

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

- BELIEVE – ACTS 16:31
- REPENT – ACTS 17:30; LUKE 13:3
- CONFESS – ROMANS 10:10; I TIMOTHY 6:12
- BE BAPTIZED – ACTS 2:38; MARK 16:16
- BE FAITHFUL – REVELATION 2:10

PRAYER LIST:

North Ridgeville Church of Christ
36364 Chestnut Ridge Road
North Ridgeville, OH 44039

www.nrcoc.net

Times for Meeting

Lord's Day

9:30 AM Bible Study (all ages)
10:30 AM Worship

Wednesday

7:00 PM Bible Study (all ages)

Elders

Bruce Dean
Mark Ullman

Evangelist

Steven Wallace

THE NORTH RIDGEVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only,
deceiving your own selves.” James 1:22

May 07, 2023

Revelation

Steven J. Wallace

The theme of Revelation: “Overcoming with the Lamb.” Keynote: “Overcome.” Key passage: Revelation 12:10, 11.

The style is written in *signs* or *symbols* to the persecuted bride of Christ about many things that are to *shortly* take place (1:1, 3, etc.). The Greek word for *sign* (*sēmeion*) is found *seven* times in Revelation. Its verb is found one time (1:1). While there were more than seven churches in Asia, Revelation speaks of *seven*. Seven represents *completeness* and is the most used number. Let's appreciate the area is Asia, not Judea (1:4).

The body of the letter consists largely of the throne scene, seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven bowls of wrath with important *pauses* or *intermissions*. The seventh seal is the prelude to the “seven trumpets.” A significant pause exists between the sixth and seventh trumpets (see, 10:1-11:14). Another lengthy interlude (chap. 12-15) exists between the *seventh trumpet* and *seven bowls of wrath*.

Revelation highlights great contrasts. The 1000-year reign is contrasted with Satan's “little while” (Rev. 20:1-4). The woman in Revelation 12:1, 2 stands in stark contrast with the woman to be judged in Revelation 17-18. One is clothed with the sun standing on the moon, the other sits on the scarlet *beast* (17:3; cf. 13:1ff). One represents God's people while the other is Rome sitting on many waters and is the poised enemy of the church. Her downfall and the exulting over her follows (18:1-19:16). Outlining the rest of Revelation looks like the judgment on the beast (19:17-21), the binding of Satan, his subsequent release and judgment (20), the new heaven, new earth, and new Jerusalem (21), and the River of Life with final counsel (22).

TWO WITNESSES REV. 11:1-19	SHARED IDEA	SOULS UNDER THE ALTAR REV. 6:9-11; 20:4-6
Measuring the temple, altar, worshippers; city is trampled. (42 months = 3 ½ yrs., cf. 13:5)	<i>Church is the temple & city Eph. 2:19-22; Heb. 12:23. God cares for His people in trial.</i>	Souls under the altar cry "How long?" to the Lord and are answered.
The two witnesses prophesy and complete testimony – 11:3-6. (1260 yrs. = 3 ½ yrs., cf. 12:6, 14)	<i>During persecution the church continues to preach the gospel and be nourished by the faith.</i>	Saints hold on to the word of God and continue their testimony.
The witnesses are persecuted and killed by the beast. The world celebrates their deaths and leaves their bodies unburied – 11:7-10.	<i>There are limited or apparent victories by Satan where the Lord's people suffer.</i>	Slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.
Witnesses rise and stand on their feet. They ascend before their enemies (11:11, 12).	<i>The church triumphs and the cause of Christ is vindicated!</i>	Souls go from <u>under</u> the altar to sitting <u>on</u> thrones (6:9; 20:4). This is the first resurrection.
A tenth of the city falls (a limited judgment) where 7000 are killed. Others fear and glorify God.	<i>Christ reigns! The kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord (11:15-18; Dan. 7:18, 22, 27).</i>	Exonerated, slain saints lived and reigned with Christ 1000 years (20:4).
	<i>No shared idea. Note: Satan was bound but was not punished until fire comes down and the final judgment ensues (20:1-3, 9-15).</i>	<i>The rest of the dead live again after the 1000 yrs. (20:5). Satan is freed for a little while to deceive the nations and besiege saints (20:3-9).</i>

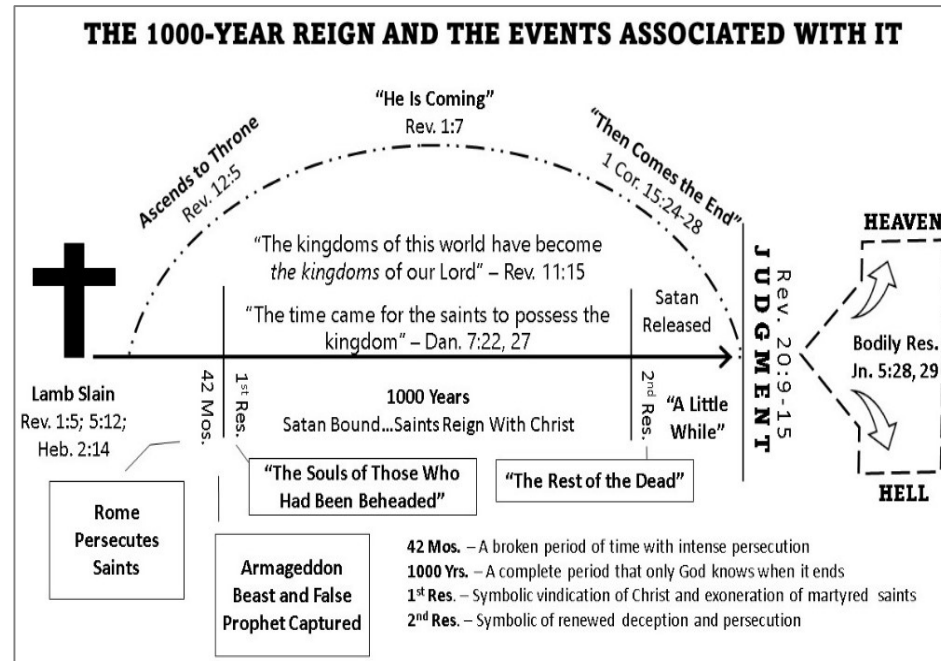
Caution is given against understanding this book through a literal approach. While this is generally our approach to Scripture, this book tells us it is a book of signs (1:1; 12:1, 3; 15:1). A sign conveys additional information and meaning beyond the picture. When we see a stop sign, we understand that we are to bring our vehicle to a "stop" before proceeding. "Warning signs" warn of some danger beyond the image of the sign. The warning sign in the appearance of "curves" or "arrows" shows us that the road will possibly have dangerous curves before us. The sign is not the curve, it represents the curve that is coming.

The two witnesses are not literally two people, nor are they literally Old Testament saints such as Moses and Elijah. They are signs that represent God's ministers who are credible and fully testifying against the world (cf. Matt. 18:16, 20). Neither are the "first" and implied "second" resurrections literal (Rev. 20:4-6). The "first resurrection" *represents* the exoneration of slain souls who *representatively* and *figuratively* reign with Christ. Even we today currently sit with Christ by taking advantage of all the *spiritual* blessings found "in Christ" (see Eph. 1:3; 2:6). The *slain saints* of Revelation 20 are no more literally reigning in heaven than the "rest of the dead" are literally living again and persecuting the church on earth in the implied "second resurrection" after the 1000 years terminates.

Revelation gives us many good things to ponder as our faith is tested and tried in the life we live here. It brings perspective to us when the world tries

to disorient us. It conveys valuable lessons. The death of a saint is not forgotten by God. Such is precious in His eyes (Psa. 116:15). Blessed are those who die in the Lord (Rev. 14:13). His works, testimony, and example are not forgotten by God.

Revelation teaches us that although the world grows intolerant and violent against the church, the church doesn't stop preaching. Although hated and opposed, the two witnesses "finished their testimony" (Rev. 11:7). Fire proceeded from their mouths and devoured their adversaries (Rev. 11:5). Has the world quenched the fire of the message today?



Revelation affirms that all will live again and stand before the judgment seat of Christ (Rev. 20:11-15). It matters not if he is destroyed by beasts or becomes lost and destroyed in the sea.

The chronology of Revelation agrees with the rest of the Bible's teaching about end times. Sadly, many run in polar opposite extremes to make the bulk of the book as yet being unfulfilled, while others run to make the entire book fulfilled by AD 70 in the destruction of Jerusalem. Some deny the presence of the kingdom of Christ on earth by erroneously embracing a future earthly 1000-year reign. Others fail to see that *Armageddon* and the persecution from the sea beast have already happened.

The letter was primarily concerned with answering the problem that threatened the faith and the existence of the church in Roman times.