
SERIES 2: JESUS REVEALED TO CHURCHES

BOOK 6:

Revelation 1-5

Book 2: *Revelation 1-5*

Introduction

In the overview of the book of Revelation, you saw that the Lord God gives this prophetic book to the servants of Jesus Messiah to know the timing of future events, that they might serve their Lord wisely.

Consider the major phases of Revelation as God reveals it to us:

Current Church Age (7 churches) → Birth Pains leading to Israel's Rebirth (7 seals unbroken) → Israel Witnesses to World (7 trumpets) → Antichrist Rules (7 bowls of judgment). In this booklet, we see the Church Age unfold as seven notable movements in the Church. However, as the Church Age draws to a close, the last two churches take very different paths. The last church chooses to serve its own *worldly interests*, seeking success in this life by abandoning Christ. Sadly, this church remains on earth as the time of birth pains and testing begins. The sixth church, with the faithful of the other churches as well, are caught up to be with the Lord. So, the people of the churches witness Jesus Christ in His resurrected glory, praising Him as He readies His Kingdom to restore peace on earth!

STEPS of a *Devoted Disciple*:

Your *Devotion* matters to the Lord. For, there is only one Lord and God, and He deserves creation's highest honor and praise. So, you were made to give yourself to the Lord God in loving devotion of heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30). In this same devotion to the Lord, Jesus Christ calls you to follow Him as His disciple. These short devotionals guide you in the Word to cultivate a heart devotion to the Lord as His disciple.

- First, **discover** what His life-giving Word has to say to you personally, being careful to write down your insights to share with others.
- Then, **discuss** His Word with those closest to you: your family, your friends, and in your home fellowship group (your spiritual family).
- Next, **dialogue** to compare views on key passages with a partner—either another disciple, or an older mentor or younger mentee.
- Finally, **develop** key skills as you abide in the Word by applying it to your life as you read the devotional, notes, and footnotes.

START HERE: *Humble Yourself in Prayer:*

Devote yourself to the Lord to hear and do His Will for you.

☐ *Do I want to humble myself under the Lordship of God by faith?*

☐ *Or, will I live as my own Lord, relying on my own understanding?*

PRAYER OF DEVOTION

Lord God, I devote my life to you today. I offer you my soul to live humbly under your Lordship; my mind to seek your will and Spirit; my heart to

love you and others; and, my strength to obey your Word and Will!
Amen.

Chapter 1: JESUS REVEALED: God's Gift to Servants

Revelation 1:1-8

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself
then *Write Insights to Share* with others.

a. Preview Revelation 1:1-8

Jesus Revealed: To His Servants. God reveals Jesus Christ first to His servants to show them the kingdom future which will soon take place in Him! So, read Revelation 1:1-8 to see the prophetic purpose of God as it is revealed in the life of His Son, Jesus Christ, the Heir of the Kingdom future to soon take place!

First, be prepared to hear and understand the *blessed prophecy revealing Jesus Christ*. As His servants *read aloud* and *hear* God's coming purpose for God's coming future in Jesus Christ, they can act as the time *nears* (1:1-3). Then, find out that the coming *future is the inheritance of Jesus Christ*, who is the *firstborn of the dead* and the *ruler of earth's kings* (1:4-5). Finally, discover our place as His servants in this coming future, for we are *redeemed for God's family and kingdom* by the blood of Jesus Christ to *return with him as the clouds of heaven!* (1:5-8).

b. Prayerfully Read Revelation 1:1-8 and Write your insights to share

SEEING What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas	
LEARNING What does it mean? What is it teaching me?	
DOING	

What lesson can I apply to my life?	
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Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. *Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.*

Q1. Why does God give His prophetic purpose of the future by revealing His plan in Jesus Christ, His Son?

Q2: How do we become part of this coming Kingdom Family though Jesus Christ?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. *Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.*

Q1 What does God promise in this book? (Rev. 1:1-3)

1. Prophecy Revealing Jesus Christ: Soon Events. In the book of Revelation, God reveals His Son Jesus Mashiach through the events recorded in this book of prophecy. This book is *prophetic* because it is revelatory, given from the *heavenly* and *eternal* vantage of *heaven* rather than limited by earthly time. Instead, Revelation spans great stretches of earthly time as a countdown for the coming of Jesus Mashiach to rule on earth: seven churches; seven seals broken; seven

trumpets; seven bowls of wrath, all leading to the full revelation of Jesus!

Q2. What is God's future for Jesus Christ? (Rev. 1:4-5)

2. Future Inheritance of Jesus Christ: Firstborn of Dead. Jesus Christ (Mashiach) is God's Son and Heir, so the coming future His servants receive is the story of Jesus Mashiach taking possession of all in heaven and on earth, to the glory of His Father. Having completed His mission of *witness* as the Mashiach, Jesus is now the Firstborn of the *dead*, the Heir of God's coming future of a *resurrected people!* For, as Jesus Mashiach *overthrows* the power of

death once-for-all, He inherits an *eternal rule* over the “kings on earth” (5).

Q3. What place do we as His servants have in this coming future of Jesus Christ? (1:5-8)

3. Redeemed for God’s Family and Kingdom: Returns with Clouds. Most amazingly, this Heir of heaven and earth, Jesus Mashiach, “loves us” and so “frees us” from our sins by His blood! (5). So, we who are His servants have a place in His future Kingdom and Family, for He *blood redeems* His own family members as their Kinsman-Redeemer. And, brought near into His House, we serve our God and Father as *priests*, with the loyal intimacy of children honoring and serving their own dear Father. Having been redeemed and brought near to God, we will one

day *surround* Him as the *clouds of heaven*, reflecting His glorious power at His return to earth, to the *desolation of its people* who have long-denied and resisted His rule! (7)

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to **read** Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Revealing Jesus Mashiach: Heir of God's Kingdom Future. This book of Revelation will only terrify you if you do not yet bow in service to Jesus Mashiach as your Lord. For, God reveals Jesus Mashiach in all His soon-coming glory so that His servants might prepare themselves for His coming. So, if you are a servant of Jesus Mashiach, this perfectly-timed revealing of the Son of God should not only give you a certain hope, but it should fortify you to *suffer* for this coming Lord and to endure for your service to continue as the *tribulations of earth* transition into the *glories of His Kingdom!* First, see your Lord Jesus as the One inheriting God's future Kingdom, ruling a people *never-to-be-touched* by death's sting (5), a glorious future which follows His own *resurrection from the dead*. Then, see yourself as one who *serves* your Lord Mashiach from the *holy and beloved place* of a "son" of His house (6) over the Kingdom He inherits as the Son of God (5). So, endure with Him this world's tribulations for the Kingdom, that you may share in His glorious rule to come!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree	

What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	
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Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/
mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

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Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

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(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

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Notes¹: Made us a Kingdom: Priests: God's original promise of Mashiach to His friend David foretold a *Kinsman-Redeemer* who would build a "house (hold)" for God (2 Sam. 7:13) and David (11), to establish a "throne" and rule an eternal "kingdom" (16). And, all these feats scaffold one upon the other. For, Jesus Mashiach suffers for sin to redeem us (14) into God's very Household, so that we as His household might *establish the throne of His Kingdom* through the word of our witness. So that in the end, we share in His Kingdom rule as *servants* who fulfill His Word of command in all the earth!

Added Notes: Coming with the Clouds: Seen by All Eyes. Because we have been *redeemed* by the precious blood of Jesus Mashiach, we are one day *clothed* in fine garments of *resurrection glory* (Rev. 19:14) and as purely glorious as the *crystal sea* surrounding the throne of God (Rev. 4:6). So, when we, as this bright and glorious *sea of His people* surround Him as *reflecting His power*, we are the *clouds of heaven's armies* which reveal the Lord Mashiach's surpassing power as He returns to Earth!

Chapter 2: KINGDOM TRIBULATION: Enduring for Jesus

Revelation 1:9-20

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View* God's Word for yourself then *Write* Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview Revelation 1:9-20

Kingdom Tribulation: Partnering in Jesus. The servants of Jesus Messiah are called to *partner and endure tribulation* for the sake of Jesus and His coming Kingdom. So, read Revelation 1:9-20 to discover the ways that the Lord supports His servants as they *partner* and *endure tribulation* to advance His Kingdom on earth! First, we who serve the Lord Jesus Mashiach are called to ***partner in the tribulation and kingdom in Jesus***, for the Lord is working even now through His churches to gather the lost into the safety of His Kingdom through our Gospel witness amidst great opposition! (1:9). But Jesus is not absent but walks among us. So, the Lord opens the eyes of His witness John to ***see One like a Son of Man*** but ***glorified*** (1:10-16). Finally, our ***Lord of Life*** gives us a ***letter*** through His servant John which helps us *time* our works as His Kingdom draws near (1:17-20).

b. Prayerfully Read Revelation 1:9-20 and Write your insights to share

SEEING What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas	
LEARNING What does it mean? What is it teaching me?	
DOING What lesson can I apply to my life?	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. *Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.*

Q1. How are we called to partner in Jesus for the Kingdom of God?

Q2: What does Jesus reveal about Himself that comforts you in your labor for him?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. *Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.*

Q1. How are we called to live as servants in our Lord? (Rev. 1:9)

1. Partnering in the tribulation and kingdom: in Jesus. As servants, we are *in Jesus*, whose Lordship shapes our lives and experiences in this world. Because we are *in Jesus*, we are *tested* in the world by tribulations and afflictions, for this *ungodly world and its people* are determined to deny the truth of God to live in lawless rebellion. But, by *testifying* of the Lord Jesus Christ and His Gospel, we advance His Kingdom as our lost brothers and sisters *find life* in Jesus!

Q2. How does Jesus reveal Himself as the One who walks among us? (1:10-16)

2. Seeing One like a Son of Man: Glorified. Jesus is revealed to John as one *like a Son of Man* (13), that is, taking the *form* of a human like us. However, He is *like us* in his humanity, but he is not fully like us, for we as the *sons of man* are clothed in weak flesh. Now, this Jesus is revealed to John in the *glory of His resurrection from the dead* (18). And, it is this *glorified Son of Man* who now walks among us to support us. In perfect wisdom and purity and with the *clearest vision and judgment* (14), our Lord guides us. And, having overcome all this world's *opposition* by His witness, and speaking the Word of God in power, He advances His Kingdom! (15)

Q3. How does our Lord help us know the unfolding of His work?
(1:17-20)

3. Letter from Lord of Life: Kingdom Timing. The Lord Jesus reminds us that He is the Lord of Life, whose power *releases* the captives from Death and Hades (18). So, He has the power to advance His Kingdom to bring life to those *captivated by Death* in this dark world.

Thus, the Lord gives us this *letter* through John's *writings* so that we may know His plan to establish His Kingdom on earth. First, John writes of the *vision* of Jesus which He has seen, testifying that this letter is from the Lord Jesus himself. Then, Jesus commands John to record "those that are." Finally, ending with "those that are to take place after this" (19). So, we are to see these main *eras* of the kingdom. Starting with this *vision of Jesus*, there will be the existing movement of the churches, running from its first to its seventh phase. After the church age, a time of *testing will seize the earth and its people* (3:10).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to **read** Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Family Mission of Kingdom: Revealing Lord Jesus. As a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, you are called to join our Lord and His host of servants to bring His Kingdom of Life to this world *ensnared by death and Hades!* Our mission is no less than life over death, and we partner to rescue all our *family* who will share in the coming Kingdom of our Lord Jesus and its unfading glory! So, prepare yourself for this *kingdom mission* by knowing this: First, know that you are not alone, for we have been partnering to reveal *our Lord Jesus Christ* to this world across generations, distances, and *family cultures!* As the current age draw to a close, we are a host of saints who bear the name of Jesus! But, know that our opposition in this *ungodly world* and by its *dark master* has not lessened. Rather, as the day of our Lord draws near, the enemy has become desperately unrestrained, so the *tribulation* we face has also intensified. So, endure! For, know that the Lord Jesus in *his resurrection glory* walks among us now—first with His churches, then in the heat of the *tribulation* as His coming draws near. May the grace of our Lord sustain you in your *testing!*

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

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Notes²: One like a Son of Man: Recognizably Human.

When John sees Jesus, he describes him as “one like a son of man” (1:13). That is, he recognizes his *human form*.

However, this is not a human being clothed in *typically* weak flesh. This is Jesus resplendent in His *resurrected glory*, being the One who is “alive forevermore” (18). Interestingly, this glorious visage is *human* yet beyond human weakness, so John can only describe Him by comparison. His face is like the *sun*, his eyes like *fire*, and his voice like *the roar of many waters* (14-16). We cannot *stand* before such a Lord, but one day we will share his *resurrected glory*!

Added Notes: Write the Things that you have seen... Jesus gives us through John the main two phases of the Kingdom on earth. First, he instructs John to show us “those things that are” (19). That is, at the time of this vision, what was the existing reality of the Kingdom? It was of course the *seven golden lampstands* (12) among which Jesus was walking! That is, the current reality of the Kingdom at the time of John’s writing and continuing until its end is the Church Age. Once the Church Age is completed, then “those things that are to take place after this (Church Age)” will commence. Once the church is taken, the Antichrist is revealed and the time of testing begins! (2 Thess. 2:6-7).

Chapter 3: FIRST CHURCHES: Love and Testing

Revelation 2:1-11

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.*

a. Preview Revelation 2:1-11

Foundational Faith: Love and Faithfulness. Jesus Mashiah launches His Church age with His first churches, whom He give a *foundational faith*. So, read Revelation 2:1-11 to learn of the first lessons which the Lord Jesus gives to these early *servants* at the very dawn of the *seven churches*.

First, see how the *First Church of Ephesus both falls from and returns to its First Love, Jesus Mashiah himself*. As you hear the lessons to this church, understand that Ephesus corresponds with the Jewish Church, established by the *apostles* which disappeared in 70 CE with the fall of Jerusalem and re-emerged in the early 2000's with the revival of the Messianic Church (2:1-5). To this Church, Jesus promises the most *fundamental treasure* given to His saints, who are ***rewarded by Fruitful Life in Paradise***. For, Jesus establishes His Kingdom to *recover the* fruitful garden paradise our first parents *lost* by their unbelief and sin (2:6-8). Finally, see that the Lord Jesus requires His *saints and churches to be faithful in testing to be crowned by Life*. For, the churches and their saints are meant to inherit the Kingdom with Jesus, so it is only fitting that they are *crowned with life* as the affirming seal of their future rule (2:9-11).

*b. Prayerfully **Read Revelation 2:1-11** and **Write** your insights to share*

SEEING What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas	
LEARNING What does it mean? What is it teaching me?	
DOING What lesson can I apply to my life?	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why does the Lord Jesus urge the church of Ephesus to return to their first love?

Q2: Why is it important that we remain *faithful* to the Lord even unto death?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 How did the first church of Ephesus fall and then return?
(Rev. 2:1-5)

1. Fallen from/ Returning to First Love: The first Church of Ephesus reveals a *danger inherent* in our communal life together in Christ. Charged with establishing Messiah's church on earth, the *first church at Jerusalem*, the church founded by the Jewish apostles, worked hard to *test truth and falsehood* (2), to endure, and to bear witness to His name (3). But, in this busy work of the church, its people *abandoned* their *first love* for Jesus. Instead, a *loving devotion* to the Lord should be the heartbeat of their *faithful service*. So, when the Jewish Church revived in the last days, they *returned* to the Lord as their Kinsman-Redeemer, appealing to Israel to return to their *Firstborn Son, the one rightfully deserving of their love* (Zech. 12:10).

Q2. What is the reward which Jesus promise His churches that overcome the world? (Rev. 2:6-8)

2. Rewarded by Fruitful Life: In Paradise. In the Lord God's design for humanity, *life* has always been the perfect target and destination for man. For, the heavens and the earth were created for man's "good"—the perpetuation of his life on earth. And, the Lord God placed our first parents in His garden to *share* a holy life with them (Gen. 1:3). So, the best promise that the Lord gives His first churches is the promise of a *restored life* to be shared with the Lord God in His fruitful paradise (7).

Q3. How does Jesus expect His Church to respond to tribulation?
(Rev. 2:9-11)

3. Faithful in Testing: Crowned with Life. Because Jesus Mashiach calls us as His servants to *walk by faith* and not by sight, He calls us to *see* our tribulations through His Kingdom perspective. So, the *Persecuted Church of Smyrna*, which endured ten *rules* of hostile Caesars, were *instructed* to view themselves in the Lord's reality as being *rich*, though on this earth they were *tested, impoverished, and slandered* (9). And, by *being faithful* to death's end, they would receive the *crown of life*—the glorious reward of His resurrection which they share along with his sacrifice and death.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Foundational Faith: First Churches. When the Lord Jesus established His first churches, He ensured that they were established on a foundational faith which would be passed on across the Church Age.

To *Ephesus*, the Lord Jesus rebuked their *fall* from their *first love of Him*, and urged them to *return* to this first love (5). As a *marriage* without love is a mere shell, so a church abandoning its first love for Jesus cannot stand. So, Ephesus, standing for the first *Jewish Church*, had its “lampstand removed” with the fall of Jerusalem and the scattering of the Jewish people in 70CE, only to see its re-emergence and *recovery* of its *first love* in the Messianic Jewish Church in recent times.

To *Smyrna*, Jesus encouraged this *greatly tested church* to remain *faithful to Him unto death* (10). So, this persecuted Church, tested across the *ten days* of the ten hostile Roman Caesars, remained faithful for more than two centuries, across generations of faithful disciples.

Thus, *love* and *faithfulness* are the foundations of our communal lives with the Lord, for these *crown us with His fruitful life of grace and qualifying us for a place in His eternal Kingdom!*

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question ! Differ
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
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Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

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What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

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Key lesson to learn?

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Notes³: Notes: First Love: The first church was built on the witness of the *apostles* of Jesus, men who affirmed their *love* for the Lord by laying down their own lives to *shepherd His sheep* (Jn. 21:17). But, as the Jewish Church in Jerusalem was busy with building the church and testing between the *true* and the *false* (2:2), they *abandoned* their first life—finding that it had no bearing on their work of the church. Mercifully, the Lord displaced and replanted this Jewish Church (5) in the last days, when the *witness* of this first church to Israel has *rekindled* its zeal and love for their Lord Mashiach, their promised Kinsman-Redeemer.

Added Notes: Faithful unto Death: Crown of Life: The Church of Smyrna, that is, the *Persecuted Church*, endured the Roman persecution for generations of believers. Tested and impoverished, the Lord affirmed that they were in reality *rich* and *crowned with life* (2:10), for they showed all the churches that we must be *faithful to the Lord unto death*. That is, our sacrificial devotion to the Lord should encompass the entirety of our lives, for we are to love the Lord with our whole being! (Mk. 12:30).

Chapter 4: FLESH-HINDERED CHURCHES: Tempted by Unfaithfulness **Revelation 2: 12-29**

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.*

a. Preview **Revelation 2: 12-29**

Flesh-hindered Churches: Tempted by Unfaithfulness. As the external opposition to the Church of Jesus Christ subsided, the next set of Churches faced threats from within, through the fleshly practices of their own people. So, read Revelation 2:12-29 to see how the Churches of Pergamum—the *Orthodox Christian movement*--and Thyatira—the Roman Catholic movement—were tested from within!

First, consider that *fleshly teaching led to weakened unfaithfulness* in the Orthodox Church. Within the church, there were teachers that resembled Balaam whose idolatrous teachings weakened the faith of many (2:12-15). But the Lord reminds these churches that He is the **Son of God with fiery eyes and feet of bronze** – He sees both their against *false teachers* yet also supports their faithful witness of His name (2:16-18). Finally, in the church of Thyatira, *fleshly leaders stole devotion from the Lord*. That is, the church and its teachers began to make a name for themselves, which would lead many to stumble (2:19-28).

*b. Prayerfully **Read Revelation 2: 12-29** and **Write** your insights to share*

SEEING What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas	
LEARNING What does it mean? What is it teaching me?	
DOING What lesson can I apply to my life?	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How do *fleshly practices* weaken how the churches relate to the Lord Jesus?

Q2: How does Jesus Christ respond to the *fleshly practices* of His churches?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 How does fleshly teaching affect the faith of people? (Rev. 2:12-15)

1. Fleshly Teaching: Weakened Unfaithfulness. In the Church of Pergamum, which refers to the Orthodox movement of the Church, witnesses like Antipas were still giving up their lives for their faith. However, *fleshly teachers* also arose like Balaam, the false prophet. For, they used familiar spiritual forms to serve *fleshly purposes*. In this way, the *spiritual food* they fed their people was really *sacrificed to worldly idols* and not suitable for building up faith. As a result, the people became guilty of “immorality”—devoting themselves to illegitimate idols rather than to God.

Q2. How does the Son of God reveal Himself to *churches struggling with fleshly practices*? (Rev. 2:16-18)

2. Son of God: Fiery Eyes and Feet of Bronze. To the people of his churches struggling against the flesh, Jesus reminds them that He is the *Son of God* who has a spiritual authority and life. As the Son of God, his eyes are like fire—he can see beyond the *outward appearance* to the *fleshly motives* of the heart. He sees the damage which false teaching *produces* and the idolatrous immorality that results. But He is also *present in power* in their faithful witness and service.

Q3. How do *fleshly leaders* weaken the church? (Rev. 2:19-28)

3. Fleshly Leaders: Stealing Devotion. In the church of *Thyatira*, the *Roman Catholic Church* forms from the *broadier Orthodox Church*. And, the Son of God sees the spiritual fruit of *love, faith, and service* in its people. However, this church also faces a *fleshly threat* as its spiritual leaders set out to *make a name for themselves*. As the Church, the *people of God* are simply referred to as the “Bride” of Christ. However, spiritual leaders who seek to make a name apart from Jesus are labelled as *Jezebel*, the unfaithful woman. So, *fleshly leaders* “seduce” God’s people in this church to divide their devotion between the Church and its Lord. Those who devote themselves to this human institution will enter the time of great testing.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Fleshly Churches: Weakened by the World. The people of Jesus Mashiach are called to live by faith, to know and serve their Lord according to the *truth of His Word* that commands a devotion to Him and His Kingdom, though they *remain hidden* to the world's eyes and its rewards. So, Jesus Mashiach reminds His churches that He is the *Son of God*, the all-power of heaven who sees with *eyes of fire* and walks among them and their *own fiery trials*. Yet, as the churches move from their early movements to the more settled *Orthodox* and *Roman Catholic* movements, some in the churches grow discontent with the *hidden realities of the Kingdom*. Instead, they seek to approach the Kingdom with fleshly eyes and abilities to gain *human* and *worldly benefits*.

So, learn the lessons of the *fleshly churches*. You must forsake all hope of *fleshly advantage* or worldly benefit for the sake of Jesus Mashiach and His Kingdom (Gal. 2:20; Luke 9:23-25). Rather, set your way to honor the Son of God, whose power you will know by faith. Knowing that He sees you with fiery vision and walks with you through the hot crucible of your trials!

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Notes⁴: Food sacrificed to Idols and Sexual Immorality:

Balaam's trickery disguised pagan offerings in the form of Hebrew altars for sacrifice. In this way, the flesh will use the *package* of faith to smuggle in false food devoted to the flesh or worldly purposes. So, social standing, academic or theological imaginings, religious institutions, financial gain, or political power will all *drain teaching of any spiritual nourishment*, suiting it only for this world and its purposes. Spiritual teaching comes at a cost because it bears the Lord's cross of sacrifice.

Added Notes: Thrown into Tribulation: When the church replaces Jesus as the focus of worship and devotion, it becomes the worst case of unfaithfulness. In fact, such spiritual *harlotry* forms into the true villain opposed to Jesus Christ. Not the Antichrist, who is but a mere trifle. But, the whoring *humanistic religion* of Babylon. For, *human religion* and its need for a *fleshly self-righteousness* is the unbelieving root of all sin (Gen. 3:5). So, those who "commit adultery" with this *false Jezebel* will be left behind at the Lord's coming to go through "great tribulation" with the rest of the world (Rev. 2:22).

Chapter 5: FALLEN ASLEEP AND FAITHFUL CHURCHES: Dead or Serving *Revelation 3: 1-13*

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.*

a. Preview *Revelation 3:1-13*

Fallen Asleep and Faithful Churches: Dead or Serving. Jesus Christ walks among His churches and tests them to determine their spiritual health or weakness. So, read Revelation 3:1-13 to see the difference between a spiritually *dying* church and a *healthy and fruitful* church. Previously, we saw that *fleshly* teachings or leadership will weaken the church. Now, we see the result of a *fleshly* practice is a self-justifying religion which calls itself “alive” but is dead.

First, see that churches may have gained *earthly recognition* but may be hindered by *spiritual weakness* (3:1-3). In contrast, the faithful church beholds the *holy and true Lord opens the doors of David's Kingdom*, for they recognize that they are weak in themselves but have a powerful Lord who holds the key (3:4-7).

Finally, notice the Lord's promise to this church, that their *faithful service delivers from the testing* that comes upon the whole world (3:8-13).

b. Prayerfully **Read Revelation 3:1-13** and **Write** your insights to share

SEEING What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas	
LEARNING What does it mean? What is it teaching me?	
DOING What lesson can I apply to my life?	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. *Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.*

Q1. What was causing the Church at Sardis to *fall asleep* and fall into *deadness*?

Q2: How was the Church at Philadelphia proving itself to be faithful to the Lord?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 What did Jesus point out as a weakness of this Church at Sardis? (Revelation 3:1-3)

1. Earthly Recognition but spiritual weakness: The Protestant Church movement. As the churches entered the modern age, the spirit of *humanism* drew the focus of this reformation church to the affairs of man. Sadly, a *human reputation* of spiritual life masked a deeper *deadness* (3:1). The church was *falling asleep* (3) by forgetting the *unchanging truths of the spiritual kingdom* and the demands of its risen Lord. These worshippers needed the “white garments” of the *righteous life of Jesus* rather than the academic life achieved by their *fleshly theology*.

Q2. How does the *faithful church at Philadelphia see Jesus Christ?* (Revelation 3:4-7)

2. Holy and true Lord opens doors of Kingdom: Key of David.

Seeing the *dangers of elevating human religion*, the *outreaching Church of Philadelphia* focused on its mission to make Jesus known. So, the Lord Jesus reveals Himself to this church as the One who is precious in his “holiness” and “true” as revealed in His Gospel (3:7). This simple church knew Jesus in these two ways, as it *kept His Words* to share in his holiness, and as it testified of His truth as revealed by His Gospel. To this simple church, Jesus opened a *door for the Kingdom* which no one was and is able to shut, even to this day!

Q3. What does the Lord Jesus Christ promise to His faithful servants of this church? (Revelation 3:8-13)

3. Faithful service delivers from Testing: Taken out of worldwide testing. This sixth, second-to-the-last of the Churches, labors in the last days before the return of Jesus Christ. So, to these simple servants, Jesus “opens a door” for service that no one shuts. In their simplicity, this church testified of Jesus to the Jewish people (9), so the Lord Jesus Christ affirms their word of testimony by *keeping them out of the world-wide trial* to soon fall on humanity (10). For, the Lord himself returns in the clouds to take this church and all the saints who belong to him (1 Thess. 4:16-17).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Sleep or Service: Opening the Kingdom. Before the seventh, rejected Church, two modern churches rise up before the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. For, as the seven churches rise up and spread their *movements* through the earth, the countdown until the Lord's return approaches the last one.

The Church of Sardis was birthed in the *great European age of humanism*, which shifted ancient thinking to a *empirical*, scientific view of reality. However, this church's humanistic founders trusted in our *human ability* to know the Word and matters of God, which became an area of religious discussion. Like the Pharisees before them, exalting *human understanding* weakened the Word of God and its powerful authority. So, many in this movement *slept, clinging to human reputation and teachings*.

However, the Church of Philadelphia was admittedly "weak" with "little power" (8). For that reason, Jesus entrusts to them an "open door" for the Kingdom's progress—to testify of Jesus to even the Jews. To these servants, Jesus says, "I am coming soon" (11)!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question ! Differ
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁵: Reputation of Being Alive but Dead: Self-Righteousness. The self-proclaimed “Reformation” or “Revival” Church of the Protestant Era was confident in its religious vitality. However, the Lord sees that they lack the spiritual substance that comes with simple belief and obedience.

Added Notes: Little Power: When we are weak, then we can be strong in the Lord Jesus. For this reason, Paul “boasted” in His weakness because the weaker we are, the more the Lord is glorified by displaying His glorious power through unworthy vessels (2 Corinthians 3:5-6; 4:7).

Chapter 6: LUKEWARM CHURCH: Rich in World without Christ

Revelation 3:14-22

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.*

a. Preview **Revelation 3:14-22**

Lukewarm Church: Rich in World without Christ. The Last Church bears the fruit of *human-centered religion*, for it is rich in worldly advantages but tragically without Christ Himself, who has been shut *outside* this church. So, read Revelation 3:14-22 as a cautionary lesson to discover how a community can abandon *the spiritual riches* of Christ and His Kingdom for the fleeting *prosperity* of the world.

First, see that the Lord Himself testifies against this church as the ***faithful and true witness supported by the testimony of Churches***. Jesus is the final “Amen,” the affirmation of the centuries’ long testimony of His churches, but this last church *testifies only of itself* (3:14). For, this ***false church is worldly rich but cut off from Christ***. Because Jesus is *outside* the Church, He expels this church from His Body (3:15-19). But the ***faithful Lord appeals to individual Hearts*** to repent, even though the entirety of this *Prosperity Church* movement is rejected (3:20-21).

*b. Prayerfully **Read Revelation 3:14-22** and **Write** your insights to share*

SEEING What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas	
LEARNING What does it mean? What is it teaching me?	
DOING What lesson can I apply to my life?	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. What does it mean for this church to be *lukewarm*, near “hot” nor “cold”?

Q2: What does this Church celebrate and boast in? How did it come to this place, do you think?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 How does Jesus Christ reveal Himself to this lukewarm church? (Revelation 3:14)

1. Faithful and True Witness: Amen affirms testimony of Churches. Jesus Christ reveals Himself to this *final church as the* “Amen,” the “faithful and true witness” (14). That is, in every single church from its very beginning has preached Jesus Christ as the “true witness” from God to bring eternal life, to which Jesus Himself affirms, “Amen.” However, this last church has *preached* its own welfare and prosperity, seeking to “create” a different spiritual reality than what was handed down. But only Jesus is the “beginning” of God’s creative work, no other.

Q2. Why does this Church consider itself as successful?
(Revelation 3:15-19)

2. Worldly Rich but cut off from Christ: Truly Pitiabile. This final church and its people has so *absorbed* the fleshly view of the world and its human-centered thinking, that it is convinced that it is “prosperous” and needs “nothing,” not even Jesus Christ himself nor the spiritual life that He brings (3:17). So, Jesus rebukes this church to show that in reality, they have nothing: no *faith*, so they must go through “fire” to be refined (18); no *righteous life of the Spirit*, for they are still in *naked flesh* without the Spirit, so they should seek the *righteousness* only Jesus supplies by His redemption; and, no Spirit of God, so they need to be reborn, anointed by the Spirit’s baptism (19).

Q3. How does our Faithful Lord approach the people of this Church? (Revelation 3:20-21)

3. Faithful Lord appeals to Individual Hearts. The Lord Jesus has only compassion for the people of this church, who have nothing and are about to be cast out of the Churches into the world-wide tribulation coming upon the world. So, Jesus approaches individuals in the Church, imploring them to “open the door” of their hearts to let him in. So, He knocks and offers Himself to individual hearts, that some might awaken and realize that Jesus Christ is worth far more than the earthly prosperity—whether monetary or religious—which they’ve accumulated.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to **read** Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

The Last Church: A Cautionary Tale. If you are reading of this Last Church, you are already in the waning days of the Church Age. Perhaps you may even come from this *Worldly Church* and have suddenly come to realize that Christ's spiritual reality has come upon you. You and your people have sided with the world. Now, you are left with the world to face the *testing* which will force your choice. Will you now choose Jesus as your Lord and Christ? Or, will you stay with the world, and its coming world leader, the Antichrist? Will you humble yourself before the true God of heaven and earth? Or, will you honor with your life and choices the false god of this world, Satan?

This final church of Laodicea was seduced by this world's allure. But now, its people with the rest of the world enter the new phase of history, the time of *spiritual reality*. No longer will human fictions be the only voice defining reality. Now, the Words of Christ have proven to be "faithful and true" (3:14). Will you now, at long last, finally listen to Him? Then, hear His "knock" on the door of your heart. Open the door, and welcome the Lord into your life for a time of fellowship!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁶: Lukewarm: Neither hot nor cold. This last church is lukewarm because it is neither “hot” with life nor completely “cold” in death. It is neither *reborn by the Spirit’s fire* nor is it as “cold” as those idolators who do not name Christ. Rather, this church calls itself Christian yet has *shut Christ out of its church-life*.

Added Notes: Spit out of Christ’s Mouth: All churches through the centuries have been members of the Body of Christ, naming Him as their Lord. While many struggled with *flesbly temptations*, it was an undisputed truth that the Church belonged to Christ, the Church’s Lord, and the Church gathered the people belonging to Christ. However, this *Christless Church* has no place in the community of churches, for it neither claims Christ as its Lord nor does it view its Church life and advances as ever belonging to Christ. Rather, the church has *achieved a level of* religious advancement by its own *progress* and *enlightened* choices to follow the world lockstep. So, it is left behind when the Lord Jesus gathers his people, banished to the earth as the world enters testing.

Chapter 7: THRONE IN HEAVEN: Gathered Family

Revelation 4:1-6a

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View* God's Word for yourself then **Write** Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview **Revelation 4:1-6a**

Throne in Heaven: Gathered Family. Once Jesus Christ gathers His churches to Himself, ending the Church Age, He now gathers His people to their glorious home in the presence of the Father. So, read Revelation 4:1-6a to witness our glorious family reunion, the first thing we will experience as we enter our glorious and eternal future!

First, see ***God's heavenly throne of life and peace*** as we gaze upon Him who is all life and reality for us, our Most High God and Heavenly Father (Rev. 4:1-3)! Then, see how we take our place in this *heavenly kingdom, with our **twenty-four family elders enthroned*** near the very throne of God (Rev. 4:4)! Then, consider the entirety of God's holy people, now glorified, with the ***seven Spirits of God and His Holy Sea*** of glorified saints spread out before Him as the innumerable *sands of the seashore and the stars of heaven* (Rev. 4:5-6)

*b. Prayerfully **Read Revelation 4:1-6a** and **Write** your insights to share*

SEEING What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas	
LEARNING What does it mean? What is it teaching me?	
DOING What lesson can I apply to my life?	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why is God, seated on His glorious throne, the first thing we see when we enter heaven?

Q2: What is our place in the Heavenly reality, and what does this tell you of God's plan for us in Christ?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. What is our first view of Heaven? Why? (Revelation 4:1-3)

1. God's heavenly throne: Life and Peace. It is fitting that our first view of heaven is the throne and the One seated on the throne, for all in heaven and earth depend on the will of God to exist. So, God has the appearance of *red stone*, carnelian and jasper, representing *life-blood*, for God is the source of life for all things. And, around God wraps an emerald rainbow, to show again that God is the source of all life and fruitfulness. Yet, in the midst of His great judgment, He remembers His mercy.

Q2. What place do we occupy in Heaven, and what does this indicate of God's plan for our family? (Revelation 4:4)

2. Twenty-four family elders enthroned: It is not surprising that at the center of Heaven is the throne of God. But, remarkably, around this seat of all-power gather twenty-four thrones, upon which are seated our *family elders*. They are so *boldly placed* because they are *elders* of His family, the family brought near to God in the Beloved. So, these family elders are clothed in white garments to share in the Son of God's righteousness and wear golden crowns, sharing in His all-encompassing authority.

Q3. Where are God's people in this heavenly family reunion? (Revelation 4:5-6)

3. Seven Spirits of God and His Holy Sea: Glorified Saints. As the holy presence of God breaks forth as *lightning* before His throne, God beholds before Him the *holy fire* of His One Spirit, *burning as seven torches of flame*, forever burning as heaven's *sacrificial fire* of worship. For, before this fire are a sea of God's *worshippers*, His holy people glorified like a pure *sea of glass, like crystal* to reflect perfectly the *righteous glory of God*. At rest, this *host of heaven* is a vast sea. Soon to be at war, this host becomes the *clouds of heaven* to follow their Lord of Hosts into *righteous battle*.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Family at Home: In God's presence. When you open your eyes and see the throne of God in heaven, you will know that you are finally home with the Family! You will understand your time on earth was mere wandering through a *land* far from home, but now you are forever home!

To outsiders, this is a fearful scene, a terrible concentration of fire and judgment, with the *holy presence of God* consuming all that doesn't belong. But, to us, His family, we draw near only in Christ, the Beloved. Clothed in the white garments of Christ's blood-bought righteousness, we gather in the most holy of places without fear, in perfect peace and acceptance.

And, to stand for us, twenty-four of our family elders surround God Himself, His faithful sons brought near to His throne to know the Father's will.

Finally, our *family* presents itself to the Father as a great and crystal sea filling His view, His heavenly hosts over which He rules as their Lord.

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁷: Throne of God: The most sacred and fundamental aspect of heaven is the *throne of God*, which is placed at the Head of all in heaven and earth, invested with all authority and power from the very *beginning*. God sits on His throne in crimson *majesty*, And, crowning His throne are twenty-four thrones upon which sit His sons, the *heads* of His heavenly family.

Added Notes: Sea of Glass: The Lord of Host does not preside over a multitude of strangers. Rather, the Host of Heaven, the Lord's formidable and unstoppable army (Joel 2:2), consists of His Family, His holy people, arrayed in their ranks and families as the *body arranged by God Himself*. A family formed through the generations; a body tested to *do God's will perfectly by faith* in the harsh conditions of a rebellious earth. These who fulfilled God's will in their weak flesh now advance His purposes in the glory of their resurrected power!

Chapter 8: WORTHY LORD GOD: Created All Things

Revelation 4:6b-11

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself
then *Write Insights to Share* with others.

a. Preview Revelation 4:6b-11

Worthy Lord God: Worshipped as Creator. Heaven focuses on God and His glorious throne at the head and center of heaven and earth, so it is right that true worship of the Lord God of heaven begins in heavenly glory! So, read Revelation 4:6b-11 to see how all of heaven, representing all creation, glorifies the Lord God as its worthy Creator!

First, the great ***angelic creatures praise the holy Lord God.***

Representing all that is living, each creature depicts the creatures of great authority: the *lion over all the wild creatures*; the *ox* over all creatures of the fields; the *man* over all *humanity*; and, the *eagle* over the flying creatures of the heavens (4:6-8). Responding to this great praise of the *holy Lord God Almighty*, the ***family elders fall before throne in worship.*** They worship the eternally living One, in whose life they share and depend (4:9-10). So, they affirm in their worship the fundamental nature of God's glory—the ***Lord God is Worthy as Creator of all things*** (4:10-11)

*b. Prayerfully **Revelation 4:6b-11** and **Write** your insights to share*

SEEING What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas	
LEARNING What does it mean? What is it teaching me?	
DOING What lesson can I apply to my life?	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. *Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.*

Q1. For what do the creatures and the elders worship God? Why do they choose to worship God for this?

Q2: What do the human Elders reveal through their acts and words of worship about how they relate to God?

Step 3: Dialogue: *Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.*

Q1 What do the great angelic creatures do? (Revelation 4:6-8)

1. Angelic creatures praise the holy Lord God. In the very presence of the Lord God and His throne, the great angelic creatures worship God as “holy, holy, holy” (8). That is, the Lord God is holy and separate from His creatures, possessing a “holy” life of His own. And, He rules as the Lord God Almighty. Finally, the angelic beings worship God “who was and is and is to come” (8). God has existed from eternity, exists now, and will “come” to dwell among His people one day!

Q2. How do the *family elders* respond to this angelic praise?
(Revelation 4:9-10)

2. Family elders fall down before throne in worship: When the praise of God is proclaimed, the *family elders fall down* before the throne of God, showing that though they are called the “*sons of God*,” they are all the reason to be worshipfully subject to God, being like the Son of God who, “being in very nature of God” (6) did not grasp for *equality* but *emptied himself as a servant* (7). In this way, though glorified on thrones, these elders recognize that they are always *emptied* and *worshipfully honoring of the Father as God*.

Q3. For what do the elders worship God? (Revelation 4:10-11)

3. Lord God is worthy as creator of all things. The elders also *cast their crowns* before the throne of God, acknowledging that all the authority and power they have been granted is from the Lord God, for they serve as those *under authority*. They themselves also praise *their* Lord and God (11) for His place as the Head, the Creator whose “will” sustains the existence of all things! This makes Him worthy of all praise.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Our Worthy Lord and God: The natural response of creation to the resplendent glory of God is worship. Imagine worship beginning at the throne of God, given by the most powerful of created beings who have the capacity to see God and His fullness. Next, see the worship of those called to be close to God, to share His holiness. With the worship of these beings nearest the throne of power, we can see glory of God at its most direct form.

First, the worship of God's *covering angels* speaks for all the living in *heaven and on earth*, for they have the power and insight to experience God in the fullness of His glory. So, they worship the Lord God first for His *three-times repeated "holiness"*—for the Father is holy; God the Son is holy; and God the Spirit is holy. And, He is the Lord of all authority, the God of highest place, and the Almighty of all power. This one is self-existent in past, present, and coming future!

Second, the worship of God's holy "elders" speaks for God's own holy people. They speak as those having the most intimate relationship with "their" Lord and "their" God. His place even in His own family is that of "Lord"—the one whose *word of command* is irresistible; and "God," the source and Head of all things, especially their family. So, these Elders "cast down their crowns" to recognize that their place of *authority* is only in relation to their Lord and God. Only their Lord God is worthy of all "glory, honor, and power" (11). For, He is the only Self-existent creator!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
↓ Differ	
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁸: Four Living Creatures: These four living creatures have appeared before, notably in Ezekiel’s vision of the Lord (Ezekiel 1:5) as well as in Isaiah’s vision in the temple (Isaiah 6:2), in which they are called *seraphim*. These creatures are charged with proclaiming the “holiness” of God with a power that *shakes* the very foundations.

Added Notes: Worthy Creator: When the *elders fall down and worship God*, they proclaim His *worthiness* as their “Lord” and “God” (Rev. 4:11). The worthiness of God which gives him all rights is the truth that He “created all things” and that their very existence depends on His will. In this way, no creature is *self-existent*. All depend on the will of God to exist and be created.

Chapter 9: LION OF JUDAH CONQUERS: Kingdom's Lamb of God *Revelation 5:1-10*

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then *Write Insights to Share* with others.

a. Preview Revelation 5:1-10

Lion of Judah: Kingdom's Lamb of God. If the Kingdom of God comes as a family, then its Firstborn Heir, Messiah, has the right of redemption to establish the Kingdom by restoring His House. So, read Revelation 5:1-10 to see how all heaven and earth recognizes that the Lion of Judah is the Kingdom's only rightful Redeemer! First, ***all in Heaven and Earth unworthy to bring God's Kingdom***, for all creation is in bondage to the corrupting sin and darkness that has tainted reality from the beginning (Rev. 5:1-4; Rom. 8:21). The reason all in creation is unworthy to bring the Kingdom is that only the Lion of Judah, the Seed of David (2 Sam. 7:12-16), has been promised the Kingdom so is its only rightful Redeemer. So, only the ***Lion of Judah has power to bring the Kingdom of God*** (Rev. 5:5). But what is the power by which this Lion conquers to bring God's Kingdom? It is the power of resurrection, for the ***Lamb slain and exalted is Worthy to receive Kingdom*** (Rev. 5:7-10).

*b. Prayerfully **Read Revelation 5:1-10** and **Write** your insights to share*

SEEING What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas	
LEARNING What does it mean? What is it teaching me?	
DOING What lesson can I apply to my life?	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why must all creation be freed to enjoy a new age of resurrection from the dead? (Rom. 8:21; Col. 1:15-20).

Q2: Why is the Lion of Judah the only one worthy to bring the Kingdom of God?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 Why is no one in heaven or earth worthy to bring God's Kingdom into reality? (Revelation 5:1-4; Rom. 8:21)

1. All in heaven and earth unworthy to bring God's Kingdom:

Into this current age of Sin and Death, Jesus was born as the "Firstborn of all creation" (Col. 1:15), this current creation, so that He might be the one by the "blood of His cross" to "reconcile all things to himself" to make peace (20). Thus, there is only one rightful redeemer to restore this current creation, the promised Messiah—the Son of David and the Son of God. So, only Jesus Messiah is worthy to bring God's Kingdom, which ushers in the New Age of freedom and resurrection life "from the dead" (18) to overturn the previous age of sin and death forever.

Q2. Who is the only one worthy take and open God's Kingdom scroll? (Revelation 5:5)

2. Lion of Judah has power to bring Kingdom of God: Right of Conquest. Again, only Messiah, the Son of Davide and the Lion of Judah, has the *redeemer's right* as the "Firstborn" (Col. 1:15) to restore all creation by His redemption on the cross (20). So, the Lion of Judah is the Kingdom's rightful ruler because He is the Kingdom's only Redeemer.

Q3. How did the Lion of Judah overcome with power to bring the Kingdom of God? (Revelation 5:7-10)

3. Lamb slain and resurrected worthy to receive Kingdom: It is an ancient darkness which corrupts this current creation by its sin and death. So, the Lion of Judah, Jesus Mashiach, conquers not by powerful force but by *sacrificial service*, giving up His life as a "Lamb slain" in order to *put away sin and its power of death* to win a *resurrection life*. It is this resurrection life which the Lamb then gives His family as the *first fruits of the Spirit-born Kingdom* (Rom. 8:23). And, it is this resurrection life that *frees the entirety of creation* to bring the Lord's eternal Kingdom uniting Heaven and Earth.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Lion of Judah/ Lamb of God: Kingdom's Right and Redemption.

When the apostle John *weeps* at creation's utter helplessness to bring God's future Kingdom of life and peace, he grieves for all of us who groan in the disappointment of this current creation. At once touched by the glory of God but defaced by the *ugly darkness* which brings sin and death. For, even at the *beginning* of God's creation of the earth, *darkness* touched the deep even as God's creative light bathed this world in glory (Gen. 1:2).

But there is a *prior love* which overturns this primordial darkness, for God has loved the Son from the "beginning," appointing Him both the "firstborn" of this current creation and also the "firstborn of the dead" (Col. 1:15, 18). That is, creation's Heir to accomplish her redemption, and the Kingdom's Heir to empower its resurrection, for He is both the powerful Lion of Judah and the obedient Lamb of God, our perfect redeemer. So, worship this Lion and the Lamb, the One who wins for God and brings you into His eternal Kingdom Age by His resurrection!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁹: Scroll: To understand the scroll in the hand of the Lord God Almighty, realize that all creation is divided into two *eras*—the time of darkness and the time of resurrection. When God made “heaven and earth” in the beginning (Gen. 1:1), he then finished the “earth” once “man” was created, bearing God’s image (Gen. 2:1). In this era of *man*, “darkness” opposed to God’s creative “light” was already in existence. This darkness to shape and corrupted man by *sin*, but always was finally defeated by the *cross of Jesus Christ, who was then raised from the dead*. Thus, Jesus establishes in himself a new people and age “from the dead,” of which He is the Firstborn and Heir to this new reality (Col. 1:15-20) to be established by the coming Kingdom of God. Thus, the scroll is the unleashing of this new Kingdom Age, which commences when the Jews are *resurrected from the Death of Sin into the Kingdom’s new life!*

Added Notes: Between the throne and living creatures/ among the elders. Lamb as if slain. When Jesus Messiah is presented to heaven and earth as the only Worthy Heir and Redeemer of Creation and the Rightful Ruler of the Kingdom, he is first shown “between” the throne and the living creatures. For, He has by His “blood” reconciled to the *enthroned God all things “on earth” and “in heaven”* (Col. 1:20). But, this redeeming Lamb also stands “among the Elders,” His *redeemed brothers* who are the first to welcome and celebrate Him as the rightful Head of their family, the multitude who are the Lord’s Hosts of Heaven.

Chapter 10: ALL CREATION WORSHIPS: Worthy Creator and Lamb *Revelation 5:11-14*

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then **Write** *Insights to Share* with others.

a. Preview *Revelation 5:11-14*

All Creation Worships: Worthy Creator and Blessed Lamb:

When the Lion of Judah proves Himself worthy as the Lamb of God to bring God's Kingdom to earth, He is worshipped by a myriad of angels who begin a chorus of praise to the Lamb and His Father, seated on the throne. So, read Revelation 5:11-14 to discover the blessings which the Lamb will inherit in His new Kingdom!

First, heaven honors the coming Rule of the Lamb as the ***praise of Angels affirms Lamb Worthy to Receive the Kingdom.*** From the high vantage point of heaven, the Lamb is worthy of the Kingdom's blessings (Rev. 5:11-12). Then, all creatures honor the Rule of the Lamb, as the ***praise of all creatures of Heaven and Earth Exalts Creator and Lamb*** (Rev. 5:13). Finally, the highest beings appointed by God, the ***powerful living Creatures and Elders fall and Worship*** (Rev. 5:14).

b. Prayerfully *Read Revelation 5:11-14* and *Write* your insights to share

SEEING What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas	
LEARNING What does it mean? What is it teaching me?	
DOING What lesson can I apply to my life?	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. *Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.*

Q1. Why is the Lamb worthy, according to the angels? All creatures in heaven and earth? The living creatures and elders?

Q2: What will the Lamb receive in His coming Kingdom?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. *Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.*

Q1 What do the angels affirm about the Creator and the Lamb? (Rev. 5:11-12)

1. Praise of angels affirms Lamb worthy to receive Kingdom.

The angelic multitudes affirm the Lamb's sacrifice and perfection, have secured an eternal Kingdom and its blessings. So, as the overcoming Redeemer of the Kingdom, the Lamb is worthy to receive the Kingdom's *power to rule all of heaven and earth* (Mt. 28:18); the Kingdom's *wealth* in all of heaven and earth (Mt. 5:3, 5); and all the Kingdom's wisdom (Is. 11:1-3); its might, honor, glory, and blessing!

Q2. How do all creatures in heaven and earth honor the Lamb?
(Revelation 5:13)

2. Praise of all creatures in heaven and earth: Exalt Creator and Lamb. Following the angelic blessing, all living creatures in “heaven and earth” ascribe to the Creator and the Lamb all “blessing, honor, glory, and might” (13). That is, all creatures give to the Lamb what is due to him in sacrificial worship—“blessing” Him as the *Blessed One of God*; honor as creation’s only redeemer; glory as the Son of the Father; and, “might” as the Kingdom’s Lord.

Q3. How do the most mighty beings respond to Creation’s
praise? (Revelation 5:14)

3. Powerful living creature and elders fall and worship. When *angelic beings and all* living creatures give themselves in praise to the Lamb who was slain, these four powerful living creatures and God’s *holy family elders affirm this worship and reward of the Lamb, saying “Amen.” With this affirmation, the elders fall down and worship the Lamb!*

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to **read** Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Receiving and Giving Glory: Worthy Creator and Lamb of God.

Although the full purpose of the sacrifice of Messiah on His cross of redemption was long-hidden from the world. Now, at the dawn of the coming Kingdom of God in its fullness, all creation in heaven and on earth recognizes and receives the Lamb of God as the perfected *Lord and Heir* of the coming Kingdom Age.

So, the angelic myriads are the first to proclaim the Lamb as the worthy Heir of the Kingdom, fitting him to receive all the *blessings* and *power* and *prestige* inherent in the Kingdom. Next, the people of the Lamb now sacrifice to Him their simple praise, blessing the Lamb for all that He has rightfully taken as part of His Kingdom.

Now is the time for you to give the Lamb your sacrifice of worship to honor His redemptive sacrifice on the cross!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question Differ
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

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What is the *big idea* of this passage?

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Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

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- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes¹⁰: Worthy is Lamb who was slain: Even at the highest level of inheritance, the Lord God recognizes that not every heir is worthy of the inheritance. However, since the Lamb of God sacrificed His life to pay the ransom for His inheritance, He simply has purchased the redemption of His people, house, and kingdom.

Added Notes: Blessing, honor, glory, and might: When all creatures in heaven and earth finally praise the Creator and His Lamb of God, they *bless* Him as the *one* embodying the blessed life of God; they *honor* Him as having the highest honor as the resurrected Lord; and, they *glorify the Lamb* as the one who won the salvation of His brothers in the humility of His cross.

Prayer Requests:

Prayer Request/ Date	Answered Prayer/ Thanks

Journaling:

What is God teaching you?	How are you growing?

Sermon Notes:

Sermon Notes/ Date	Applying it to my life

Notes: