

# Session Five

# Revelation



## **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.

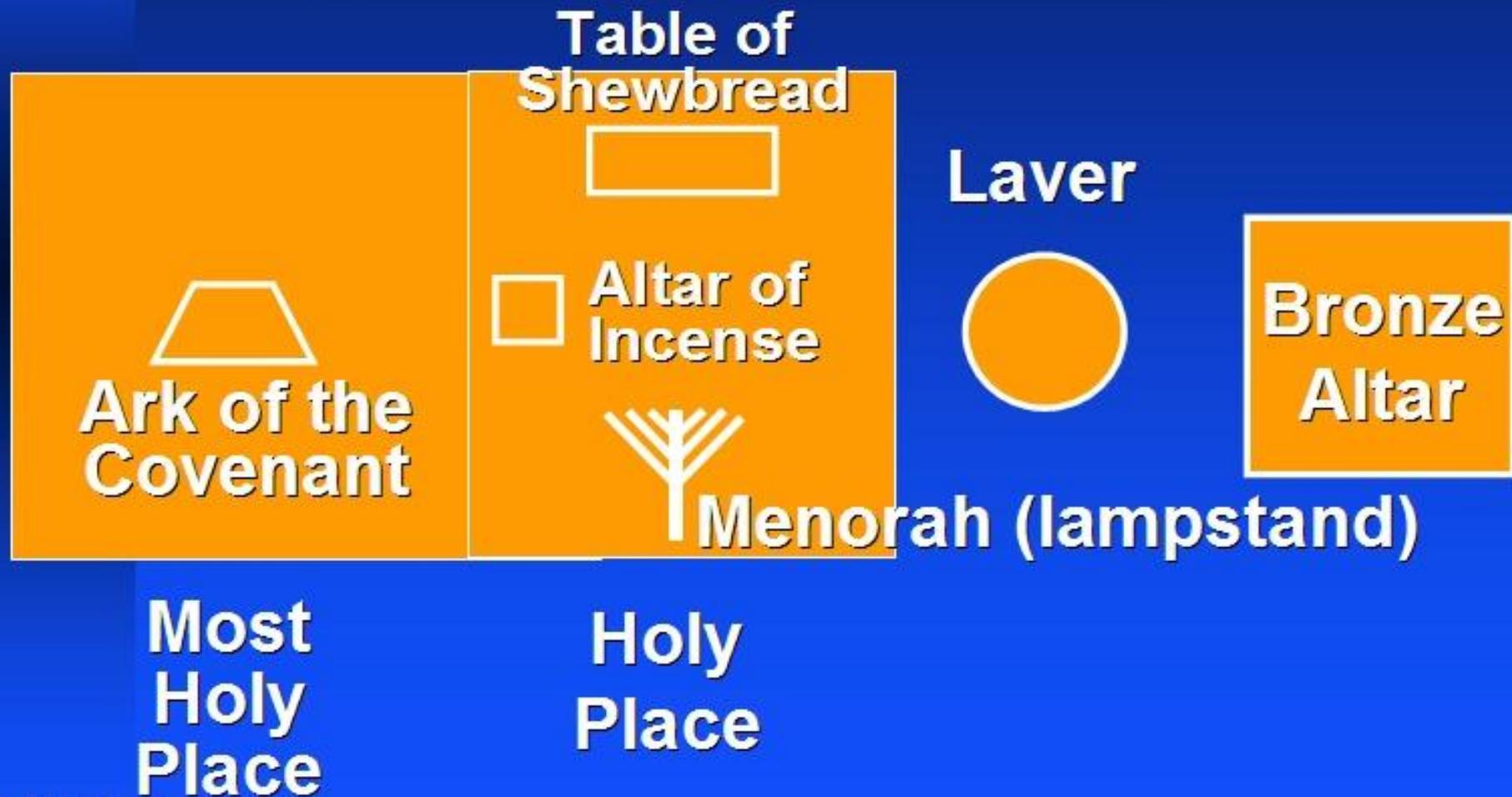
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- **The second beast (13:11-18) which comes from the earth is identified as having a character – 666. This beast has no connection with an antichrist.**
- **John is shown another layer of reality (14:1-5). He sees the Lamb with the entire company of 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





*“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.”*

**The Sixth Opening:**  
*Heaven Itself – Open!!*  
**19:11 to 22:6**

# Four Operatic Movements:

- *The first movement (19:11-21)*
- *The second movement (20:1-10)*
- *The third movement (20:11-15)*
- *The fourth and final movement (21:1-22:5)*

# *The first movement (19:11-21)*

- Jesus, as the Conquering King, is also the Word of God;
- His Word is his only weapon;
- “he will rule them with an iron sceptre”
- Used three times 19:1; 2:27; and 12:5;
- It is not Jesus who starts this battle;
- The battle takes place in the white space between vv 19 and 20.

# *The second movement (20:1-10):*

**Three most common interpretations:**

- **This section outlines seven years (or 3½ years) of tribulation, the Rapture of the church, the Return of Christ, and a 1000 year-long Millennial reign of Christ, followed by another Return.**
- **This section is a continuation of the description of the great Age of the Church. The 1000 years is not taken as a literal amount of time in this view, and the reign of Christ is even now in place, although it must be conceded that the devil still has considerable effect and influence. There is only one Second Coming, and it comes only after this period is finished.**
- **In keeping with the general interpretation of Revelation as a broadly symbolic book, the events in Chapter 20 are not to be taken as literal in any way, and the whole thing is just to be read as the culmination of the war against evil.**

***The third movement (20:11-15):***

*1 Cor. 4:2-5 <sup>2</sup>Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. <sup>3</sup>I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. <sup>4</sup>My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me.*

*<sup>5</sup>Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.*

*1 Corinthians 3:13-15 <sup>13</sup>Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.*

*<sup>14</sup>If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. <sup>15</sup>If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*

## *The fourth and final movement (21:1-22:5)*

1. It is not that we go to heaven to be with God, but rather that heaven, and God with it, comes to earth (21:1-4).
2. Is the main purpose of heaven to go to heaven to meet up with family and relatives again?

Extract from C. S. Lewis' *The Great Divorce* ...

3. It is not so much that God chooses to save some, but rather that some choose not to be saved by him.
4. The work of the angels is not only to pour out God's wrath, but also to show us the sheer beauty of the redeemed (21:9).
5. We are not taken back to the Garden of Eden, and become eternal tree-huggers. We become eternal city-dwellers.

## *The fourth and final movement (21:1-22:5)*

- 6.** The measurements are intended to make us think that this city is unimaginably huge, and totally impossible ever to be overthrown.
- 7.** There is no temple in the city (v 22).
- 8.** There is genuine restoration of earthly things (22:1-5).
- 9.** The Tree of Life from the creation narrative; for the healing of the nations.

*<sup>1</sup> Come near, you nations, and listen; pay attention, you peoples!  
Let the earth hear, and all that is in it, the world, and all that comes  
out of it!*

*<sup>2</sup> The LORD is angry with all nations; his wrath is upon all their  
armies.*

*He will totally destroy them, he will give them over to slaughter.*

*<sup>3</sup> Their slain will be thrown out, their dead bodies will send up a  
stench;*

*the mountains will be soaked with their blood.<sup>4</sup> All the stars of the  
heavens will be dissolved*

*and the sky rolled up like a scroll; all the starry host will fall  
like withered leaves from the vine, like shrivelled figs from the fig  
tree.*

*Isaiah 34: 1-4*

*5 God has ascended amid shouts of joy, the LORD amid the sounding of trumpets.*

*6 Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises.*

*7 For God is the King of all the earth; sing to him a psalm of praise.*

*8 God reigns over the nations; God is seated on his holy throne.*

*9 The nobles of the nations assemble as the people of the God of Abraham,*

*for the kings of the earth belong to God; he is greatly exalted.*

*Psalm 44:5-9*

*<sup>10</sup>In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious.*

*<sup>11</sup>In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to reclaim the remnant that is left of his people from Assyria, from Lower Egypt, from Upper Egypt, from Cush, from Elam, from Babylonia, from Hamath and from the islands of the sea.*

*<sup>12</sup> He will raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel;*

*he will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth.*

*Isaiah 11:10-12*

No hymn of praise to conclude; rather, a declaration of the truth of this vision.

- **The Wrath of God;** how a God of love can also be a God of wrath.
- **The Kingdom of God and of Heaven.** This is a major study and answers the question: *How shall we then live?*
- The timing issues and **what is wrong with Pre-Millennialism.**