

Daily Reading Notes

Revelation

(Night Church - Term 1 2007)



Ruins on the Island of Patmos

Central Coast Evangelical Church

"Building Christ's Church by the proclamation of God's Word"

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Table of Contents

Week	Passage	Title	Sermon Date
1	Rev 1	Fall at His Feet	4 Feb
2	Rev 2-3	Letters From Jesus	11 Feb
3	Rev 4-5	The Lion and the Lamb	18 Feb
4		Thanksgiving Sunday	25 Feb
5	Rev 6-11	Tyranny and Chaos	4 Mar
6	Rev 12-16	Persecution and Destruction	11 Mar
7	Rev 17-18	Come Out Of Her, My People.	18 Mar
8	Rev 19-20	The Rider on the White Horse	25 Mar
9	Rev 21-22	The End of the Beginning	1 Apr

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION

**PLEASE READ ALL OF REVELATION AS SOON AS YOU CAN -
READING THE WHOLE WILL MAKE THE TASK OF
UNDERSTANDING THE PARTS EASIER!**

Reading Revelation can feel like you are eavesdropping on someone else's nightmare!

But as we read Revelation, we must never forget that this is part of the Bible. This means that we dare not neglect it because we are lazy and think it is too much work. And we dare not read it in isolation from the rest of the word of God. The Bible - Old and New Testament together - forms one message from God to man. It is a fantastic, detailed and staggering message - that the God of the universe cares for us, has seen our helplessness in sin and has sent a rescuer to save us. And each part connects with the others to make up the whole.

The danger with Revelation, because it has some complexity of style, is

that we do not treat it like the rest of scripture, and we read it in distinction or opposition to the rest of the Bible rather than as a part of it.

What kind of Literature is Revelation?

Revelation is a unique piece of literature. To use the ‘technical’ terms, it is apocalyptic, prophetic and a letter.

It is Apocalyptic. This means that it needs to be read in a certain way. One important distinction is that it is a picture book and not a puzzle book. *“Revelation is a picture book, not a puzzle book. Don’t become preoccupied with isolated details. Rather become engrossed in the overall story. Praise the Lord. Cheer for the saints. Detest the beast. Long for the final victory.”* (Poythress, p.13)

It is Prophetic. Chapter 1 makes it clear that Revelation is a word of God to the church. It is prophetic in that it speaks the voice of God into the situation of those churches just as other parts of the Bible speak to specific situations. Our task then is to apply what is said to those churches to our situation today. And the book of Revelation does speak powerfully to our situation today, as we shall see!

It is a letter – to the seven real and representative churches of Asia Minor (Turkey) and it is addressed to the specific needs and circumstances of those churches (so we need to understand the historical context). The one who reads is blessed (1:3), that is, the one who reads aloud in church in a culture of 15% literacy is blessed – blessed are those who keep the faith in the light of what is happening and will happen.

Two matters dominate the apocalypse. There is the theme of the holy war – played out at the highest levels – *pantocrator* – the Lord of Hosts. Jesus is the Lion of the Tribe of Judah (Messianic warrior) – yet when John turns to see, the Lion is the slain Lamb. The other is the walk of God’s people, which is one of suffering – present and impending – they will triumph only through the blood of the Lamb and their own proclamation and suffering (12:11).

How do we Interpret Revelation?

Revelation is clearly grounded in the events of the churches addressed at the beginning of the letter; we cannot hope to understand Revelation until we understand the historical context. It is also clear that elements of this

book relate to the future from the perspective of John. This means that some of it relates to the history of the world that we live in and some of it relates to the return of Jesus, which (obviously) still lies in the future.

In most commentaries, you will read of terms like *Futurist*, *Historicist*, *Preterist* and *Spiritualist*. This is not the place to go into the details of all of these, suffice to say that they represent streams of interpretation of Revelation. None of them in pure form can work. If you want to dig further into these things, read the Introduction to Leon Morris' commentary, which helpfully shows that none can work on their own.

Suffice to say that elements of each of these streams of interpretation are evident in the book. We need to work hard at the text to understand John's original intent, rather than disputing over labels.

A WORD OF WARNING – Revelation has consistently resisted attributing the details it contains to specific events in history. Inevitably this method of interpretation delivers results that located the last day events in their own time. History has shown these attempts to be futile – see note on Week 4.

It is important to read the extra notes that appear throughout these Daily Reading Notes. Take particular note of the Old Testament connections which lay behind virtually every part of the text and when understood, help to tame some of the more apparently bizarre sections.

Suggested commentaries:

The Book of Revelation: An Introduction and Commentary – Leon Morris (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries)

Apocalypse Now and Then, Reading Revelation Today – Paul Barnett (Aquila, 1989)

THE FIVE PURPOSES OF CHURCH

God has saved us for a purpose - he is a purposeful God! What therefore does he purpose for us as a community of believers? For the sake of simplicity we have identified five areas. As you and your small group fellowship together over the Scriptures this term, consider these five and how they bear on our lives together!

God has called us to:

MATURITY	growth in our knowledge of him and in our godliness of life
MAGNIFICATION	growth in our love and adoration of Christ expressed in all of life
MEMBERSHIP	growth in the joy of living as a community of renewed people
MINISTRY	growth in our service of others — especially of our Christian family
MISSION	growth in our desire and ability to bring the gospel to others

How to use these notes

Bible reading requires effort and concentration for the task is to understand clearly what God himself has given us. We must not however, approach Bible reading with a merely 'academic' attitude. In the text we are confronted with God himself. As we read the scriptures we will experience the overwhelming wonder of being prompted by the Spirit to conform our lives to be more like Christ. These notes are not designed as a self-contained group Bible study but as a stimulus for daily reading and for Growth Group preparation. Don't feel restricted by the questions; they are simply designed to get you thinking.

Here is a guide for how to spend your time.

- Before you begin reading pray! Ask that God would enable you to sit humbly under his word, that he might graciously speak to you, and that he would mould you to his character.
- Read the section for the day. Use the questions to aid your reflection on each passage, taking notes if it is helpful.
- Finally spend some time considering the impact of your reading and then pray again about those things.

Disclaimer!

These studies are an aid to your Bible reading. They are by no means definitive. There are many more issues and implications for reflection than those highlighted in the daily questions.

WEEK 1

REVELATION 1

Fall at His Feet

Revelation 1 sets up the whole of the book in several important ways.

First of all it begins with the end – with the vision of the risen, victorious Christ Jesus. Note that the centre of his power is his conquest of death (v18).

Second, it tells us what kind of book this is – prophecy – that is, a word from God, spoken through his prophet, John.

Third, it describes what we will read (v19) as “... what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later.”

Fourth, v20 locates the Revelation in time and space as addressed to the seven churches in Asia Minor. This location in time and space must be taken account of as we read Revelation.

Fifth – look where Jesus is! He is among the churches. He is intimately concerned and involved with them.

Day 1 Read Revelation 1

1. What is the tone of Revelation 1?

2. What do you think is the main thing that John wants you to understand from Chapter 1?

PONDER: How does this picture of Jesus in all his glory affect the way that you think about yourself?

PRAY: Thank Jesus that he is in control, and pray that this will be a truth that will affect your life today.

Day 2 Read Revelation 1:1-11

The Revelation is written by the Apostle John. He was one of the sons of Zebedee, one of Jesus disciples. John writes his Revelation from his island prison on Patmos. Patmos is a desolate island off the coast of Turkey (which was then called Asia Minor). His letter is addressed to the churches of Asia Minor.



It seems that John had pastoral oversight of these churches, but had been removed to Patmos to frustrate his organisation of those churches. This imprisonment was most likely under the reign of the Roman Emperor Domitian in the 90s of the first century AD. Under Domitian, persecution of Christians was becoming more systematic and effective.

1. What is the source of the information in John's Revelation?

2. What does he say about those who receive its message?

3. Verses 5-8 describe Jesus' relationship with the churches. How does this passage describe the relationship?

PONDER: Given the above historical situation – can you guess why John may have written his Revelation?

PRAY: Thank God that he has given us this revelation, so that we can know what was and what is and what will be.

Day 3 Read Revelation 1:9-20 and Daniel 7:13-14

1. Who speaks to John?

2. What evidence in the text is there for your answer above?

PONDER: Why do you think John links his description back to Daniel 7?

PRAY: Thank God that Jesus has won the victory over sin and death by his death and resurrection. Thank God that our times are in his hands.

Day 4 Read Revelation 1:17-18

1. How does Jesus describe himself?

2. In the context of these verses, what is meant by the title Living One?

PONDER: Jesus has conquered death for us by his death. He holds the keys of death and Hades (Hell). How does this reinforce your hope for eternity?

PRAY for God to help you to see the events of today through eternal eyes.

Day 5 Read Revelation 1:19-20

1. What is John instructed to write down?

2. What might these things relate to?

3. If the seven lamp stands are the seven churches and the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, how does this change the way that you perceive the vision of Jesus in v13f?

PONDER: Does vs 19 give any hints about interpreting Revelation as a whole?

PRAY and thank God that all the process of communicating his words are in his hands (as the image of the stars picks up).

PREPARE FOR YOUR GROWTH GROUP

Read Revelation 1

- Why do you think Christians avoid Revelation?

- List the things that this passage says about Jesus.

- What details can you work out from the passage about the writer?

- List the things that the passage says about Revelation itself.

- What does the passage say about the original recipients of Revelation?

*Women's
Breakfast*

*"How to Cope With Change in Life"
- Margie Cohen*

*Saturday morning at 8.00 a.m. on the
24th February at the North Avoca Surf
Club.*

Call Mary Wood: 4388 5332

WEEK 2**REVELATION 2-3****Letters From Jesus**

In Chapters 2 and 3 we come to the actual messages to each of the churches in Asia Minor. Jesus is pictured as the involved, all powerful ruler in Chapter 1 – now we hear what he has to say to each church.

We have lost track of the stories that lie behind each church here. All we know is what is recorded here. But there is a repeated pattern in each of the letters to the churches. Morris summarises it like this:

1. A greeting: “To the angel of the church in ...”
2. A title of the risen Christ
3. A praise section “I know ...”
4. A criticism
5. A warning
6. An exhortation “He who has an ear ...”
7. A promise “To him who overcomes ...”

This basic pattern is modified to make points about certain of the churches.

Day 1 Read Revelation 2:1-7 and 3:14-22

1. What have these churches done wrong?

2. What have they done right?

PONDER: From these passages, what does Jesus value in a church?

PRAY that we will be like this.

Day 2 Read Revelation 2:8-11 and 3:7-13

1. What have these churches done right?

PONDER: From these passages, what does Jesus value in a church?

PRAY that we will be like this.

Day 3 Read Revelation 2:12-17

1. What has this church done wrong?

2. What have they done right?

PONDER: From this passage, what does Jesus value in a church?

PRAY that we will be like this.



Don't Forget

Night Church Weekender
23rd - 25th February
At Crosslands Convention Centre
Plan to attend

Day 4 Read Revelation 2:18-29

1. What has this church done wrong?

2. What have they done right?

PONDER: From this passage, what does Jesus value in a church?

PRAY that we will be like this.

Day 5 Read Revelation 3:1-6

1. What has this church done wrong?

2. What have they done right?

PONDER: From this passage, what does Jesus value in a church?

PRAY that we will be like this.

PREPARE FOR YOUR GROWTH GROUP

1. Fill in the following table:

Church	Description of Jesus	Strengths I know your works...	Weaknesses... But I hold this against you...	Solution... e.g. Repent	Promise to anyone who conquers...
Ephesus (2:1-7)					
Smyrna (2:8-11)					
Pergamum (2:12-17)					
Thyatira (2:18-29)					
Sardis (3:1-6)					
Philadelphia (3:7-13)					
Laodicea (3:14-22)					

WEEK 3**REVELATION 4-5****The Lion and the Lamb****A Note on the Old Testament and Revelation**

Vast tracts of Revelation have no mention of anything specifically Christian. They could almost have been lifted from the Old Testament - and in some sense this is the case. While John does not quote the Old Testament, many of his accounts are structured by Old Testament prophetic literature.

For example, Chapters 4 and 5 are heavily influenced in structure, content and words used, by Ezekiel 1 and 2 and Daniel 7. Zechariah and Isaiah also stand behind the text of Revelation.

Why? From the perspective of the Old Testament, the Last Days and the coming of the Messiah and the Judgement were all to take place at the same time. With the appearance of Jesus, that 'end time' exploded out in terms of its scope and duration. Instead of just national Israel, the whole world has become the scope of salvation. Instead of a Last Day, there was to be an Age of the Spirit where the gospel of salvation in Christ would be preached, calling for a response. Instead of a sudden end with the coming of the Messiah, there is an age of suffering, which shapes for God a people who live for him.

In chapters 4 and 5, we see the essential features of the end, which we now know is centred on Christ. We see the total conquest of the Lamb who was slain. His victory is an 'already' thing. And by the end of chapter 5, we see the end of the end, the whole world worshipping the Lamb.

John has most likely structured it this way to help his suffering brothers and sisters to make sense of their suffering in the context of a victorious, risen Messiah. They are already a kingdom who reigns on the earth. But their reign is in line with their Messiah, the slain Lamb!

This lays out a sketch of the whole period from Christ's ascension to the arrival of the eternal city, which is filled out in Chapters 6-22.

Day 1 Read Revelation 4

John is about to see the unrolling of the Christian age before his very eyes “... what must soon take place”. But before that begins in chapter 6, John is given a remarkable vision of heaven.

Notice in chapter 4 that God is not described beyond colour – in keeping with the prohibition on seeing God.

- 1. List the things that John saw in heaven.

PONDER the contrast between chapters 2-3 and chapter 4. How does this impact you?

PRAY:.. Praise God for his power and majesty, and that we have this vision of his splendour.

Day 2 Read Revelation 4

- 1. What do the creatures say without ceasing?

- 2. How do the elders respond?

PONDER: what is the focus of the praise for God seated on the throne?

PRAY:.. Praise God for the wonders of the creation.

Day 3 Read Revelation 5:1-6

The scroll tells the future of mankind. And more than that it represents the actual execution of that future – hence the distress when no one is found who can open the scroll.

1. What expectation does verse 5 raise?

2. What does verse 6 tell you about the nature of the victory?

PONDER: Why do you think in verse 6, nothing is mentioned as having been triumphed over?

PRAY:.. Thank God for the Lamb who was slain. Thank God that he died on the cross for you and rose again as the conqueror of sin and death.

Praise him for the future that you now have through his victory.

Day 4 Read Revelation 5:7-10

1. What does this passage say about Christians?

2. What does the song sung by the four creatures and the twenty-four elders say about the nature of the victory that the Lamb has won?

PONDER and PRAY about the wonder of what we are caught up in in Christ. Praise God that he has chosen you. Contemplate your identity in all of this. Pray the words of their song.

Day 5 Read Revelation 5:11-14

This passage shows that Revelation is all about the gospel of Jesus Christ.

1. What are the millions of angels singing?

2. What is the whole of creation singing?

PONDER: In the light of this, do you think that the cross might have been an important event?

PRAY and praise God for Jesus' work on the cross. Praise Jesus for what he has done. Pray the words of the songs in the passage.

WEEK 4

REVELATION 6-11

Tyranny and Chaos

A note about Numbers and their Significance

Numbers have symbolic meanings in Revelation: 7 is the perfect number; 6 is the number that pretends, but falls short of perfection. Thus, 666 can be seen to mean “failure upon failure upon failure.

Again, if 7 is the perfect number, then three and a half is an incomplete period.

A third is dramatic but not the totality (as in a third of the living creatures in the sea died – not all of them but a lot).

12 is the number of perfect Israel.

10 is the number of completion.

144,000 is 12 squared times 10 cubed (12 X 12 X 10 X 10 X 10) - see below!

Day 1 Read Revelation 6

The first four seals are opened and the so called Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse ride out. These four work together and they work in a sequence that we are familiar with all over the world where men are bent on conquering others. The great leader with the vision rise up – the great general ride out to cause war, famine and deprivation follow (in our terms verse 6 means a packet of Weetbix for \$150.00). And finally death follows. The pale rider – in Greek, the word here translated pale is *chloros*, where we get Chlorine – it is pale grey green – the colour of a corpse.

This passage clearly depicts the age we live in, as well as every age in between John’s writing and us.

- 1. What hope does the answer to the cry of the saints give?

- 2. How does the sixth seal answer their cry?

PONDER: how does this vision of the age we live in benefit you today.

What mind changes do you need to make in response to this revelation.

PRAY that we will live consistently with our beliefs.

Day 2 Read Revelation 7

There is massive controversy over the interpretation of chapter 7 of Revelation. Some argue that the 144,000 represents Israel, and the great multitude represents the Gentile converts. Against this are the fact that that would mean that the 144,000 were sealed whereas the multitude are not – and the audience of this letter are predominantly Gentile. Others argue that the 144,000 and the multitude are one and the same. The problem with this theory is that there needs to be some explanation of the difference in the textual detail – one speaks in Israelite terms and the other of a group coming from all nations.

The best sense that I can make of this difficult passage is that the two groups are the same, and that the similarity is modelled on that of the Lion and the Lamb of Chapter 5. The Lion of Judah was the Israelite expectation – and it was delivered – only it was in the shocking form of a slain Lamb. Here the Israelite expectation was of a faithful remnant of Israel to be preserved – and it was delivered – only in the form of a great multitude that no-one could count from all nations, tribes, peoples and languages.

1. What is the great multitude doing?

2. What is the future for the great multitude?

PONDER: Why do you think God has given you this revelation?

PRAY: Thank God for his costly love and concern for you.

Day 3 Read Revelation 8-9

The transition from the seals to the trumpets with the opening of the seventh seal is an important waypoint in our reading of Revelation. Some have interpreted the seven trumpets to be the content of the seventh seal. Others interpret the beginning of verse 8 as the final judgement followed by the trumpets which are a recapitulation of the seven seals, but from a different perspective.

The trumpets closely follow in order the plagues of the Exodus (Exod 7-10).

1. What is the result at the end of this entire calamity?

2. What is the response towards God when the world thinks of the troubles that plague it?

PONDER: What is required to cause a pagan to repent?

PRAY: Praise God that he called you to repentance and faith. Pray for a friend or relative who has yet to bow the knee to Christ.

Day 4 Read Revelation 10

John taking the 'little' scroll from the massive angel is the main event of this passage and ought to help us to understand the difficulties such as verse 7. John's action in v9 is extraordinary in the collision of humanity with the heavenly realm.

The question for us is what is this little sweet tasting scroll which turns sour in the belly?

1. How is the angel described here? How would someone respond to an angel like this who came with a message?

2. Can you think of a connection between the accomplishment of the mystery of God and the taking of the little scroll?

PONDER: where today do we see humble humanity taking on a task that has the whole of the heavenly realm standing behind it, and watching and thrilling to what is going on? Read Ephesians 3:1-13!

PRAY for us as a church that we will understand the scope of the task we are caught up in as we preach the gospel and build our church.

Day 5 Read Revelation 11

Verse 4 here is as close as John comes to actually quoting an Old Testament text. Here the link to Zechariah 4 is very clear. Zechariah itself is not so clear – but the two olive trees are there revealed to be two who are anointed to serve the Lord of all the earth.

Zechariah prophesies in the context of the rebuilding of the temple after the exile. In spite of appearances to the contrary the people are assured that God by his Spirit will rebuild the temple.

And it seems by analogy that this is exactly the message of Revelation 11 for the church - that despite appearances, despite setbacks such as being overpowered by the beast and being killed in the street, the people of God will rise and will triumph. They will do this because of the triumph of the Lamb.

- 1. The days before the final judgement are pictured in vs 1-14. What will they be like?

- 2. What will happen after the final trumpet sounds?

PONDER: When do you get discouraged about our church? Can this passage help?

PRAY that God will sustain us to the end.

PREPARE FOR YOUR GROWTH GROUP

Read Revelation 6 and 7

- Where do we instinctively go for our security?

- What light does Revelation 6 and 7 shed on the wisdom of this?

- Where is our security ultimately found?

- What will be the end of all who refuse to acknowledge him who sits on the throne and the Lamb?

WEEK 5

REVELATION 12-16

Destruction and Persecution

Day 1 Read Revelation 12

1. What events does this passage remind you of?

2. How long between the defeat of the dragon and the end?

PONDER: How does vs 17 relate to you personally?

PRAY that you will be able to resist the devil so that he will flee from you.

Day 2 Read Revelation 13:1b-10 and Daniel 7:1-28

1. What does the beast from the sea remind you of?

2. What will he do?

3. What kind of beast is this?

PONDER: How should Christians respond?

PRAY that we will understand the forces arrayed against us and trust in the Lord.

Day 3 Read Revelation 13:11-18

1. What does the beast from the land do?

2. What kind of beast is this?

PONDER: How should Christians respond?

PRAY: Thank God that we bear the mark of Christ (7:3, 14:1) rather than the mark of the beast.

Day 4 Read Revelation 14:1-20

1. What is the final picture for Christians?

2. What is the final picture for God's enemies?

PONDER: How does this picture relate to you?

PRAY for the continued faithful preaching of the gospel in our church.

Day 5 Skim Read Revelation 15 and 16 and Exodus 7 - 10

Try to match up the plagues in both books.

PONDER: why would there be such a connection?

PRAY that God will sustain our attention as we wrestle with Revelation.

Praise him for the majesty of this part of his word.

PREPARE FOR YOUR GROWTH GROUP

Read Revelation 12

- Compare Matthew 2:13-23

- Compare Matthew 8:28-34

- Compare Matthew 12:22-29

- What do you make of the two types of accounts?

WEEK 6**REVELATION 17-18****Come Out Of Her, My People**

Many have attempted to make close application of the seven heads of the beast – Roman Emperors, Popes, Kings etc. These efforts are usually frustrated by the chaotic nature of history. Clearly the original frame of reference is Rome – built on 7 hills etc. – but the application is for all empires who acts as she does. The angel cries: “Fallen, Fallen is Babylon the great!” and this could equally be said wherever an empire/nation sets itself up in opposition to the people of God – their judgement is sure.

Day 1 Read Revelation 17

1. How is Babylon described?

2. Who could she be?

PONDER: Could the Babylon tag be applied to any city today?

PRAY: Thank God that even the strongest and most violent regimes will fail before the LORD.

Day 2 Read Revelation 17:9-18

1. How does the beast mimic Jesus?

2. What kind of end will come for the prostitute?

PONDER: What does this tell you about the nature of those opposed to the things of Christ?

PRAY: Thank God that he is sovereign over all things, even over the minds of those opposed to Him. Praise him for the security that that brings us.

Day 3 Read Revelation 18

1. How does this expand on Revelation 16?

2. From Chapters 17 and 18, what has Babylon done wrong?

PONDER: In our context, how does the civilisation we live in work against us?

PRAY that we will have the wisdom to see the world around us in all its earthly splendour, through spiritual eye.

Day 4 Read Revelation 18

1. How do the nations respond to Babylon's destruction?

2. How does heaven respond?

PONDER: How might you tell where the centre of your emotions are in regard to the things of the world and the things of Christ?

PRAY: For wisdom as we relate to the world we live in.

Day 5 Read Revelation 18

1. What are the people of God called on to do in the face of the fall of Babylon?

2. What two cities are contrasted in the last part of Revelation (skim forward)?

PONDER: What steps can you take to ‘come out of her’?”

PRAY for discernment and courage in making any needed changes.

PREPARE FOR YOUR GROWTH GROUP

Read Revelation 18 and Jeremiah 51:1-50

- Note any points of similarity.

- Does any of chapter 18 make you feel uncomfortable? Why do you think that is?

- Why do you think trade and economics are included in the account of the prostitute?

WEEK 7

REVELATION 19-20

The Rider on the White Horse**A Note on the way Ezekiel stands behind Chapters 19 and 20**

When Jerusalem fell, all Israel's hopes fell with it. Every last trace of the Israelite nation would soon be wiped from the earth. Yahweh and his people would be no more than a dim memory. It was the final and irreversible death of Israel.

God, however, had something altogether different planned. The fall of Jerusalem in 587 BC would not be the end, but a new beginning. After bringing Israel to the brink of annihilation, God came and spoke a word of hope to Ezekiel. God's people would not be wiped out forever; he would restore them. As incredible as it may have seemed to the Israelites languishing in the death of exile, God promised to bring his people back to life. Israel was like a valley full of old, dry bones, but, as he did at the creation of the world, God would breathe life into them and recreate them as a vast, living army (Ezek 37).

God would bring them back to a renewed and purified land, where he would shepherd and care for them (Ezek 34). And as the evil forces of the world, symbolized by the dark and threatening Gog and Magog, gathered to war against Israel and destroy her forever, God would protect his people and utterly defeat his enemies (Ezek 38). The piled up bodies of the forces of Gog and Magog would provide a gruesome banquet for the wild animals and birds (Ezek 39).

What remained after this final defeat of evil would be a magnificent new temple in a glorious new city. The city, Jerusalem, would be in the form of a large square, 2.3 km on each side (Ezek 48). At its heart would be the temple, from which would flow an Edenic river, through the city and out to the Jordan valley. This river would bring life to everything it touched, even the lifeless, salty Dead Sea, and along its banks would be lush and fruitful trees to nourish and heal God's people (Ezek 47).

This would be a truly wonderful city, the eternal home of God's people, filled with God's glory, as God himself dwelled in their midst (Ezek 43; 48).

John, in exile himself, also sees a final battle with evil and a glorious, eternal city. But the city he sees, while similar to Ezekiel's, is something of such unimaginable glory, that had Ezekiel seen it, he would not have believed his eyes.

Day 1 Read Revelation 19 - 20

- 1. Who is the rider on the white horse? What is he like?

- 2. Who accompanies him? What are they like?

PONDER: What do they intend to do?

PRAY: Thank God for this inspiring vision of our King in all his glory.

Day 2 Read Ezekiel 38-39 particularly 38:14-39:8; 39:17-20

Ezekiel 38-39 stands behind Revelation 19 - 20

- 1. What links can you see?

PONDER: Why would John pick up these Old Testament Links in Revelation?

PRAY for wisdom and clarity of thought as we look at these passages.

Day 3 Read Revelation 19

1. What is this 'great supper of God'?

2. Where in Revelation have we already seen a feast (albeit a little different!)?

PONDER: What does John say by this?

PRAY: Thank God that we will be present at the wedding feast of the Lamb!

Day 4 Read Revelation 20

1. What does Satan intend to do after he is released from his prison (20:7-10)?

2. What will the outcome of this be? What happens to the devil?

3. What connection is there between Rev 20:7-10 and Rev 19:17-21? What do both passages speak about?

PONDER: So what guess can we already make as to what the passage in the middle is about (ie, Rev 20:1-6)?

PRAY that our minds will always be set to the fact that this world is coming to an end, and that no matter how good technology gets, we ought not to expect the world to get any better.

Day 5 Read Revelation 20:11-15

1. What will the basis for the judgement of the living and the dead be?

2. What is the book of life and how does this factor in?

PONDER: the wonder of the fact that your name is written there.

PRAY: Thank God for his grace and mercy in saving you.

PREPARE FOR YOUR GROWTH GROUP

Read Revelation 20

- When was Satan bound?

- What do the following passages say about when Satan is bound?

- John 12:31

- Col 2:15

- Matt 12:29

- How is the house plundered? (See also Luke 10:18-20).

- What is the outcome for Satan when he is released at the end?

WEEK 8

REVELATION 21-22

The End of the Beginning

Day 1 Read Revelation 21 and 22

- 1. Is the New Creation too big to be friendly? Why/Why not?

PRAY: Thank God for the hope of a new creation.

Day 2 Read Isaiah 65:17-25.

- 1. In what way does Rev 21:1-22:10 remind us of Is 65:17-25?

- 2. What is different?

PONDER: What is John saying by this?

PRAY: Praise God for the nature of the new creation.

Day 3 Read Revelation 21

The city was laid out like a square with a side being 12,000 stadia which is approximately 2,300 km. The ESV translates 21:17: 'He also measured its wall, 144 cubits by human measurement, which is also an angel's measurement.' It is not stated whether the 144 cubits refers to the wall's

height or width - 144 cubits is approximately 65 m. Some (eg, the NIV translators) are of the opinion that it is most probably the width of the wall that is on view. It is possible, though, that it refers to both.

- 1. What is the relationship between God and his people like in the new creation (Rev 21:1-7)?

- 2. What does Rev 22:1-5 add to this?

PONDER: Who makes up God’s people?

PRAY that this wonderful hope will shape our present as well as our future.

Day 4 Read Revelation 21:22 – 22:6

- 1. Earlier in the book John saw a heavenly temple (15:5-16:1,17). Why does he now say that there is no temple in the city (21:22)?

- 2. According to this passage, what will be the best thing about eternal life?

PONDER: If eternal life will be about being with God, how should this affect us now?

PRAY that this would be our heart's desire, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Day 5 Read Revelation 22

1. How does this passage neatly round off the Bible?

PONDER: Revelation should leave us longing for Jesus to come – for justice to come to the Earth, for the enemies of God to be banished. And it should leave us desiring to be godly while we wait for Jesus to come. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

PRAY that Revelation would have that effect on you!

PREPARE FOR YOUR GROWTH GROUP


Read Revelation 21 and 22

- List as many of the features of the new Jerusalem as you can

- What four images are used to describe the New Jerusalem?

CCEC Missionary Contacts



Ecuador 
Colin & Jill Bakon
Mathew & Nicholas
colin.bakon@sim.org
Colin is the Ecuador Associate Director and is also involved in outreach through teaching English and small groups. Jill is the book keeper for SIM Ecuador and is involved in strengthening the SIM Ecuador team and homeschooling.

France 
Paul & Sandra King
Philip, Nathalie & Michael
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Paul is working with students in universities in the Strasbourg area of France, with GBU, the French equivalent of the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students (AFES). The family moved from Paris in early 2004, after many years doing similar work among students there.

Tanzania 
Jono & Amy Vink
Lili, Isaac & Brie
jvink@cems.org.au
Jono and Amy are based in Musoma. Their main work is to develop a teaching and training ministry specifically with and for youth leaders. They also work in schools and a Bible college.

Botswana 
Peter & Joanna Shaw
Andrew, Ellen & Daniel
The Shaws are preparing to go to Botswana in Africa with SIM to do Christian discipleship work in churches, schools and colleges. They are planning to leave in July 2006.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matt 28:18-20

Papua New Guinea
 Christian Leaders Training College
 Overseas Council
 CCEC has formed a close relationship with CLIC through Overseas Council. CCEC is supporting CLIC in order to enable the college to continue to have the resources it requires to train the people of PNG for ministry.

Maitland
 Simon & Margie Gillham
 Noah & Madelon
 simonig@hunterlink.net.au
 Simon and Margie planted the Maitland Evangelical Church, which meets at East Maitland School. The church has been meeting since September 2002.

Perth
 Matt & Cecily Greenwood
 Will, Josh, Tim & Laura
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 Matt and Cecily planted the Western Suburbs Community Bible Church in Perth. The church has been meeting since 2005.

Berkeley Vale
 David & Ruth Sheath
 Daniel, Moah & Sarah
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 David and Ruth planted The Lakes Evangelical Church, which meets at Berkeley Vale School. Some members from CCEC assisted the plant by moving there.

Port Macquarie
 Steve & Nicole Covetz
 Matthew, Sarah, Ethan
 Steve & Nicole planted Point Community Church in Port Macquarie. The church currently meets in a local public school and has been meeting since February 2006.

Gorakan
 Connan & Belinda O'Shea
 Jayden, Joshua & Sarah
 connan@northernlakes.com.au
 Connan & Belinda O'Shea planted Northern Lakes Evangelical Church. The church has been meeting since February 2006. The church meets at Gorakan High School.

April 2006