan Richards states,

“After the Millennium and the short season, the heaven and earth will pass away. The earth must die and be resurrected; the heavens will change as the earth takes its place in a new position in space. Just like the souls of the righteous, the resurrected earth is brought back to life with a celestial glory. Never again, does it need to be cleansed, renewed, or sanctified.”⁶⁹

Doctrine and Covenants 88:18-20

18 Therefore, it [earth] must needs be sanctified from all unrighteousness, that it may be prepared for the celestial glory;
19 For after it hath filled the measure of its creation, it shall be crowned with glory, even with the presence of God the Father;
20 That bodies who are of the celestial kingdom may possess it forever and ever; for, for this intent was it made and created and for this intent are they sanctified.

The earth, having gone through the process of being purified and sanctified, has now become a place of dwelling for those of the celestial glory, including God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.

Revelation 21:2-3

2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

James E. Talmage states,

“The Church in this day teaches that the New Jerusalem seen by John and by the prophet Ether [Ether 13:3-8], as descending from the heavens in glory, is the return of exalted Enoch and his righteous people; and that the people of Zion of Enoch, and the modern Zion, or the gathered saints on the western continent, will become one people.”⁷⁰

PGP, Moses 7:63-64

63 And the Lord said unto Enoch: Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there, and we will receive them into our bosom, and they shall see us; and we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other;

64 And there shall be mine abode, and it shall be Zion, which shall come forth out of all the creations which I have made; and for the space of a thousand years the earth shall rest.

According to revelation, the event of the city of Enoch being united with those who have established the city of Zion shall occur at the beginning of the Millennium.

Brigham Young states regarding the return of the city of Enoch,

“We have no business here other than to build up and establish the Zion of God. It must be done according to the will and law of God, after the pattern and order by which Enoch built up and perfected the former-day Zion, which was taken away to heaven, hence the saying that went abroad that Zion had fled. (See JST, Genesis 14:34.) By and by it will come back again, and as Enoch prepared his people to be worthy of translation, so we through our faithfulness must prepare ourselves to meet Zion from above when it shall return to earth, and to abide the brightness and glory of its coming.”⁷¹

Revelation 21:4

4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

James E. Faust states regarding our reunion with the Father and His Son,

“In the celestial glory, we are told, [quotes Revelation 21:4]. Then faith and hope will replace heartache, disappointment, torment, anguish, and despair, and the Lord will give us strength, as Alma says, that we ‘should suffer no manner of afflictions, save it were swallowed up in the joy of Christ’ (Alma 31:38). Of this I have a testimony, and I so declare it in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.”⁷²

What a joyous event it will be when once again we are united with God the Father and His Son, having been faithful to the covenants we have made, and we shall be worthy to be in their presence once again.

Revelation 21:7

7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

David O. McKay shares a vision he had,

“In the distance I beheld a beautiful white city...I then saw a great concourse of people approaching the city. Each one wore a white flowing robe, and a white headdress. Instantly my attention seemed centered upon their Leader, and though I could see only the profile of his features and his body, I recognized him at once as my Savior!...The city, I understood, was his. It was the City Eternal; and the people following him were to abide there in peace and eternal happiness.

“But who were they?”

“As if the Savior read my thoughts, he answered by pointing to a semicircle that that appeared about them, and on which were written in gold the words:

“These Are They Who Have Overcome The World—Who Have Truly Been Born Again!”⁷³

These words penned by David O. McKay give further evidence to the words of John as they relate to the reunion those who are righteous will experience with their beloved Father.

Revelation 21:10-11

**10 And he [Rev. 21:9-“one of the seven angels who had the seven vials of the seven last plagues] carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,
11 Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;**

Joseph Smith states,

“Now many will feel disposed to say, that this New Jerusalem spoken of, is the Jerusalem that was built by the Jews on the eastern continent. But you will see, from Revelation 21:2, there was a New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband; that after this, the Revelator was caught away in the Spirit, to a great and high mountain, and saw the great and holy city descending out of heaven from God. Now there are two cities spoken of here.”⁷⁴

Bryan Richards provides the following contrast of the description of the two Jerusalem’s:

	Heavenly New Jerusalem	Heavenly Old Jerusalem
Description:	A city which is to come from heaven and be joined with the New Jerusalem	A city which is to come from heaven and be joined with the Old Jerusalem
Timing:	Beginning of Millennium	After the Millennium
Location:	Jackson Co., Missouri	Site of ancient Jerusalem
Temple:	Large temple in the city will be the site of extensive temple work during the Millennium	No temple is necessary because the work has already been done, hence John saw no temple therein (Rev. 21:22)
Inhabitants:	The people of Enoch (Moses 7:62-64)	“an innumerable company of angels”...the general assembly and the church of the firstborn (Heb.12:22-23)
Glory:	The earth will be renewed and enjoy a terrestrial (paradisiacal) glory during the Millennium	After heaven and earth pass away, the earth becomes a celestialized sphere
Leadership:	The Son of God will dwell with men for a thousand years	Both the Father and the Son will reign, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it (Rev. 21:22)

Reference⁷⁵

Joseph Fielding Smith states,

“After the close of the millennial reign we are informed that Satan, who was bound during the millennium, shall be loosed and go forth to deceive the nations. Then will come the end. The earth will die and be purified

and receive its resurrection. During this cleansing period the City Zion, or New Jerusalem, will be taken from the earth; and when the earth is prepared for the celestial glory, the city will come down according to the prediction in the Book of Revelation.”⁷⁶

Bruce R. McConkie states,

“Here is a city, in size and dimensions, in splendor and glory, which is so far beyond human experience or comprehension that there is no way to convey to the finite mind what the eternal reality is. Hence, expressions relative to precious stone, to streets of gold, and to pearly gates. It is noteworthy that the city is cubic in shape. Calculated on the basis of 606 feet, 9 inches to the furlong, its outer limits will stretch nearly 1400 miles in length and breadth and height. This means there will be approaching 2, 744, 000, 000 cubic miles of dwelling space within its sacred portals.”⁷⁷

Revelation 21:22

22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

Bruce R. McConkie states,

“Temples, now and during the millennium, are to prepare men for a celestial inheritance. When that glorious goal is gained, heaven itself becomes a temple. The holy of holies in the Lord’s earthly houses are symbols and types of the Eternal Holy of Holies which is the highest heaven of the celestial world.”⁷⁸

3.11. Revelation 22

Revelation 22:1

1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

William J. Bohn states,

“Those who overcome all things, including persecution for His name’s sake (3 Ne. 12:10), will experience ‘great joy’ (3 Ne. 12:12) of having their hungering and thirsting for righteousness satisfied by the Savior, who grants them a steady diet of righteousness from the ‘living fountains of waters,’ which represent the love of God and whose source flows from His throne in the temple of heaven. (Rev. 7:16-7; Rev. 22:1; 1 Ne. 11:25). This is the living water that quenches the spiritual thirst everlastingly. Like the seed that becomes a fruitful tree (Alma 32), so this living water can be in men ‘a well of water springing up into everlasting life’ (John 4:14).”⁷⁹

Revelation 22:2

2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

Richard D. Draper notes,

“Note that the tree stands alone. It has no competition. The tree of good and evil has ceased to exist because the inhabitants of the city, knowing good from evil, have spurned all evil and eternally chose the good. In

consequence the cherubim, placed to guard the tree of life, have been removed, allowing God's people to eat freely of the fruit...

"But one must not overlook the meaning of the tree itself, for 'it is the love of God, which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men... [which is] the most joyous to the soul' (1 Ne. 11:22-23). Thus, the tree and the water symbolize the same thing. The continuous flow of the water and the perpetual bearing of the tree emphasize the limitlessness of God's love. It flows forever and unconditionally. All who wish to partake may do so."⁸⁰

Revelation 22:4

4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

Bruce R. McConkie states,

"If we keep the commandments and are true and faithful in all things, we shall inherit eternal life in our Father's kingdom. Those who attain this high state of glory and exaltation shall dwell in the presence of God. They shall see his face and converse with him mouth to mouth. They shall know him in the full sense of the word because they have become like him."⁸¹

Revelation 22:7

7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

Orson Pratt states,

"The time is near—how near, no man knoweth; the day and the hour when the Son of Man shall come is a secret...But the great question is, brethren and sisters, Are we ready?—Are we perfect enough for this day? Are we honest enough? and Are we filled with integrity enough to be ready for the Saviour and his holy angels? Is there a sufficiency of union? Have we that firmness in our minds that we can stand in their presence—that we can look them in the eye and say that all is right?"⁸²

Now is the time for us to make a careful evaluation of ourselves and to make the necessary changes within that will enable us to say, "Lord, I am clean. I have done all that I promised to do. I have kept thy commandments. I have been kind and generous with the poor and needy. I am ready to return to thy presence." If we cannot say that now, then let us today take the steps that will enable us to say so.

Revelation 22:11

11 He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

The time is going to arrive for each of us, the filthy and the holy, when the day of our repentance is past. We will have to stand on our record as we are called upon to give an accounting of our mortal probation before the Son. May we not procrastinate our repentance until it is everlastingly too late.

Revelation 22:14, 17

14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

My list of things to do: I will find and then join His Church. Keep His commandments. Follow the promptings of the Holy Ghost. Follow the Prophet and Apostles. Do my part to build the kingdom of God on earth. Attend the temple and do the work for the dead. Be kind to others. Repent when I make a mistake. Endure to the end. These are the basic steps I need to follow each day if I want to live with my Heavenly Father and His Son again. He has given me His plan of happiness so that if I follow these steps, I can have joy here on earth and eternal joy hereafter. With His help, I can do it. You can too.

Revelation 22:16

16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

Bryan Richards states,

“For Christ to be the root and offspring seems to be a contradiction. While the offspring is the branch, the root comes before the main trunk as the main source of sustenance. Such was Jehovah to King David—he was the root of his success, the source of his power. In an irony that the Jews of Christ’s day never resolved, Jehovah [Pre-mortal Christ] was born through the lineage of David. While they knew the Messiah would come through David’s line, they did not understand that Jehovah himself would take upon him flesh and blood as the long awaited Messiah [Mortal Christ]. Therefore, Christ came before David [Jehovah] and after David [Messiah]. He was both root and offspring. [See Matthew 22:41-46; Isaiah 11:1].”⁸³

Revelation 22:18-19

**18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:
19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.**

Some, unfortunately, have interpreted this warning to apply not only to the book of Revelation, but to the Bible in its entirety. They have therefore declared that the heavens are sealed and there can be no further revelation beyond that which is contained in the Bible.

Another perspective is that while this warning is serious and does have application, it is only to the book of Revelation, and not to the Bible as a whole. This reasoning is supported by the fact that the Bible, as we now have it, was not assembled in its current form with Revelation being the last book until hundreds of years later.

Secondly, a similar warning is noted in the book of Deuteronomy in two separate verses. The first states, “Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you” (Deuteronomy 4:2); the second states, “What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it” (Deuteronomy 12:32).

Third, John himself ignored the warning if it is strictly applied to any further revelation. He wrote the Gospel of John, and his three epistles, after he wrote the book of Revelation. These are known as 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John and they each contain additional revelation from the Lord.

It is the position of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints the warning noted applies specifically to the Book of Revelation. It does not limit the ability of the Lord to continue to reveal His word to His Prophets and Apostles, or for it to be recorded as scripture. The heavens are not closed. We continue to need the word of the Lord. He does speak, even today, through His current Prophet and Apostles.

4. Conclusions

As we come to the conclusion of our study of the Book of Revelation, we have an opportunity to reflect upon its contents and the lessons we have learned. As we continue our effort to become familiar with John's vision, our knowledge and understanding will continue to be enhanced.

Revelation Chapter 12: It offers insight regarding our pre-mortal experience where we dwelt with Our Heavenly Father prior to our coming to earth. We learned that there had been a war in heaven precipitated by the rejection of Satan of the Father's plan and his desire to obtain the glory of the Father. He sought to serve as our redeemer, to save us all, but at the expense of our free agency. His offering was so convincing he drew away a third of heavens spirits with him. As a result of their rebellion against the Father's plan and Jesus Christ as our Redeemer, he and those who supported his rebellion were cast down to earth. We learn through modern revelation that due to their rebellion they lost the opportunity to receive a physical body, which was essential to their receiving eternal life.

Revelation Chapter 13: We addressed the interpretations that have been offered regarding the beasts. We addressed the power which Satan will exercise upon the earth. He will do so through the tools of falsehoods and deception. Those who survive will be those who are attuned to the whispering of the Spirit of the Holy Ghost.

Revelation Chapter 14: We wondered regarding the representation of the Lamb, mount Zion and the hundred forty-four thousand. The Lamb is Jesus Christ; mount Zion is the New Jerusalem in Jackson County, Missouri, and the hundred forty and four thousand are those who will be called to bring souls unto Christ.

Revelation Chapters 15 and 16, work together. Chapter 15 refers to the experiences of the righteous, whereas Chapter 16 refers to the experiences of the wicked. The description of the scourge and plagues, to be poured out in the final days prior to the Savior's Second coming, are outlined in the chart found in Chapter 16.

Revelation Chapter 17: John the Apostle addresses the vision he saw of Babylon, the mother of whores and the beast. Orson Pratt reminds us that "Babylon is a great power [represented by a number of] ...churches...scattered over the wide face of the earth" (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 18, 179-180). We must choose between Babylon and Zion.

Revelation Chapter 18: It proclaims the fall of wicked Babylon and her utter destruction. Great will be the mourning of those who have chosen to follow her.

Revelation Chapter 19: We learn of the Marriage feast prepared for the righteous. Prior to the Millennium of one thousand years and the reign of Jesus Christ upon the earth, there will be a great battle between the forces of evil and the Jews and their supporters. Upon their victory, Christ will manifest Himself to those in Jerusalem.

Revelation Chapter 20: With the beginning of the Millennium, those who do not qualify for either Celestial or Terrestrial glory will be destroyed. Satan and his servants will be bound and Christ, and those whom He calls to be His rulers, will reign on the earth. Those who have not previously been resurrected, but qualify for Celestial glory will come forth. At the conclusion of the Millennium, Satan will be loosed and he will gather

his forces, and the final battle of Gog and Magog will occur. At its conclusion, Satan and his servants will be cast into a lake of fire.

Revelation Chapter 21: We learn the earth is sanctified and receives its Celestial glory. Only those who qualify for membership in the Celestial kingdom will be able to live there. God the Father will wipe away all tears, and there will be no more death or sorrow. Heavenly New Jerusalem will return to the earth.

Revelation Chapter 22 is the concluding chapter. We learn those who inhabit the Celestial kingdom, will experience great joy as they are blessed with God's limitless love. As these events will soon occur, now is the time for us to live worthy for the great blessings that await those who are faithful.

At the conclusion of John's writing, we are warned there are penalties attached to those who would be so bold as to add to the vision that John had received. Upon closer inspection, we understand that this warning was meant to apply only to John's Book of Revelation. Just as God spoke to those who lived on the Eastern Hemisphere, His words were recorded. These words make up our Bible today. It is important to know that He continues to speak, even today, through His Prophets and Apostles. As the world becomes more and more wicked, we especially need the word of God, as spoken through His authorized servants, to guide us through these perilous times. Turbulent times yet await those who are striving to live their lives as disciples of Jesus Christ. The promised blessings of the Seventh and most glorious seal, yet to be opened, are reserved for those who are now faithful.

The battle for the hearts and souls of man continues here on earth. It is the devil's goal to corrupt and destroy the souls of all those who seek to follow the Father's plan of happiness while they are on earth.

Wilford Woodruff states,

"There are two powers on earth and in the midst of the inhabitants of the earth—the power of God and the power of the devil... When God has had a people on the earth, it matters not in what age, Lucifer, the son of the morning and the millions of fallen spirits that were cast out of heaven, have warred against God, against Christ, against the work of God, and against the people of God. And they are not backward in doing it in our day and generation. Whenever the Lord sets His hand to perform his work, those powers labored to overthrow it."⁸⁴

As grim and foreboding as the present and the future may appear, it is important we remember Christ stands ready... "at the door" (Revelation 3:20), to assist us in overcoming any challenge or temptation Satan or his fallen spirits present to us. Jesus will not, however, violate our freedom of choice. It is you and I who must make the request for His assistance, otherwise He will not intervene. Only at our request, will He respond. He may not send an angel or a bolt of lightning, but help will come. That is His promise to each of us and, unlike Satan, He does not break promises! Sometimes the help comes as quiet as a whisper to just walk away thereby removing ourselves from potential danger. It may even come as a surprise visit or call from a close friend. You may even at the moment not recognize the tender mercy of the Lord, but over time your spiritual eyes will be opened and you will see He did come when you called.

This concludes our study of the New Testament. I have been greatly blessed by the scriptures and the blessing they are in our lives. I appreciate the writings of those who have shared their knowledge and understanding in an effort to enhance ours. I hope you also benefited from your reading and reflection. Thanks for sharing the journey with me.

Footnotes

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- ² *New Testament Gospel Doctrine Teacher's Manual*. Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1997, [2002], 196.
- ³ www.meridianmagazine.com/NT/Lesson46/TaylorHalverson2007.
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- ⁶ *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, Vol.3. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1973, [9th Printing, 1976], 516.
- ⁷ Bryan Richards, www.gospeldoctrine.com/content/Rev-12.
- ⁸ "Insights from the Joseph Smith Translation into the Book of Revelation," in *Selected Writings of Gerald N. Lund: Gospel Scholars Series*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1999, 94.
- ⁹ *Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol.1. Edited and Compiled by Bruce R. McConkie. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954, [24th Printing, 1980], 229.
- ¹⁰ *Following Christ: The Parable of the Divers and More Good News*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1995, 115.
- ¹¹ *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1997, 408.
- ¹² *Understanding The Book of Revelation*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1998, 160.
- ¹³ "The War We Are Winning," in *Ensign*, November 1986, 42-43.
- ¹⁴ *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*. Compiled by Joseph Fielding Smith. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976, [1977], 292.
- ¹⁵ *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*. Compiled by Joseph Fielding Smith. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976, [1977], 289.
- ¹⁶ *Understanding the Book of Revelations*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1998, 167.
- ¹⁷ Bryan Richards. www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/Rev.13.
- ¹⁸ *Understanding the Book of Revelations*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1998, 168-169.
- ¹⁹ "The Power of the Word," *Ensign*, May, 1986, 79.
- ²⁰ *Church History and Modern Revelation*, Vol. 2. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1953, 225.
- ²¹ *Opening the Seven Seals: The Visions of John the Revelator*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1991, 146.
- ²² *Gospel Doctrine*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1919, [Eighth Edition, 1949], 376.
- ²³ "Revelation for the Church, Revelation for Our lives," *Ensign*, May, 2018, 96.
- ²⁴ *Understanding the Book of Revelations*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1998, 175.
- ²⁵ "Things Which Must Surely Come to Pass." *Selected Writings of Gerald N. Lund: Gospel Scholars Series*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1999, 64-65.
- ²⁶ *Understanding the Book of Revelations*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1998, 179.
- ²⁷ *Church History and Modern Revelation*, Vol. 1. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1953, 302.
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- ²⁹ *Understanding the Book of Revelations*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1998, 181.
- ³⁰ Bryan Richards. www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/Rev.14.
- ³¹ "The Angel Moroni Came!" *Ensign*, November 1983, 31.
- ³² "The Most Important Knowledge," *Ensign*, May 1971, 3.
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- ⁴² *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 15. London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1873, [Eighth Reprint, 1974], 75-76.
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- ⁴⁵ *Opening the Seven Seals: The Visions of John the Revelator*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1991, 182.
- ⁴⁶ Bryan Richards. www.gospeldoctrine.com/content/Rev-17/.
- ⁴⁷ Stephen E. Robinson. "Waring against the Saints of God," *Ensign*, January 1988, 36-39.
- ⁴⁸ "Waring against the Saints of God," *Ensign*, Jan. 1988, 36.
- ⁴⁹ Bryan Richards. www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/Rev-17/.
- ⁵⁰ *Opening the Seven Seals: The Visions of John the Revelator*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1991, 193.
- ⁵¹ *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 18. London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1877, [Eighth Reprint, 1974], 179-180.
- ⁵² "The War We Are Winning," *Ensign*, November 1986, 45.
- ⁵³ *New Testament (Institute) Student Manual*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2014, 561.
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- ⁵⁵ *Understanding the Book of Revelations*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1998, 237.
- ⁵⁶ *Articles of Faith*. Salt Lake City: Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1913, [Forty-second Edition 1961], 339.
- ⁵⁷ *Understanding the Signs of the Times*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1999, 313.
- ⁵⁸ *Opening the Seven Seals: The Visions of John the Revelator*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1991, 202-203.
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- ⁷² "Spiritual Healing," in *Ensign*, May 1992, 8.

⁷³ *Cherished Experiences from the Writings of President David O. McKay, Revised. and Enlarged.* Compiled by Clare Middlemiss. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1955, 102.

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⁷⁵ Bryan Richards. www.gospeldoctrine.com/content/Rev-21. Altered for clarity.

⁷⁶ *Answers to Gospel Questions*, Vol. 2. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1958, 106.

⁷⁷ *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, Vol.3. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1973, [9th Printing, 1976], 588.

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⁷⁹ “Three Other New Testament Temples,” in *Ensign*, July 1991, 24-25.

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⁸¹ *The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ.* Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1978, 578-579.

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