

The book of Revelation is a "Revelation of Jesus" (Rev. 1:1). It is a revelation of His work as our great High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary. This becomes clear from the beginning, where we see Jesus standing in the midst of "seven lampstands" wearing "a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band" (Rev. 1:12, 13). The seven lampstands were seen in the earthly sanctuary, while the garments and the golden band depict the dress of the high priest (Ex. 37:17-24; 39:1-30). Hebrews 9:11 confirms all this, telling us that "Christ came as High Priest" into the "more perfect tabernacle," for "Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands...but into heaven itself" (Heb. 9:24). This is why we see sanctuary images throughout the book, like "incense," "the golden altar," "the ark," "the temple" and more (Rev. 8:3; 9:13; 11:19; 15:5).

### ***Unlocking the Seven Churches***

As the cycle of creation was seven days, seven is symbolic of a complete cycle, representing the cycle of the church from the time this was written after the death of Christ until the end of the world. The seven churches are both literal and symbolic. God often takes literal events in history and uses them symbolically to parallel future events. Just as the days of Noah parallel the future (Matt. 24:37), the churches of Revelation were not only seven literal churches that existed during the time of the apostles, but they also perfectly represent the future history of the Christian church from the time of the apostles until the end of time. The church is divided into seven time periods which started out strong and eventually started to weaken over time. We are now in the final "lukewarm" era of the church (Rev. 3:16).

### ***Unlocking the Seven Seals***

The seals parallel the seven churches of Revelation, representing the spiritual condition of Christianity during seven stages of church history

extending from the time of Christ until the end of the world. This becomes clear at once. While the first seal is represented by "a white horse" (Rev. 6:2), symbolizing the initial purity of the Christian church, over time it begins to decay. The second church is represented by a "fiery red" horse (Rev. 6:4), representing the persecution that soon entered the Christian church under Nero, while the third period depicts "a black horse" (Rev. 6:5), revealing the spiritual decay. The fourth horse is then represented as "a pale horse" (Rev. 6:8), showing that the church during this era is spiritually dead. The following woes then go on to explain the final history of Christianity.

### ***Unlocking the Seven Trumpets***

Trumpets were instruments to alert the troops for war. Numbers 10:9 says, "When you go to war...sound an alarm with the trumpets." The seven trumpets represent the military history of God's people from the time of Jesus until the end of the world. This becomes obvious through the symbols of destruction depicted. These images are full of symbols which depict the wars that went on in Christianity throughout the violence and persecution of the Middle Ages. The first four trumpets have been said to represent God's judgment against Rome for their persecution of Christians. The last three are against the second phase of the Roman Papal wars against Christians during the middle ages.

### ***Unlocking the Antichrist***

Revelation 13:1 depicts the antichrist as a "beast," while Revelation 17:3 follows by depicting the same antichrist as a "woman sitting on a scarlet beast." A woman represents a church (Jer. 6:2; 2 Cor. 11:2), while a "beast" represents a "kingdom" (Dan. 7:23), so this woman on a beast is a symbol of a church controlling a kingdom. The woman is also a "mother" and a "great city" which sits on "seven mountains," or hills (Rev. 17:5, 18, 9). Her main colors are "purple and scarlet" and she is "drunk with the

blood of the saints" (Rev. 17:4, 6). Ironically, the Catholic Church calls herself the mother church, she sits on Rome, the city of seven hills, her colors are purple and scarlet, and she killed millions of Christians who refused to go along with her teachings during the middle ages. For these and other reasons Protestants have historically identified the Catholic Church as the antichrist.

### ***Unlocking America in Prophecy***

In Revelation 13:11 we see "another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon." Since a "beast" represents a "kingdom" (Dan. 7:23), this beast represents a kingdom or nation that will rise up after the fall of the previous beast. While the previous nation comes up "out of the sea" (Rev. 13:1), representing a nation rising up from an already established body of "peoples" (Rev. 17:15), this new nation comes out of the earth, representing a previously un-established land, a new land with no established government. Since a "Lamb" is a symbol of Christ, this lamb-like beast must represent a Christian nation raised on Christian principles (John 1:36). Sadly, while this nation is raised on Christian principles, it later speaks "like a dragon," turning its back on its Christian foundations. This is taking place today, preparing the way for the mark of the beast.

### ***Unlocking the Mark of the Beast***

The mark of the beast forces "as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed" (Rev. 13:15). If the mark forces people, it must be a law. If it enforces "worship," it will be a religious law. We are also told that this "mark" of the beast law is contrasted with "those who keep the commandments of God" (Rev. 14:9, 12), which means the mark of the beast will be a man-made law which conflicts with one of God's laws, the Ten Commandments. While the last six commandments have always been legislated, the first four, relating to how we "worship" God,

should not be forced. Since the mark of the beast revolves around worship, it will be a religious law that goes against one of the first four commandments. At that time, people will be forced to obey God's law or the man made mark of the beast law.

### ***Unlocking Revelations Final Warning***

In Revelation 14:6 we are told that "the everlasting gospel" is about to go "to every nation," in fulfillment of Jesus' words, "this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world... and then the end will come" (Matt. 24:14). Revelation goes on to explain that the gospel is encompassed in three messages, warning that God's "judgment" has begun, "Babylon is fallen," and an appeal to avoid the "mark" of the beast (Rev. 14:7-9). While the gospel is an appeal to accept Jesus, this final appeal is wrapped up in a sense of urgency because time is running out. Once these warnings are given, "the end will come."

### ***Unlocking the Millennium***

When Jesus returns, the wicked die and the righteous are taken to heaven. Here "they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years," known as the millennium (Rev. 20:4). At this time, "judgment was committed to them" (Rev. 20:4). You see, before Jesus returns to destroy the wicked for good, God lets His people review the judgment records of all those who didn't make it to heaven so there will be no question about why they have to be destroyed. When everyone sees that God's judgment is fair, God finally returns to destroy the wicked. After "the thousand years were finished" the wicked will rise again at the "resurrection of condemnation" (Rev. 20:5; John 5:29). At that time fire comes down and the wicked die a second time, known as the "second death" (Rev. 20:14), bringing an end to all pain and evil.

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