# Revelation

Chapter 6, Verses 9-17

- The Revelation to John
  - A prophetic writing with features of a letter and of the form of literature called Apocalyptic
  - Written by John to Christians during the second half of the First Century
  - Placed at the end of the New Testament because of its concern with the "end times"

- Introduction (1:1-3)
  - This revelation was given by God to Jesus.
  - Jesus revealed it, through his angel, to John.
  - John writes of all that he has heard and seen.
  - Those who read, hear, and do what is written will be blessed, because the end is near.
- Salutation, Doxology (1:4-8)
  - John extends his greetings to "the seven churches in Asia" while giving praise to God.

- The First Vision (1:9-20)
  - John was worshiping on the Lords day, in Patmos, when he was overtaken by an ecstatic vision
  - In the vision:
    - He sees the glorified Christ standing among seven lampstands with seven stars in his hand.
    - Christ explains the mysterious image that John sees: The lampstands are the seven churches and the stars are the "angels" of the seven churches.



- Letters to the Seven Churches (Chapters 2 & 3)
  - In the vision, Jesus instructs John to write certain things to each of the seven churches.
  - These "letters" draw on the material from Chapter 1 and help to interpret the visions which follow in later chapters.
  - Each "letter":
    - follows approximately the same pattern,
    - is to be read by <u>all</u> of the churches,
    - shares the common theme: those who overcome and persevere until the end will inherit eternal life

# The Seven Churches



- Ephesus (2:1-7)
  - Christ commands them to become loving again, or he will remove them as a lampstand.
- Smyrna (2:8-11)
  - Christ urges them to endure persecution and remain faithful unto death.
- Pergamum (2:12-17) and Thyatira (2:18-29)
  - Christ warns these churches to expel heretics, repent of their idolatrous and immoral practices, and remain faithful to him until the end.

- Sardis (3:1-6)
  - Christ urges them to become alert to their situation (they are "dead") and repent lest he comes against them.
- Philadelphia (3:7-13)
  - Christ promise them a place in the eternal kingdom of David despite their persecution by so called Jews
- Laodicea (3:14-22)
  - Christ says he will spit this lukewarm church out of his mouth, but to those among them who conquer, he promises that they will sit with him on his throne.

In Verse 21 of Chapter 3 Jesus says:

"The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne."

- John then sees a door standing open in heaven and hears Jesus calling him to come up and see.
- What John sees at first is the heavenly throne room, which is described in Chapters 4 and 5.



#### Chapter 4 & 5

- All of the heavenly beings constantly give glory to God, because he <u>created</u> all things.
- In God's right hand, John sees a scroll full of writing, things which only God knows, completely sealed.
- Only Jesus Christ (the "Lamb") can reveal these things and cause them to happen, because only he is worthy.
- He is worthy because he was slain and by his blood he <u>ransomed</u> a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.
- He takes the scroll from the hand of God and then <u>all</u> of creation gives glory to God and to the Lamb.

- John never speaks of the scroll being opened, unrolled, or read aloud.
- Rather the opening of the seals causes to happen certain things that John sees and hears within this vision and then describes to his readers.
- In Chapter 6 --- which we began last week --John tells of the opening of the first six seals.
- So far we have finished discussing the first eight verses although we read a bit more than that.

- Chapter 6, Verses 1-8
  - John watches as horses with riders are summoned before the heavenly throne, one for each of the first four seals which are opened successively by the Lamb.
  - The first horse is white and its rider has a bow and is given a crown; it seems at first to be a symbol of good.
  - But the next three horses are unmistakably symbols of violence, scarcity, and death that will come on the earth.
  - These have been summoned before the heavenly throne and given permission to do evil on the earth,
  - but they are not permitted to destroy the world entirely.

### Observations

- Chapter 6, Verses 1-8
  - The destructive forces, represented in this vision by horses and riders, are being shown to us and, then, explained to us one by one
  - But they seem, to me, to be sent out together.
  - And they are only symbols of the forces they represent.
  - In sum we understand that tribulation, of various kinds, is coming and that it is ultimately controlled by God.

# **New Reading**

- Tonight we will finish reading and discussing all of Chapter 6.
- Let's begin by rereading Verses 9-11
- Before we do, does anyone have any questions or comments related to the previous 8 verses of Chapter 6 or to anything else we have read in Revelation so far?

# ヨハネの黙示録 6:9-11

- 小羊が第五の封印を解いた時、神の言のゆえに、また、そのあかしを立てたために、殺された人々の霊魂が、祭壇の下にいるのを、わたしは見た。
- 10.彼らは大声で叫んで言った、「聖なる、まことなる主よ。いつまであなたは、さばくことをなさらず、また地に住む者に対して、わたしたちの血の報復をなさらないのですか」。

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# Revelation 6:9-11

- 9. When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne.
- 10. They cried out with a loud voice, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

# Revelation 6:9-11

11. Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.

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Who opened the fifth seal?

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- Who opened the fifth seal?
  - The Lamb

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  - The Lamb
  - Who in this vision represents Christ

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- Who opened the fifth seal?
  - The Lamb
  - Who in this vision represents Christ
  - Who alone can cause what is written in the scroll to go forward.

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Who is the seer here?

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Who is the seer here?

John

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  - The same John who saw Jesus standing among the seven churches

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- Who is the seer here?
  - John
  - The same John who saw Jesus standing among the seven churches
  - The same John who was instructed by Jesus to encourage the churches to overcome the evils of this present age and remain faithful unto death.

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- Their bodies have been slain because they had borne witness to the word of God, because they are believers.

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- What John is being made to see now, is the souls of certain people whose earthly bodies have been slain.
- Their bodies have been slain because they had borne witness to the word of God, because they are believers.
- But of course their souls are alive, and John in this vision is able to see them: the living souls of the martyrs.

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I do not know what souls "look like"

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  - Other Christian martyrs in the seven churches and elsewhere, including those who were Jews both spiritually and ethnically.
  - Godly Jews and Gentiles in all places and times who were slain for the word of God.

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- What is the significance of the fact that John sees the martyrs "under the altar?"
  - The blood of the martyrs is like an offering to God
  - It adorns and, in some sense, is part of the atoning sacrifice of the Lamb! (Col. 1:24, Phil. 2:17, 2 Tim. 4:6)

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- On the contrary they may receive a greater share of it, precisely because they have received the testimony of Christ and sought to live by it.

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- On the contrary they may receive a greater share of it, precisely because they have received the testimony of Christ and sought to live by it.
- This raises a fundamental question of justice which is voiced in the following verse (6:10).

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  - Those how have shared in the suffering and death of Christ.

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- Do they desire personal vengeance?
  - Of course not. (c.f. Acts 7:54-60, Luke 23:34, Romans 9:3)

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- So what do they long for?
  - That God's will be done

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- Surely this horrible state of affairs which we witness on earth cannot be allowed to continue indefinitely.
- The godly souls can only cry out ... "how long?!"
- Notice that these godly souls are aware of what happens on earth and waiting eagerly, even impatiently, for things to be set right!

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Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.

 The vision also shows us what <u>comfort</u> has been given to the godly dead.

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- The vision also shows us what <u>comfort</u> has been given to the godly dead.
- They have already been counted holy and blessed (as symbolized by the white robes) and shall be part of the coming kingdom.

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- Yet just as clearly this is no promise that anyone will be removed from earthly suffering.
- On the contrary it is certain, in this vision, that more believers will suffer and die for their faith before the end.

# ヨハネの黙示録 6:12-17

- 12.小羊が第六の封印を解いた時、わたしが見ていると、大地震が起って、太陽は毛織の荒布のように黒くなり、月は全面、血のようになり、
- 13. 天の星は、いちじくのまだ青い実が大風に 揺られて振り落されるように、地に落ちた。

# ヨハネの黙示録 6:12-17

- 14. 天は巻物が巻かれるように消えていき、すべての山と島とはその場所から移されてしまった。
- 15. 地の王たち、高官、千卒長、富める者、勇者、 奴隷、自由人らはみな、ほら穴や山の岩か げに、身をかくした。

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# ヨハネの黙示録 6:12-17

- 16. そして、山と岩とにむかって言った、「さあ、 われわれをおおって、御座にいますかたの 御顔と小羊の怒りとから、かくまってくれ。
- 17. 御怒りの大いなる日が、すでにきたのだ。だれが、その前に立つことができようか」。

# Revelation 6:12-17

- 12. When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood,
- 13.and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale.

# Revelation 6:12-17

- 14. The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.
- 15. Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains,

# Revelation 6:12-17

- 16.calling to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb,
- 17.for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"

小羊が第六の封印を解いた時、わたしが見ていると、 大地震が起って、太陽は毛織の荒布のように黒く なり、月は全面、血のようになり、

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This answers the cry of the holy martyrs in Verse 10

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- This answers the cry of the holy martyrs in Verse 10
- They wait patiently for the end, as more are added to their number, but they will not need to wait forever.

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The end is near.

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- This answers the cry of the holy martyrs in Verse 10
- They wait patiently for the end, as more are added to their number, but they will not need to wait forever.
- The end is near.
- Various signs that the end is near are to be seen in nature, within John's vision certainly, and even by us.

天の星は、いちじくのまだ青い実が大風に揺られて振り落されるように、地に落ちた。

and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale.

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Notice the past tense, here and in what follows.

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- Notice the past tense, here and in what follows.
- In this vision John has seen all of these things happen.

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- It remains for us to determine, if we can, which of these things happened before, during, and after John's lifetime.

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- Notice the past tense, here and in what follows.
- In this vision John has seen all of these things happen.
- It remains for us to determine, if we can, which of these things happened before, during, and after John's lifetime.
- I think that John is here being shown the progression of events leading to the end, sort of on "fast forward."

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and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale.

 The images he saw at first, such as earthquakes and the altaration of the appearance of the sun and moon, are common in apocalyptic literature even for "preliminary" disasters.

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- The images he saw at first, such as earthquakes and the altaration of the appearance of the sun and moon, are common in apocalyptic literature even for "preliminary" disasters.
- Such things are even part of our ordinary experience.
- But the falling of stars from the sky is rather more final.
- What comes next seems very final indeed.

天は巻物が巻かれるように消えていき、すべての山と 島とはその場所から移されてしまった。

The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.

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- In the vision, the end is .... almost ... here!
- In the vision, what was the end finally like?

地の王たち、高官、千卒長、富める者、勇者、奴隷、自由人らはみな、ほら穴や山の岩かげに、身をかくした。

Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains,

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Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains,

Everyone who was still alive on earth, at this point, tried to hide.

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Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains,

- **Everyone** who was still alive on earth, at this point, tried to hide.
- When the end came on earth, <u>nobody</u> was secure.
  - Not the rich
  - Not the poor

そして、山と岩とにむかって言った、「さあ、われわれを おおって、御座にいますかたの御顔と小羊の怒りと から、かくまってくれ。

calling to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb,

 Those who remained on earth, were absolutely terrified, willing to escape their fear by being buried under rocks and mountains.

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- What were they afraid of?

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  - The wrath of the Lamb...final judgment.

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- What were they afraid of?
  - Him who is seated on the throne...God
  - The wrath of the Lamb...final judgment.
- They were willing to do anything to escape judgment.

御怒りの大いなる日が、すでにきたのだ。だれが、その前に立つことができようか」。

for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"

On the last day, only the redeemed in Christ can stand.

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This is where the vision is going next, in Chapter 7