

The Middle of the End

Week 51: December 17-23 — *Revelation 11-17*

BiAY.org | NT Reviews
99% Complete – 8 Days to Go

Helpful Resources

Progressive Revelation (p.33), Interpretative Challenges (p.71), Order of End Time Events (p.73)

Making Sense of It All

- The Big Picture

Imagine looking at one piece of a puzzle and trying to identify the entire picture. It is nearly impossible, yet that is the purpose of this review. In our reading this week, we observed the middle of the end, which is difficult to understand without seeing the bigger picture. So then, let's first look at "the picture on the puzzle box," then return to this week's pieces.

- The Picture on the Box — Overview of *Revelation*

Revelation 1-3 Jesus and the Seven Churches

Revelation 4, 5 God's Throne in Heaven, Scroll with Seven Seals, Worship of the Lamb

Revelation 6:1-8:1 Seven Seal Judgments — Four Horsemen, Voice of the Martyrs, Terror

Revelation 8-11 Seven Trumpets — Intense Suffering, Creation Ruined, Two Witnesses

Revelation 12-14 Woman, Dragon, and Child, Angelic War, Anti-Christ, and False Prophet

Revelation 15, 16 Seven Bowls — Creation Destroyed, Armageddon

Revelation 17-20 Fall of Babylon, Final Battle, End of Satan, Judgment of the Dead

Revelation 21, 22 New Heaven and Earth, Holy City, Marriage of the Lamb, Eternal Life

This week, we read *Revelation 11-17*, the middle of the end. Let's review what happened.

- New Characters

1. **Two Witnesses** (*11:1-19*): During the tribulation, two unidentified witnesses appear, pointing people to Christ. They perform miracles like Moses and Elijah. It is uncertain whether these witnesses are individuals or figurative representatives of the Church. Notice they are slain but resurrected, just as the martyrs who appear later in heaven.
2. **Woman, Dragon, and Child** (*12:1-17*): These three figures are symbols of Israel (woman), Satan (dragon), and Christ (child). Together, they fulfill the prophecy of the Promised Seed, who would defeat the serpent of old forever (*Gen. 3:15*).
3. **Two Beasts** (*13:1-18*): The two beasts represent the rise of the Anti-Christ and his master propagandist, the false prophet. Together, they rule over a confederacy of ten world leaders (districts) and force the world into a one world political, religious, and

economic system. Participants in this system will be marked by a sign. Those who don't accept the mark are persecuted and killed by the beasts.

4. **Mother of Harlots** (17:1-18): The one world system, which worships the Anti-Christ and kills the saints, is called Babylon the Great or the Mother of Harlots. The world drinks her abominations. Leaders corrupt themselves with her immoralities. However, the harlot is short-lived. She is abandoned by the nations and destroyed by the Lamb.
5. **The Reapers** (14:9-20): An angel announces doom on those who worship the beast or who have his mark on them. Then, the Lamb and his angels swing their sickles "to gather the grapes for the wine press." These grapes are to be pressed in God's wrath.

- New Judgments

The wrath of God is poured out in full in the seven bowl judgments (*Rev. 16:1-21*), which closely mirror the plagues of Egypt (*Ex. 7-11*). The wicked people of earth endure sores, bloody water, scorching heat, darkness, the loss of the Euphrates River, unprecedented earthquakes, and giant hailstones. The cities of earth are destroyed, islands and mountains disappear, and Babylon the Great (the one world system) is no more.

The people of God, who are delivered from these plagues, praise the Lord by singing the old Song of Moses (*Ex. 15:1-18*) and the new Song of the Lamb (*Rev. 15:1-8*). Once again, they will have witnessed God's incredible mercy amid His awesome judgments.

- Signs of the Times

While it does not appear that we are in the great tribulation period yet, there are signs that we are nearing it. World leaders constantly collaborate to build a one world political, economic, and religious system (what they call the New World Order). For example, there are currently 195 nations in the world. All but two of them are members of the United Nations, which continues to pass tighter controls over them all. The building blocks for global government is already here (*Rev. 13:1-3*).

World leaders are also quickly working towards a global economic system. For example, it won't be long before all independent monetary systems are combined into a global digital currency (called the Unicorn, or UNicoIn). Once earth's people transition to this digital currency, then tighter measures can be set in place to control them (*Rev. 13:16, 17*).

Finally, though there are dozens of religions in the world today, in the end times they will all be blended, or set aside, to worship the beast (*Rev. 13:3, 4, 8, 12-14*). Currently, though all religions have different beliefs, they are uniting for the cause of sustainable development, the UN's code for saving the planet from climate change disasters. Will this be the global religion?

The Bottom Line

The end is coming, just as God said, with judgment, destruction, and restoration.

Questions to Consider

1. What were your thoughts or impressions as you read *Revelation* this week?
2. What other signs of the times are you seeing? What should we do about them?
3. Knowing that the events of *Revelation* will take place, how now should we live?