

# Session Four

# Revelation



**Continuing from where we left off  
in our study of the Third Opening...**

**We were up to Chapter 10, but let's  
do a little recap...**

# This is happening in the Church Age:

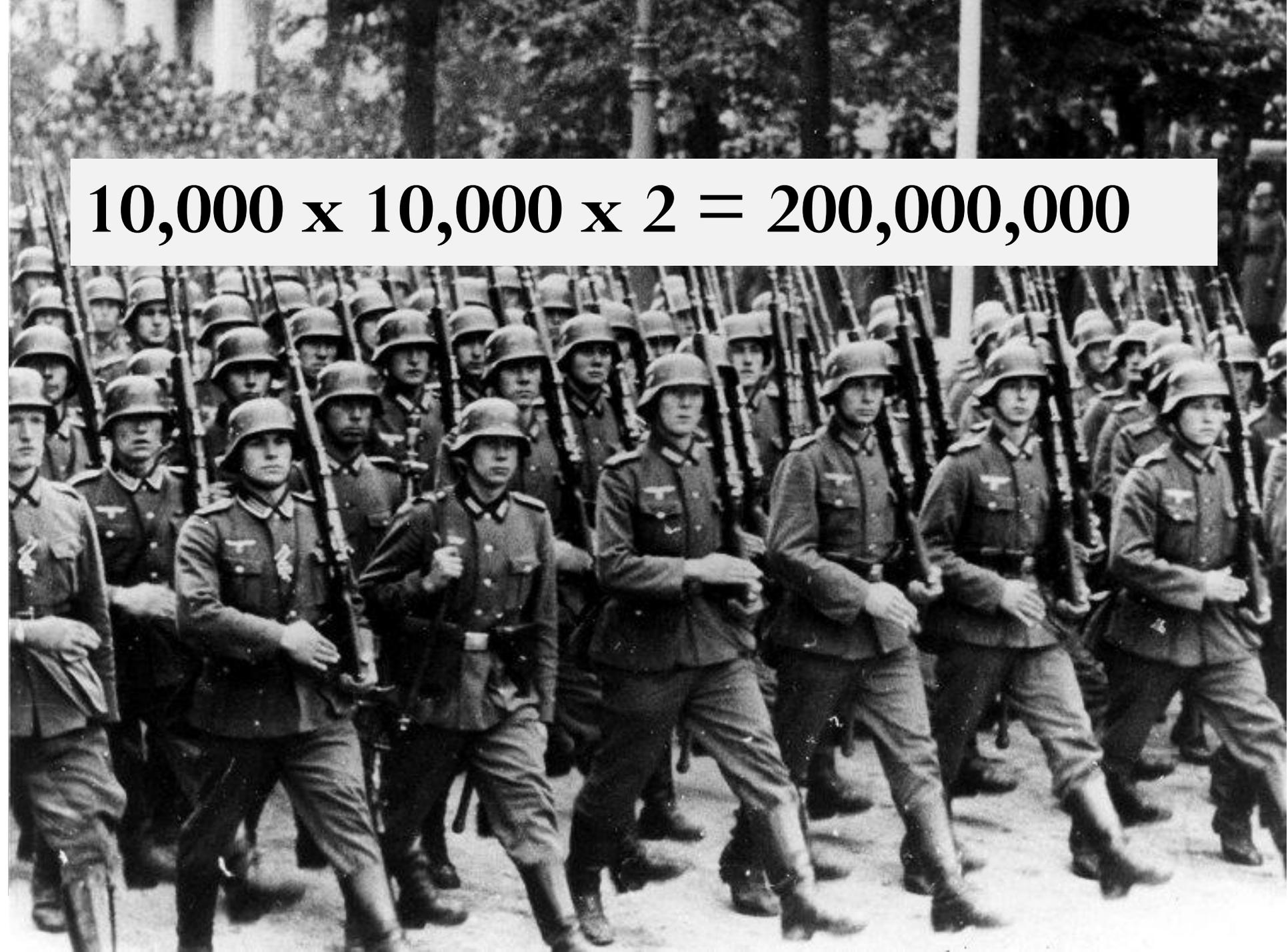
- The prayers of the saints are still relevant and operative;
- The instruction to harm only the people without the seal of God on their foreheads (9:4) echoes the previous section and places it in a similar time frame;
- The prophet is told to go and measure the temple, which was apparently tantamount to, or equivalent to the task of counting the Christians (11:1);
- It concludes with the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet (the last trump of 1 Corinthians 15:52) which appears to indicate or announce the completion of the kingdom.
- The hymn at 11:17-18 announces clearly the end of the old and the ushering in of the new kingdom. The Age of the Church ends and judgement takes place and the kingdom is ushered in, in all its fullness.

Each numbered series [the seals, trumpets and bowls] moves us closer to the end; not so much because it follows the preceding series in sequence but because it heightens and intensifies the final climactic confrontation of God and the forces of evil.

Detailed outlines of Revelation sacrifice the existential heartbeat of the Apocalypse in an unfortunate attempt to intellectualise that which belongs primarily to the realm of experience.

Mounce p 205.

**$10,000 \times 10,000 \times 2 = 200,000,000$**



**The Trumpets and the Seals show a constant cycle of the same things:**

**Human Greed and the Quest for Power creating:**

- **Injustice,**
- **War,**
- **Famine,**
- **Racism,**
- **Economic ruin and**
- **Environmental damage.**

# So now, to new ground...

## Chapters 10 and 11: An Interlude

- A re-appearance of the rainbow in 10:1
- An announcement that the mystery of God is about to be accomplished (10:7).
  - Romans 16:25;
  - 1 Corinthians 2:7;
  - 1 Corinthians 15:51;
  - Ephesians. 1:9 and 3:1-11;
  - Colossians 1:13-27;
  - 2Thessalonians 2:7...

## **Four Difficult Inclusions:**

- 1. The seven thunders;**
- 2. The angel and the little scroll which the prophet ate;**
- 3. The measuring of the temple of God;**
- 4. The two witnesses.**

## The seven thunders (10:1-4):

- There is not much we can say – The record has been sealed!!!

# The angel and the little scroll which the prophet ate (10:5-11):

- We are still on the spiral staircase of ever more revelation;
- Eating God's Word is a not uncommon concept (Psalm 119:103; Jeremiah 15:16; Ezekiel 2:8 – 3:3);
- Tasted sweet because it is the Word of God;
- Bitter taste??? Perhaps because the news was not good – there was still much more suffering to come????

# The measuring of the temple of God (11:1-2):

- **The holy city throughout Revelation is the gathered church of God;**
- **The Church will live its life under the constant tension of attack by the ungodly.**

## **The Two Witnesses (11:3-12):**

- **No good reason to think of them as two actual people who will play a future role in end times;**
- **In the spirit of Moses and Elijah, rather than their actual re-appearance;**
- **The great city is not Jerusalem;**
- **The city is “every city and no city. It is civilised man in organised community”.**

**(Morris p 150)**

## **Recap:**

Although all of these episodes and trumpet blasts and seal-openings have taken a very long time to read, we should see all of these as happening more or less concurrently over 2000 years or more, and working towards a climax: the end of the age;

By the end of the sixth trumpet, although there is still one more trumpet to go, we are effectively at the return of Christ.

**And there are still three more openings...**

# How do we know we are approaching the end of the Church Age?

- In 11:15, we hear the sounding of the Seventh trumpet, or the Last Trumpet as it is called elsewhere in scripture. Read 1 Cor. 15: 23-25 and 50-54. The time lag between v 12 and v 15 is probably a nanosecond.
- In 11:15, we are told that “the kingdom of the world **has become** the kingdom of our Lord”. The church is taken to heaven and the new reign of God’s kingdom has begun. Although the narrative will take another 6-7 chapters to tell more of the last days, the narrative has leapt ahead to tell us the ending of the story
- In 11:17, the hymn of praise specifically states that “You have taken your great power and have begun to reign”. This is clearly referring to an event that has happened.
- And finally, in 11:18, it is time “for judging the dead”, and “rewarding your servants”.

**The Fourth Opening:**

*The Temple in Heaven*

**11:19 to 15:4**

## A Brief Narrative of the History of Salvation:

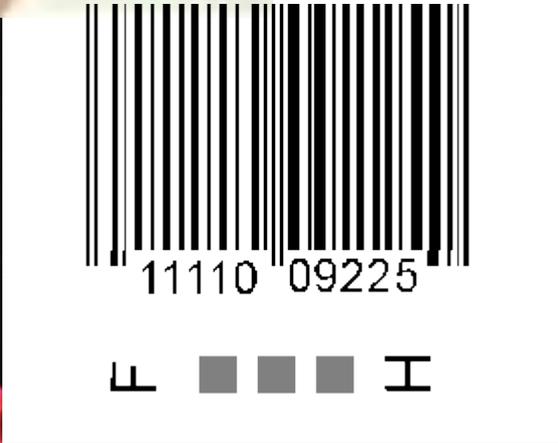
- An introductory sound and light display (11:19);
- A pregnant woman about to give birth (12:1-2);
- (For a rewarding little treasure hunt, regarding Anna, read these Scriptures in sequence: Luke 2:36-38; Genesis 49:20; Isaiah 25:6-9);
- A dragon of royal bearing and lineage, powerful and violent, strongly desires to destroy the Child (12:3-4);
- The child is born, but before the Dragon can destroy him, he is rescued by God himself and placed on God's own throne (12:5);
- The Dragon, who is now expressly identified as the devil, or Satan, is cast out of heaven to the earth (12:7-9) where he violently tries to destroy the Church;
- A Declaration of Victory (12:10-12).

# The Declaration of Victory (12:10-12).

- It occurs exactly in the middle of the entire book of Revelation. There are 4878 words before it and 4875 words after it;
- It is a summary of the Salvation saga, but from the perspective of heaven!
- Satan is presented as the accuser of the brethren, who has been defeated by the Lamb's sacrifice. No longer is there any condemnation for the saints – we have peace with God. Romans 5:1-11;
- This hymn is perhaps included as a parenthesis in the middle of the story as a reminder that all is not lost, that there is a plan and to remind the listeners of the Grand Plan.
- Alternatively, it is the centrepiece because it tells the central story of the Cross as the most important event in all of history.

## **Narrative of the History of Salvation (cont'd):**

- **When the dragon saw that his quest was frustrated, he attempted to destroy the woman, but was forced to take out his anger on her seed. (12:13-17)**
- **The dragon calls up a beast out of the sea (13:1-10). This first beast is spiritual in nature – it is worshipped, one of its central characteristics is pride (13:5) and it is permitted authority over the earth, other than over those who are the redeemed of the Lamb.**
- **The second beast (13:11-18) which comes from the earth is identified as having a character – 666. This beast has no connection with an antichrist.**



# Various forms of Humanism:

- **Secular humanism**, where the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man become the final arbiter of truth, and where any form of Deism is ruled out;
- Various forms of **utilitarianism**, where human life and society are seen merely as tools to achieve harmony and government;
- **Socialism, Communism, Marxism**, where any spiritual side of humanity is deemed less important than economics and capital;
- **Hedonism, consumerism, materialism**, where the relentless pursuit of pleasure, through the consumption of physical things and new experiences, becomes the ultimate means to create meaning;
- **Postmodernism**, where each and every person is entitled to create meaning for himself or herself out of anything.

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- **The second beast (13:11-18) which comes from the earth is identified as having a character – 666. This beast has no connection with an antichrist.**
- **John is shown another layer of reality (14:1-5). He sees the Lamb with the entire company of the redeemed.**
- **A third level of reality (14: 6-13). This third reality is that there is supernatural activity constantly taking place, represented by three angels flying “in mid-air”.**

**The Fifth Opening:**  
*The tabernacle of the  
Testimony*

**15:5 to 19:10**

# Tabernacle

Table of  
Shewbread



Altar of  
Incense



Menorah (lampstand)

Laver



Bronze  
Altar

Ark of the  
Covenant



Most  
Holy  
Place

Holy  
Place



*“The wrath of God” admits of being filled up; nowhere do we read of His mercy being filled up.*

*Equally, “seven last plagues” are here defined; but nowhere seven last blessings.*

*Christina Rossetti*

*Retribution is not God’s last word on human sin. G. B. Caird*

# Worship of false gods as Betrayal or Prostitution:

- Judges 2: 10-17;
- Psalm 106:34-39;
- Jeremiah 3: 1-2;
- Hosea 4: 10-13.

# Who is the Woman in Scarlet?

- “the great city that rules over the kings of the earth” (17:18);
- Any system that places anything ahead of God as Lord and Absolute Power is an idolatrous system.
- Chapter 17 and 18 detail the destruction of two of the great systems of human evil. The aspect of the world system that is destroyed in this chapter is the religious one. In chapter 18, the aspect marked for destruction is the confidence in money and goods and material things.

# The Hymn of Praise (19:1-8):

- The justice of the judgement;
- The faithfulness of God in completing the plan of salvation;
- The reinforcement of the Truth of the Vision:  
*“These are the true words of God.”*