

Handout Revelation Lesson 6

The four sections of Revelation following the Preamble in Chapter 1 are structured like the warning of four sevenfold curse-judgments for apostasy against the Sinai Covenant in Leviticus 26:18, 21, 24, and 28 that can be summarized as follows:

1. Judgment on false apostles (Rev Chapters 2-3)
2. Judgment on false Israel (Rev Chapters 4-7)
3. Judgment on the evil king and false prophets (Rev Chapters 8-14)
4. Judgment on the royal harlot (Rev Chapters 15-22).

The patterns of judgments in the first four letters also follow the curse-judgments for apostasy in Leviticus 26:18-28:

1. Ephesus: Judgment on the false apostles (Rev 2:1-7)
2. Smyrna: Judgment on false Israel (Rev 2:8-11)
3. Pergamum: Judgment on the evil king and false prophet (Rev 2:12-17)
4. Thyatira: Judgment on the harlot (Rev 2:18-29)

The New Covenant Treaty Format in the Letter to the Church at Philadelphia:

Preamble: *Here is the message of the holy and true One* (Rev 3:7)

Historical Prologue: *I know about your activities* (Rev 3: 8)

Ethical Stipulations: *Look, I am going to make the* (Rev 3:9)

Sanctions: *Because you have kept my commandments* (Rev 3:10)

Succession Arrangements: *I am coming soon ... let no one take your victor's crown away from you. Anyone who proves victorious I will make into a pillar in the sanctuary of my God, and it will stay there forever; I will inscribe on it the name of my God* (Rev 3:11-13)

The expression “those who dwell upon the land” appears twelve times in the Greek text of the Book of Revelation in reference to an apostate Israel (Rev 3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 11:10 twice; 13:8, 12,14 twice; 14:6; 17:2 and 8). In the Greek version of the Old Testament, it is the expression that appears in the historical books for rebellious, idolatrous pagans about to be destroyed and driven from the land (Num 32:17; 33:52, 55; Josh 7:9; 9:24; Judg 1:32; 2 Sam 5:6; 1 Chron 11:4; 22:18; Neh 9:24). It is the same expression that appears in the Books of the Prophets for a rebellious, idolatrous Israel about to receive God's divine judgment and to be driven from the land (Jer 1:14; 10:18; Ez 7:7; 36:17; Hos 4:1, 3; Joel 1:2, 14; 2:1; Zeph 1:18). Therefore, when the expression applies to the Israelites/Jews, it means they have become like idol-worshipping pagans who no longer deserve to dwell in the Holy Land God gave them.

The New Covenant Treaty Format in the Letter to the Church at Laodicea:

Preamble: *Here is the message of the Amen, the trustworthy, the true witness, the Principle of God's creation* (Rev 3:14)

Historical Prologue: *I know about your activities how you are neither cold nor hot ... but since you are neither hot nor cold, but only lukewarm, I will spit you out of my mouth* (Rev 3:15)

Ethical Stipulations: *I wish you were one or the other You say to yourself: I am rich, I have made a fortune and have everything I want, never realizing that you are wretchedly and pitifully poor, and blind and naked too* (Rev 3:16-17)

Sanctions: *I warn you buy from me the gold that has been tested in the fire to make you truly rich, and white robes to clothe you and hide your shameful nakedness, and ointment to put on your eyes to enable you to see* (Rev 3:18-20)

Succession Arrangements: *Anyone who proves victorious I will allow to share my throne, just as I have myself overcome and have taken my seat with my Father on his throne* (Rev 3:21-22)

Significant Old and New Testament references:

- *Do not make yourselves unclean by any of these practices, for it was by such things that the nations that I am driving out before you made themselves unclean. The country [land] has become unclean; hence I am about to punish it for its guilt, and the country [land] itself will vomit out its inhabitants ... If you make it unclean, will it not vomit you out as it vomited out the nations there before you? Yes, anyone who does any of these hateful things, whatever it may be, any person doing so, will be outlawed from his people; so keep my rules and do not observe any of the hateful laws which were in force before you came; then you will not be made unclean by them. I am Yahweh your God (Lev 18:24-28).*
- *When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then you must realize that it will soon be laid desolate ... For great misery will descend on the land and retribution on this people. They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive to every gentile country, and Jerusalem will be trampled down by the gentiles until their time is complete (Lk 21:20-24).*

The seven letters to the churches in the Roman Province of Asia follow the pattern of Salvation History from creation (the reference to the Tree of Life in Rev 2:7) to the end of the Old Covenant Church. The letter to Philadelphia covered the period of the last of the Davidic kings, who held the key of Davidic covenant, and their Vicars (pointing to Christ and His Vicar), to the destruction of Solomon's Temple, the Exile, the return from Exile, the rebuilding of the 2nd Temple, and the period of the Maccabees, which completes the Old Testament. The Letter to Laodicea alludes to the next period in Salvation History: the Advent of the Messiah, the apostasy of the Old Covenant Church, Jesus' Ascension to the Father (Rev 3:21), and the Last Days of the Old Covenant (AD 30-70). The church at Laodicea was overconfident in its self-sufficiency and wealth and yet blind to its actual spiritual poverty and nakedness. It is fitting imagery for Pharisaical Judaism of the first century (Luke 18:9-14). Jesus warns the church at Laodicea that she is about to be vomited out of the Land (the curse of Leviticus 18:24-28 and Jesus' judgment in Luke 21:24). This judgment parallels Israel being urged to repent and accept Christ in the Eucharistic meal by the Apostles in Acts, the letters of Paul, and the Catholic letters of the other Apostles and the bishops who succeeded them.

Among the images in the Book of Revelation, there is a collection of names and titles for Jesus that began in Chapter 1. Each reflects one aspect of Christ's character and His saving work in God's plan of redemption and salvation:

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| 1. faithful witness (1:5) | 12. Creator (4:11) |
| 2. firstborn from the dead (1:5) | 13. Lion of the Tribe of Judah (5:5) |
| 3. highest of earthly kings (1:5) | 14. Root of David (5:5) |
| 4. Alpha and Omega (1:8) | 15. the Lamb (5:6) |
| 5. Son of man (1:13) | 16. Shepherd (7:17) |
| 6. First and the Last (1:17) | 17. Christ [Christos = Anointed] (12:10) |
| 7. Living one (1:17) | 18. Faithful and True (19:11) |
| 8. Son of God (2:18) | 19. Word of God (19:16) |
| 9. the Amen (3:14) | 20. King of Kings (19:16) |
| 10. trustworthy true Witness (3:14) | 21. Lord of Lords (19:16) |
| 11. Source of Creation (3:14) | |

The names/titles form a pattern of three times seven: the three Persons of the Godhead times seven, the number symbolizing Spiritual Perfection.

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