

# AN INTRODUCTION TO T3 REVELATION: THE LION AND THE LAMB

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## SESSION 1

## OPENING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, you tell us to fear nothing except that which can separate us from you. Give us eyes to see and ears to hear now, Lord, all that you wish to tell us. We ask you to send your Spirit upon us here, to help us focus, to offer us wisdom and to calm our souls as we grow closer to you. Mother Mary, Queen of Heaven, we ask you to be with us and to pray for us throughout this study, this night and this week. *Hail Mary...*

Christianity is filled with apparent paradoxes. If you don't understand this, then you probably won't understand the Bible. As you may know already, a paradox is a statement that appears self-contradictory, like "jumbo shrimp."

In Scripture, we read many things that are seemingly paradoxical:

- "He who believes in me, though he die ... shall live." (John 11:25)
- "Whoever loses their life will find it." (Matthew 16:25)
- "If you wish to be the greatest, you must become the least." (Luke 9:48)
- "The first shall be last and the last shall be first." (Mark 10:31)

You get the idea.

People think that the book of Revelation is a prophecy about the "end times," a book brimming with fearful imagery and life-or-death consequences (literally). Many see it as a "dark book" filled only with angst, fear, wrath, and death.

Christians, however, who see with the eyes of faith, should not view Revelation this way. We know our God is a loving God. We know that He is merciful. So we know it is not God's plan to scare us. It is also not God's plan for us to die but to live. Now, you might be saying, "Then why will I die?" God wants you to live, eternally; God wants you to live forever, with Him, in heaven. The devil wants no such thing. The devil wants you in hell, where there is no God, no love, and, therefore, no true "life" within you. Make no mistake—there is a battle being waged for your soul. The devil's plan is to keep you from life, from God. God's plan is to save you from eternal death.

In the coming lessons you will hear a lot about judgment and punishment, heaven and hell, good and evil, etc. What you will be challenged to do is to choose between believing the lie or believing the truth ... just like Adam and Eve had to choose. God wants you to live, so first you must die.

If you want to learn the "truth" about Revelation, first you must forget everything you think you know.

The paradox is that this book is not about fear at all; it is about hope. The question is whether you are willing to let God increase your vision, as He did St. John's vision. Before you embark on this journey, as God to give you "eyes to see" (Psalm 119:18).

## THE CHAPTERS COVERED IN THIS LESSON

## Revelation Chapters 1-5

## OPENING QUESTION

Are you afraid of death?

## VERSE TO REMEMBER

Revelation 5:6

1. What five persons or groups are involved in communicating Revelation's message?  
God, Jesus Christ, God's Angelic Servant, God's Human Servant, God's Seven Churches.
2. What is the significance of there being seven Churches?  
All of the churches. Seven represents completeness.
3. What three things must we do to inherit God's special blessing (1:3)?  
Read the word aloud, receive the word, and obey the word.
4. What does the title "Alpha and Omega" mean (1:8)?  
Jesus is fully God with no beginning and no end.
5. On what day did this vision given to St. John occur (Rev 1:9-10)?  
Sunday
6. What does the figure in the first vision tell John?  
Fear not, I am the first and the last.
7. What do the seven lampstands represent in 1:20?  
The Seven Churches.
8. What does John witness in God's throne room (Rev. 4)?  
The heavenly liturgy
9. What do the twenty-four elders represent in the throne room?  
The leaders of the faith from different time periods, sitting on thrones because of the way they served God.
10. How does the Lion appear in Revelation 5:6?  
A lamb that has been slain.

## Play the DVD - Disc 1, Segment 1

### TALKING IT OUT

#### Discussion Questions

1. Why do people find Revelation so "scary", in your opinion?
2. What is more difficult for you - reading the Word or obeying the Word? Explain.
3. Do you enjoy going to Mass? Why and why not? Explain.
4. Based on your answer to Question 2, what are some things you can do to "get more out of Mass?"
5. The "Verse to Remember" (Rev. 5:6) says that the lion was a lamb - a slain lamb - why is this so important an image for us to have of Christ in heaven? Explain.

### THINKING IT THROUGH

List out all of the "symbols" and "sacred things" you see at Mass (i.e. candles, crucifix, chalice, vestments, etc.) Next to each word/phrase listed, write out what you think the significance is and why the Church has it. When you come back together, share what hit you about the list and ask any questions you may have.

### CLOSING PRAYER

# KEY TO UNDERSTANDING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF NUMBERS, COLORS, AND ANIMALS IN REVELATION

The book of Revelation is full of fantastical images and a rich symbolism unfamiliar to most readers today. As you read, use this key to help unlock the meaning and find its relevance.

## NUMBERS

<b>One</b> (Revelation 1:17, 2:8, 22:13)	Primacy, greatness, God himself
<b>Two</b> (Revelation 11:3; 2 Corinthians 13:1)	Two witnesses needed to judge a crime
<b>Half; three-and-a-half</b> (Revelation 8:7, 9:15, 12:4)	Limited or restricted time frame
<b>Four</b> (Revelation 4:6, 7:1, 9:14, 20:8)	Cosmos, creation, creatures: four animals, four winds, four corners
<b>Six</b> (Revelation 13:18)	Imperfection
<b>Seven</b> (Revelation 1:4, 1:12, 2:1, 3:1, 4:5; 5:1; 8:2; etc.)	Completeness, covenant
<b>Ten</b> (Revelation 2:10; 9:16; 12:3; 13:1; 17:3, 7, 12, 16)	Shortness, incompleteness, limitation
<b>1,000</b> (Revelation 5:11; 9:16; 11:13; 20:2-3)	As the product of 10x10x10, 1,000 represents a long time, but still a finite time
<b>Twelve</b> (Revelation 7:5-8; 12:1; New Israel) 21:12, 14, 16; 21:21; 22:2)	Continuity with the twelve tribes of Israel (for example, the twelve apostles in the New Israel)
<b>144,000</b> (Revelation 7:4, 11:2, 13:5, 14:1, 21:17)	As the product of 12x12x1,000, the number 144,000 represents all of God's people in union with him

## COLORS (CHROMATIC SYMBOLISM)

<b>White</b> (Revelation 1:14, 2:17, 3:4-5, 6:11, 7:9, 7:13, 14:14, 19:14)	Victory, purity, dignity
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<b>Black</b> (Revelation 6:5, 12)	Death, disaster, distress
<b>Red</b> (Revelation 6:4, 9:17, 12:3)	Bloodshed, violence
<b>Green</b> (lit. "pale") (Revelation 6:8)	Impending death
<b>Purple/scarlet</b> (Revelation 17:4, 18:16, 18:12)	Immorality

## OTHER SYMBOLS

<b>Babylon</b> (Revelation 14:8)	Place of exile; the greatest threat to Israel and her freedom to worship
<b>Beasts</b> (Revelation 11:7, 11:13, 14:9; 14:11)	Foreign nations opposed to God's people
<b>Crowns</b> (Revelation 4:4, 4:10, 6:2, 9:7)	Authority
<b>Dragon, Serpent</b> (Revelation 12, 13)	Satan
<b>Eyes, full of</b> (Revelation 4)	All-seeing, all-knowing power
<b>Egypt</b> (Revelation 11)	Oppressor of God's people
<b>Eagle, Ox, Lion, Man</b> (Revelation 4:7, 8:13, 9:17)	The four mightiest creatures
<b>Horns</b> (Revelation 5:6; 12:3; 13:1, 11)	Power
<b>Jewels</b> (Revelation 4, 21)	Unique, rare, and precious
<b>Key of David</b> (Revelation 3:7)	Power to open or shut God's kingdom
<b>Palm branches</b> (Revelation 7:9)	Joy, victory
<b>Right hand</b> (Revelation 1:16-20, 5:1, 5:7)	Power, authority
<b>Seals, trumpets, bowls</b> (Revelation 1:10; 4:1; 5:6; 8; 16)	Liturgical images used in Revelation to call for repentance, to announce and dispense judgment
<b>Sodom</b> (Revelation 11:8)	Immorality
<b>Spirits</b> (Revelation 1:4, 3:1, 4:5, 5:6)	Angels
<b>Thunder</b> (Revelation 4:5, 6:1, 8:5, 10:3-4, 14:2)	God's voice



# SHARED ELEMENTS IN THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS AND THE BOOK OF REVELATION

(From The Lamb's Supper: The Mass as Heaven on Earth by Scott Hahn, pp. 119-120)

Sunday Worship	1:10
High Priest	1:13
An altar	8:3-4, 11:1, 14:18
Priests	4:4, 11:15, 14:3, 19:4
Vestments	1:13, 4:4, 6:11, 7:9, 15:6, 19:13-14
Consecrated celibacy	14:4
Lampstands (Menorah)	1:12, 2:5
Penitence	chapters 2-3
Incense	5:8, 8:3-5
The Book, or Scroll	5:1
The Eucharistic Host	2:17
Chalices	15:7, ch.16, 21:9
The Sign of the Cross (The Tau)	7:3, 14:1, 22:4
The Gloria	15:3-4
The Alleluia	19:1, 19:3, 19:4, 19:6
Lift up your hearts	11:12
The "Holy, Holy, Holy"	4:8
The Amen	19:4, 22:21
The Lamb of God	5:6 and throughout
The Prominence of the Virgin Mary	12:1-6, 12:13-17
Intercession of angels and saints	5:8, 6:9-10, 8:3-4
Devotion to St. Michael the Archangel	12:7
Antiphonal chant	4:8-11, 5:9-14, 7:10-12, 18:1-8
Reading from Scripture	chapters 2-3, 5, 8:2-11
The priesthood of the faithful	1:6, 20:6
Catholicity (or universality)	7:9
Silent contemplation	8:1
The Marriage Supper of the Lamb	19:9, 19:17

## FINDING THE MASS (PRAYERS) IN SCRIPTURE

Did you know that the entire Mass from start to finish is *completely* based on and founded in Scripture? Virtually every prayer and response we say during the celebration of Mass is based on the Word of God.

Here are just a few examples:

- In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19).
- Amen (1 Chronicles 16:36).
- The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you (see 2 Corinthians 13:13-14).
- The Lord be with you (Ruth 2:4).
- Lord have mercy (Tobit 8:4).
- Christ have mercy (1 Timothy 1:2).
- Glory to God in the highest, and peace to His people on earth (Luke 2:14).
- Lord, I am not worthy to receive you (Matthew 8:8).
- Blessed be God forever (Psalm 68:36).
- May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands (Psalm 50:23).
- Lift up your hearts; we lift them up to the Lord (Lamentations 3:41).
- Let us give thanks to the Lord our God (Colossians 3:17).
- Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might (Isaiah 6:3).
- Hosanna in the highest; blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord (Mark 11:9-10).
- Let us proclaim the mystery of our faith (1 Timothy 3:16).
- Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again (1 Corinthians 15:3-5; Revelation 22:12).
- Lord, you are holy indeed, the fountain of all holiness (2 Maccabees 14:36).
- From age to age ... from east to west (Psalms 103:17, 113:3).
- Take this and eat it, this is my body (Matthew 26:26).
- This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins (Matthew 26:28).
- Through Him, with Him, in Him (Romans 11:36).
- This is the lamb of God; happy are we who are called to His table (Revelation 19:9).
- Go in peace to love and serve the Lord (Luke 7:50; 2 Chronicles 35:5).

Our Church, the *Catholic* (i.e., "universal") faith, was founded by Christ, entrusted to Peter, and led by the Holy Spirit. It is the *only* Church that Jesus Himself founded. Our Mass, celebrated in hundreds of languages throughout the world, thousands of times every day, is totally, absolutely, unequivocally, 100 percent founded in Scripture.

Take pride in the fact that you are part of a long and glorious tradition. Be proud to be Catholic!

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### LEADER'S NOTE

#### Finding the Mass (Prayers) in Scripture

Non-Catholic Christians often ask Catholics questions about the Mass. One of the most common objections from well-intentioned Christians is, "Where is the Mass in the Bible?" Obviously, there are several references (see Acts 2:42) to the early Christians gathering together on the first day of the week to break bread, read from the Scripture, gather in fellowship, etc. Also, point out to your teens that the Church was celebrating the Mass *before* the New Testament was even written. It is not surprising, then, that the celebrating of the liturgy is reflected in the books of the New Testament.

The list of references provided above is not exhaustive, but it does offer a substantial overview of various prayers the priest and assembly offer during the Mass. Read through them and, if you are able, offer the context behind specific verses to give teens a better understanding of why they are praying these sacred words during Mass. Encourage them to mark the verses in their Bibles and read them on their own.

## WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? HEAVEN, HELL, AND PURGATORY

You are familiar with the Creed. Every time you pray the Rosary, you pray the Apostles' Creed. During Sunday Mass, we recite the Nicene Creed. Both begin with the words, "I believe in God, the Father Almighty..."

Try reciting it under your breath now. Keep going.

What is the last line before you say, "Amen"?

That's right — "I believe in life everlasting."

Do you? Do you believe that we are designed and invited to live forever with God, in perfect joy? Do you believe that if Jesus came back today (or if He came for you personally), you would be headed to heaven, no questions asked?

What does the Catholic Church teach about the final judgment? What do you know about heaven, hell, and purgatory? Revelation often makes people think, talk, and debate about the end of time, but rarely do people know the "other places" in Scripture that talk about the "last" things.

We are going to take a brief look at heaven, hell, and purgatory and some of the verses and *Catechism* references that refer to each.

### HEAVEN: OUR HOME

Heaven is eternal joy — our natural selves, the way that we were intended by God to be. If we die with our wills turned toward God and His grace in our souls, then we will be united with Him for all eternity. We call this "heaven." Heaven is not as much a "where" as a "Who" and a "what." In heaven, our heart's deepest longing is satisfied in God. According to St. Paul, we will be joined with the saints and angels and see God "face to face" (see 1 Corinthians 13:12).

We do not become angels in heaven because we are not angels. We are human beings. God, as the perfect good, the perfect knowledge, and the perfect love, gives us our fill of each. Read and re-read 1 Corinthians 2:9. Pray it. Commit it to memory.

God wants everyone to be in heaven. He wants it so much that He died on the Cross in order that we may be with Him. The only thing keeping us from heaven would be us. We can change that any time we want by giving ourselves completely to the Lord of heaven and earth.

Check out these verses and *Catechism* references: Genesis 2:2-4; 1 Kings 8:22-23; Isaiah 63:8, 24:4; Psalms 24, 114, 142; Revelation 21:10; CCC 32, 1821, 2053, 2796.

### PURGATORY: A REALITY

Many non-Catholics do not believe in purgatory because they believe it has no basis in Scripture. In fact, there are several biblical passages that support the doctrine of purgatory.

It is true that the word "purgatory" is not mentioned in Scripture. (Many theological terms that all Christians accept are not found in the Bible, either: "Trinity," for example.) The verb *purge* comes from a Latin term meaning "to purify." So purgatory is a state of cleansing in which our souls are purified from sin.

As Revelation 21:27 clearly teaches that "nothing unclean will enter heaven." Likewise, in 1 Corinthians 13:15, St. Paul states that "if someone's work is burned up, that one will suffer loss; the person will be saved, but only as through fire." Clearly, the "fire" mentioned here is purgatory. St. Paul cannot refer to hell because he says that the "person will be saved." There is no salvation for those in hell.

Jesus Himself teaches us that some sins can be forgiven in the "next world," as we hear in Matthew 12:32 and elsewhere (1 Peter 3:18-20, 4:6). St. Paul prayed for the dead, too (1 Timothy 1:16-18). In addition, there is a passage in 2 Maccabees 12:44-46

### LEADER'S NOTE

#### Where Do We Go From Here? Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory

While it is true that teens don't think about death as often as adults, they are utterly intrigued by "what comes next." To get the most out of this section, schedule a separate Bible study, utilizing the listed Scriptures as your guide. Be sure to use relevant articles from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, as well.

As you approach this topic, be aware of your tone and presentation. Many teens, though intrigued by it, still get apprehensive when discussing topics such as death, judgment, and eternal life. Often, they are not only concerned about their own souls but also about the souls of certain family members and friends who are "far from God." Be mindful of the potential emotions running through their hearts and the life-altering questions running through their minds. Don't allow yourself to be so focused on catechesis that you forget to be pastoral with this subject. Scripture is clear in regards to heaven, hell, and purgatory; we need only lean on it.



which clearly speaks of the existence of purgatory. The real question, then, isn't "Where is purgatory found in the Bible?" but "Why does there need to be a purgatory at all?"

God is perfect holiness (Isaiah 6:3). We are called to be perfectly holy (Matthew 5:48; 1 Peter 1:5-6). Without perfect holiness, we cannot see God in heaven (Hebrews 12:14). Purgatory is meant for our cleansing and sanctification (Hebrews 12:11). All discipline and affliction leads us closer to God, if we let it (Romans 5:3-5; James 1:2).

Christ accomplished our justification by dying on the Cross. But the Bible teaches us that we are made holy over time (the process of sanctification), and this process involves suffering. Purgatory is just the final stage of sanctification for those in need of purification prior to entering the perfect and eternal banquet of heaven.

Check out these verses and Catechism references: 2 Samuel 12:13-14; 2 Maccabees 12:44-46; Hebrews 12:31; Corinthians 3:15; 2 Timothy 1:16-18; Revelation 21:17; CCC 1030-32, 1472

#### WHY THE HELL?

As much as heaven is the fulfillment of all goodness, knowledge, and love, hell is the opposite. When we die, our wills are set. We have freely chosen in this life whether we want to be with God for all eternity.

We may think during this life that we don't need God, that we have the ability to be happy on our own, know things on our own, or be good to others on our own. When confronted by God, those who are destined for hell cannot accept that all of those abilities come from God.

hell is the absence of God and His love. Hell is a choice on our part. If we choose to live without Him in this life on earth (showing Him that we want nothing to do with His mercy or His life), He will not force us to live with Him for eternal life in heaven. Again, hell is our choice.

Those souls in hell are eternally removed from God. There is no way for them to know His love or anything about His plan. They are eternally frustrated. There is no goodness, no sacrifice, no beauty, no joy. There is only selfishness, ignorance and hatred. The absence of God is so horrific we cannot even fathom it. We call it hell, but a simple word or mental picture cannot begin to do justice to this reality.

Check out these verses and Catechism references: Isaiah 33:1; Job 16-19; 2 Kings 12-16, 126; Matthew 22:12-14, 25:41-46; Luke 3:9, 16-17; John 15:6; CCC 1033-36, 1861

#### NOTES

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