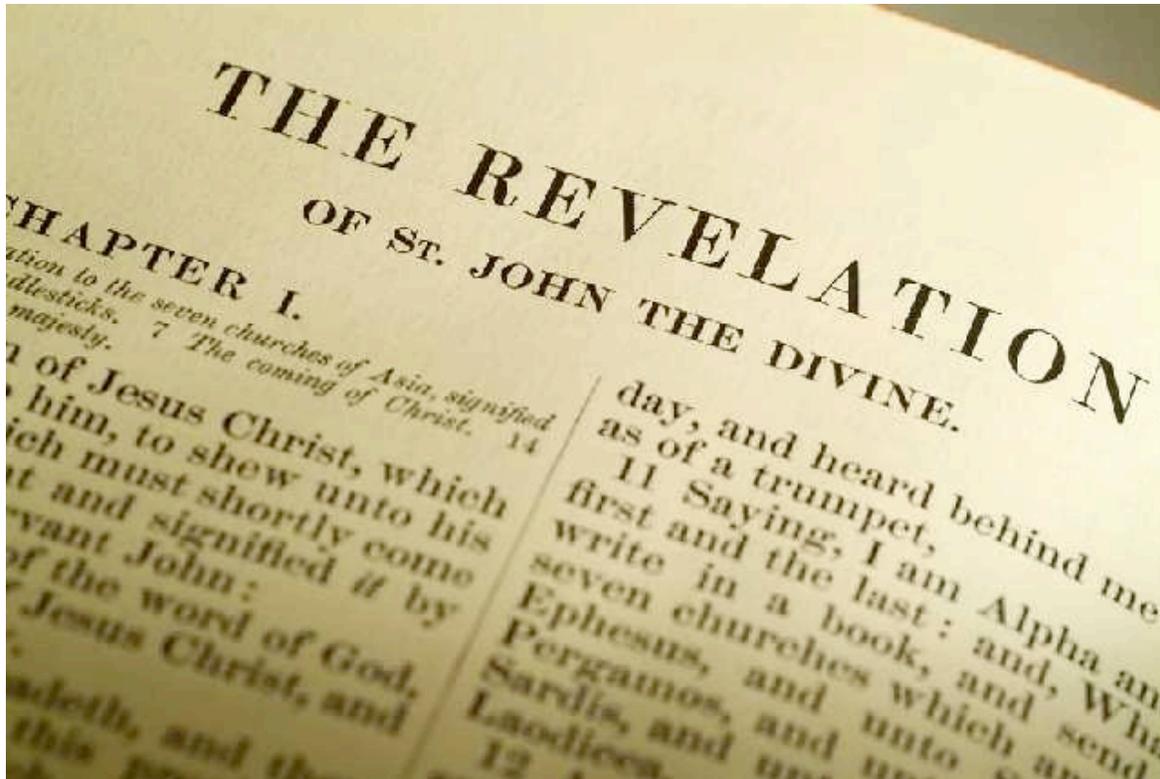


# THE SIXTH FACET: REVELATION 16-20 (2)



*A Scriptorium Study from The Fellowship of Ailbe*

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**The Fellowship of Ailbe**

*Revelation: The Sixth Facet*  
*Revelation 16-20*

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Revelation 16-20 (2)  
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## Revelation 16-20 (2)

We continue investigating the sixth facet of the book of Revelation as the rebellion of Satan and sinful men is brought to a sudden and complete end.

A good bit of ink has been wasted arguing about certain aspects of Revelation 19 and 20, and I hope we can avoid the typical controversies and disagreements that arise here by maintaining a lofty and total perspective on the events described. What's important is to read these chapters in the light of the overall themes of Revelation: Kingdom, tribulation, and patient endurance. If we can do that, we'll discover God's purpose for these chapters and will gain the benefit He intends.

We are happy to provide *Scriptorium* studies in PDF format at no charge. We hope you will find them helpful and encouraging as you press on in your journey toward spiritual maturity with the Lord.

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We hope you find this study of Revelation a challenging and stretching experience of journeying more deeply into the Word of God. Thank you for joining us.

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## 1     **The Marriage Supper of the Lamb**

*Week 9, Monday: The Groom and His Bride*

We need to revisit this passage in order to focus more specifically on the event which stands at the center of it – the marriage supper of the Lamb. This is an event of glorious significance. The prospect of it should move us to great anticipation and diligent preparation.

*Read Revelation 19*

*Meditate on Revelation 19.1-10*

1. Those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb are described as “blessed” (v. 9). Meditate on Genesis 1.26-28 and 12.1-3. How should we understand this word? Does it simply mean that those who are able to come to the supper are “blessed” by being there? Is there more?
2. The multitude in heaven rejoices that the “wife” of the Lamb has “made herself ready” for the marriage supper. Meditate on 2 Peter 3.10-14, 1 John 3.1-3, and Revelation 19.8. How can we tell those who are making themselves ready for this glorious event?
3. The angel tells John, “These are the true sayings of God.” This seems a bit curious here. Why would the angel have to make this emphatic point concerning the marriage supper of the Lamb? Do you think most Christians live with a view to that coming supper? Why or why not?
4. Think of marriage suppers you have attended. Why is this an excellent way of thinking about the final disposition and estate of those who “have the testimony of Jesus”?
5. What is the place of the marriage supper of the Lamb in the Gospel? How would you incorporate this great celebration into the Good News as you share it?

*My Reflection*

Does the prospect of the marriage supper of the Lamb play much of a role in your own walk with and work for the Lord? Explain.

*The Glory of God*

What is suggested about Christ’s attitude toward His Church that He is preparing this glorious wedding feast for us? How can you make that awareness more a part of your daily life with the Lord?

*Glory to Glory*

All who “have the testimony of Jesus” are headed for a glorious consummation with the Lord. Do you think that spending some time thinking about this each morning might affect the way you live each day? Why or why not?

*Memorize*

Our memory verse for this week is Revelation 20.6. Write this verse on an index card, using your preferred translation of the Bible. Carry this with you throughout the week, and spend some time each day working to memorize this passage. How should this verse encourage you in your walk with and work for the Lord?

*Closing Prayer*

Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;  
Let the sea roar, and all its fullness;

*Revelation: The Sixth Facet*  
*Revelation 16-20*

Let the field be joyful, and all that *is* in it.  
Then all the trees of the woods will rejoice before the LORD.  
For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth.  
He shall judge the world with righteousness,  
And the peoples with His truth.

Psalm 96.11-13

## 2 The Rider on the White Horse

### *Week 9, Tuesday: The Final Sortie*

The Rider on the white horse, Whom we first encountered in chapter 6, makes His final appearance on the earth. He has been going forth in His Church and by His Word and Spirit through all the tribulations of men and history, advancing His Kingdom and preparing His Bride. Now He comes in full, visible glory to bring His Kingdom to its consummation and to deal a final blow to all His enemies.

### *Read Revelation 19*

### *Meditate on Revelation 19.11-16*

1. In what ways is this vision of Christ similar to what we observed in Revelation 1?
2. While this is probably a vision of Christ's final sortie on the earth, it also, in many ways, represents His daily going forth "conquering and to conquer." What aspects of this final appearing should we also expect to see in our own daily experience (meditate on verses 11, 14, and 15 in particular)?
3. In what sense, or what ways, does the "sharp sword" "strike the nations"? Should this be happening in our own day? Explain.
4. Note the names given to Christ in this passage (vv. 11, 13, 16). What do these suggest about this One with Whom we will be sharing an eternal wedding feast? How should this encourage and guide us as we look forward to His coming?
5. Meditate on verse 16, recalling, as you do, Acts 2.29-36. How should this affect the way we share the Good News of Jesus?

### *My Reflection*

Are you ready to ride forth today with the Rider on the white horse? Why or why not?

### *The Glory of God*

The image of Christ presented in these verses is all about power. What kind of power? How is it wielded? To what ends? What is our role in this as members of the "armies of heaven"?

### *Glory to Glory*

Do the believers in your Personal Mission Field understand Jesus in the way He is presented in these verses? That is, do they follow Him as Faithful, True, the Word of God, King of kings, and Lord of lords? Ask a few of them to explain what these names of Jesus mean to them.

### *Memorize*

Let's look more closely at our memory verse, Revelation 20.6. Recite your memory verse aloud. How will you serve as a priest of God and of Christ today? How will it be apparent that Jesus is ruling and advancing His Kingdom in and through you?

### *Closing Prayer*

Those who trust in the LORD

*Are* like Mount Zion,

*Which* cannot be moved, *but* abides forever.

*Revelation: The Sixth Facet*  
*Revelation 16-20*

As the mountains surround Jerusalem,  
So the LORD surrounds His people  
From this time forth and forever.  
For the scepter of wickedness shall not rest  
On the land allotted to the righteous,  
Lest the righteous reach out their hands to iniquity.  
Do good, O LORD, to *those who are* good,  
And to *those who are* upright in their hearts.

Psalm 125.1-4

### 3 Another Supper

*Week 9, Wednesday: The Defeat of Christ's Enemies*

The last part of chapter 19 presents another “supper” which is hosted by God, but this one is unto the destruction of men’s flesh, not its glorification. The wages of sin are horrible, and Jesus wants us to know that clearly.

*Read Revelation 19*

*Meditate on Revelation 19.17-21*

1. As we have seen in previous facets, here we are given a glimpse toward the end of history as we know it. What about this passage suggests that?
2. We note that God has prepared this terrible “supper.” What do we learn about God as a result of this event?
3. Though this is a scene of finality, it represents only the culmination of a long-standing historical process which John summarized under the rubric, “tribulation.” According to verse 19, what is the reason for the tribulation that calls for patient endurance by believers as they seek the Kingdom? What forms does this take in the present?
4. Keep in mind that what we are seeing here are images and visions, not necessarily actual reality. Getting past the images to the deeper meaning of this passage, how would you summarize what we see happening here?
5. Is the fact of these events part of the Good News? Explain.

*My Reflection*

Are there any unbelievers in your Personal Mission Field? Are you content to let them come to the events described in these verses without some warning?

*The Glory of God*

God is glorified in the destruction of the wicked. Explain.

*Glory to Glory*

How should we expect to manifest the glory of God in the face of the wickedness and sin of our day?

*Memorize*

Recite your memory verse aloud: Revelation 20.6. Share it with a Christian friend. Share any way that this verse has begun to affect your daily walk with the Lord, or any questions you may have regarding the understanding of this verse.

*Closing Prayer*

Blessed *is* the man  
Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,  
Nor stands in the path of sinners,  
Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;  
But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD,

*Revelation: The Sixth Facet*  
*Revelation 16-20*

And in His law he meditates day and night.  
He shall be like a tree  
Planted by the rivers of water,  
That brings forth its fruit in its season,  
Whose leaf also shall not wither;  
And whatever he does shall prosper.  
The ungodly *are* not so,  
But *are* like the chaff which the wind drives away.  
Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment,  
Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.  
For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,  
But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Psalm 1

## 4 Satan Bound

### *Week 9, Thursday: The Binder and the Bound*

Chapter 20 is to the sixth facet what chapter 12 is to the fifth. It fills in more of the spiritual background against which the events of chapters 16-19 unfold. What's happening in chapter 20 should be understood not as chronologically sequential to chapters 16-19, but intermingled through them all. We need to proceed slowly through this chapter. You may not agree with my understanding of the images and events described here, but I encourage you to keep an open mind.

Let's take a closer look.

### *Read Revelation 20*

### *Meditate on Revelation 20.1-3*

1. The word "angel" doesn't always mean "angel." It can simply mean "messenger" or even "pastor," as we have seen. In Revelation 1.18 we met a "messenger" who was described in terms similar to Revelation 20.1. What's the similarity, and who is this "messenger" John sees "coming down from heaven"?
2. Meditate on Matthew 12.22-29. What does Jesus say He has already done to Satan? Is it possible that this occurred at Matthew 4.1-11? Explain.
3. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil (1 Jn. 3.8). How did the "binding" of Satan in the gospels demonstrate that destroying the devil's works had already begun? According to Paul in Colossians 2.13-15, what was the next phase of that work, and what did it accomplish? Can you see that Revelation 20.1-3 is serving to remind the reader of events already accomplished, in order to assure the reader that his faith is not in vain? Explain.
4. The devil – bound, humiliated, and deprived of his powers – is "cast into the bottomless pit" but only for a season (cf. Rev. 9.1ff). Does the binding of Satan mean the absolute nullification of his powers? Compare 1 Peter 5.8, 9.
5. The devil is "bound" and on a leash, so to speak. What is the effect of this on "the nations"? How can you see this is true, say, compared to the state of nations prior to the coming of Christ?

### *My Reflection*

What does it mean for you to "resist" the devil? What are the consequences to *not* resisting him?

### *The Glory of God*

Jesus has bound the "strong man." What do we learn from this about the power of Christ, and how should this encourage us during our Kingdom-seeking, tribulation-enduring life on this earth?

### *Glory to Glory*

The devil, though "on a leash", still has power to tempt. How can we tell when we are being tempted by the devil? How should we respond?

### *Memorize*

Recite Revelation 20.6. What is the relationship, in your understanding, between "blessed" and "holy" in the life of faith?

*Revelation: The Sixth Facet*  
*Revelation 16-20*

*Closing Prayer*

LORD, how they have increased who trouble me!  
Many *are* they who rise up against me.  
Many *are* they who say of me,  
“*There is no help for him in God.*” *Selah*  
But You, O LORD, *are* a shield for me,  
My glory and the One who lifts up my head.  
I cried to the LORD with my voice,  
And He heard me from His holy hill. *Selah*  
I lay down and slept;  
I awoke, for the LORD sustained me.  
I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people  
Who have set *themselves* against me all around.  
Arise, O LORD;  
Save me, O my God!  
For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone;  
You have broken the teeth of the ungodly.  
Salvation *belongs* to the LORD.  
Your blessing *is* upon Your people. *Selah*

Psalm 3

## 5 The Thousand Years

### *Week 9, Friday: The Reign of the Saints*

Remember: Images and numbers in the book of Revelation are not to be taken literally. They point to realities beyond themselves and symbolize aspects of reality which are or are to be. We do not insist on taking the 144,000 of Revelation 7 and 14 literally, so we should not take the 1,000 years mentioned here as indicating anything other than a fixed time, a complete or perfect time, a time, which Jesus reminds us (Acts 1.7), is known only to the Father.

### *Read Revelation 20*

### *Meditate on Revelation 20.4-6*

1. Let's get some background before us. Meditate on Matthew 19.28 and Luke 22.28-30. Jesus says that the period when He sits on His throne in heaven is called "the regeneration." Why? He also says that all who follow Him during this period have a part in His rule (cf. Matt. 6.33; Heb. 12.28). At this same time, those who believe in Jesus will "eat and drink" at His table – presumably, the table of the Lord's Supper (note the context of Luke 22), where saints gather to anticipate and prepare for the marriage supper of the Lamb. OK. What is the "first resurrection" mentioned in Revelation 20.5 (cf. Jn. 3.16; Eph. 2.1-6)? To what does this compare in Matthew 19.28?
2. Verse 4 should be read as John receiving a glimpse of saints in glory and saints pursuing the Kingdom on earth. Keeping in mind Matthew 19.28 and Luke 22.28-30, how can you see that? If this is the case, how should we understand the "thousand years"?
3. It's not that every saint lives for a thousand years. That's obviously not true. But during "the regeneration", that "thousand years" when people are coming to the first resurrection, judgment is committed to the saints continuously, as a people. What kind of judgment? For what purpose?
4. We note that, when the "thousand years" is over, "the rest of the dead" come to life again. To what does this seem to refer?
5. Those who have attained to the "first resurrection" have overcome the "first death"? What is the "second death" mentioned in verse 6, and who has "overcome" it, and how? What is the effect of that overcoming on them – in terms of the kind of people they are and what they are doing?

### *My Reflection*

Complete the following: "Since I have a 'part in the first resurrection'..."

### *The Glory of God*

For "a thousand years" the devil is restrained and the saints reign in glory, united as one people, living and departed. We are a kingdom of priests and kings, as John reminded us in Revelation 1.6. Judgment is committed to us, and we are called to lay down our lives and keep the testimony of Jesus and the commandments of God. We ride out each day with the Rider on the white horse, seeking to advance the rule of Christ in a world of tribulation and woe. How are the grace, wisdom, and power of God evident in this arrangement?

### *Glory to Glory*

How will it be evident today that you are a priest to God and rule in His Kingdom?

### *Memorize*

*Revelation: The Sixth Facet*  
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Review Revelation 20.6. Write a prayer based on this verse.

*Closing Prayer*

Pray the prayer you wrote from your memory verse. Write it on a card and carry it with you to pray it over and over today. Pray it and keep praying it, until joy wells up within you and boldness moves you to fulfill your calling as priest of God and ruler in His Kingdom today.

## 6 The End of Satan

### *Week 9, Saturday: Satan Doomed*

There is such a note of folly – a tragic/comedic note – to this brief passage (Rev. 20.7-10) that I hope we won't miss it. Satan has been bound for "a thousand years." Now he is released "for a little while" (v. 3).

*Very* little while, as it turns out.

*Read Revelation 20*

*Meditate on Revelation 20.7-10*

1. Remember the description of those who experienced the wrath of God in Revelation 9.21. They are chips off the old block. Having watched the Lord Jesus "plunder" his house for "a thousand years" (Matt. 12.22-29), what does Satan do when the Lord's relaxes His "leash" a little (Rev. 20.3, 7)? What do you suppose that will look like? Is anything like this happening already? How should we expect to see this intensified at the end of the "thousand years"?
2. Satan is, as Jonathan Edwards once observed, the biggest blockhead of all time. What does his recalcitrance suggest about the power of sin, and what does that suggest to us about dallying in it?
3. You may have noticed that nowhere in Revelation 19 or 20 is Armageddon mentioned. We have to go back to our overview of this facet, Revelation 16.16, to see that place mentioned (wherever it may be). How does this argue against a "chronological" reading of Revelation and for the cyclical/linear approach we have been pursuing?
4. Here is yet more lunacy: The nations of the world gather as one to withstand the approach of the Rider on the white horse and His armies (cf. Rev. 19.19). Even when they see Him coming, every eye fixed on that glorious King and His innumerable host, they're still saying to themselves, "Yeah, I think we can take Him." Sin is really dangerous. Explain.
5. The final rebellion is short-lived. As Luther insisted concerning the devil, "One little Word shall fell him." What is the final disposition of the devil and his "offspring" (v. 10, cf. Rev. 19.20, 21)? Is there any end in sight to this situation?

### *My Reflection*

We are amazed to see how blind and stupid the devil and sinful people can be. But what about you? Do you find any evidence of the blinding power of sin in your own soul? Meditate on Psalm 139.23, 24.

### *The Glory of God*

In the background of events in time and history a spiritual struggle is engaged. God is in control of all aspects of reality, both material and spiritual, and He is working all things together for good to those who love Him and are called according to His purpose (Rom. 8.28). How can you see that in Revelation 20?

### *Glory to Glory*

Sin is serious business. We cannot glorify God as priests and rulers if we insist on holding a place at the table of our souls for sin. How can believers help one another be more serious about resisting the devil and all his temptations to sin?

### *Memorize*

*Revelation: The Sixth Facet*  
*Revelation 16-20*

Recite Revelation 20.6. As you meditate on this verse today, concentrate on areas of your life where you need to improve in blessing, holiness, worship, and judgment.

*Closing Prayer*

Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
Try me, and know my anxieties;  
And see if *there is any* wicked way in me,  
And lead me in the way everlasting.

Psalm 139.23, 24

## 7 The Last Judgment

*Week 9, Sunday: Condemned by Their Works*

The history of humankind's rebellion against God ends in eternal tragedy, as the judgment of God is finally and fully pronounced against still-unrepentant men and women from every age.

*Read Revelation 20*

*Meditate on Revelation 20.11-15*

1. How do verses 11 and 12 (cf. Rev. 16.20) signal that this is the end of history as we know it?
2. All those whose names are not written in the Book of Life are condemned by their works. Given what we've seen before (question 1 from yesterday), and keeping in mind the blinding power of sin, should we think these people who are being condemned were finally repentant? Why or why not?
3. What is "the second death" (v. 14)? Why are those who have come to the "first resurrection" able to escape the "second death" (v. 6)?
4. Try to envision the scene as God's judgment unfolds against unrepentant human beings from every age and culture. Do you imagine them merely standing by quietly, meekly accepting their inevitable fate? How should we envision this scene? What do you suppose it will really be like?
5. This passage puts a strong emphasis on "books" and what's written in them. What do these books represent? What do they suggest about God? About how we should try to live?

*My Reflection*

Meditate on Genesis 6.3. What does it mean to say that God's Spirit "strives" with people? How does He do that? Why? What does this suggest for us, knowing what we do about the final disposition of those who refuse to repent and believe the Gospel?

*The Glory of God*

Is it contrary to the love, holiness, justice, and mercy of God to condemn people and fallen angels to perpetual torment? Why or why not?

*Glory to Glory*

How much does God hate sin? How much do you hate sin (Ps. 97.10)? What steps can you take today to make sure sin does not find a nesting place in your soul?

*Memorize*

Today, share your memory verses for this week (Revelation 20.6) with a Christian friend, and briefly explain what you have learned about these verses.

*Closing Prayer*

Unto You I lift up my eyes,  
O You who dwell in the heavens.  
Behold, as the eyes of servants *look* to the hand of their masters,  
As the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress,  
So our eyes *look* to the LORD our God,

*Revelation: The Sixth Facet*  
*Revelation 16-20*

Until He has mercy on us.  
Have mercy on us, O LORD, have mercy on us!  
For we are exceedingly filled with contempt.  
Our soul is exceedingly filled  
With the scorn of those who are at ease,  
With the contempt of the proud.

Psalm 123

*Revelation: The Sixth Facet*  
*Revelation 16-20*

*Week 9: Questions for Reflection or Discussion*

1. How do the love of God – by which He redeems and preserves His saints – and the justice of God – with which His wrath and judgment come upon sinners – work together to encourage us to glorify God?
2. How do we see in the sixth facet of the book of Revelation the relationship between things in the spiritual world and things in the world of men and history?
3. When it comes to the Gospel, there's no “Good News” without the “Bad News.” Explain.
4. What are the most important lessons for you personally from Revelation 19 and 20? Summarize those lessons:
5. How are you beginning to implement those lessons in your walk with and work for the Lord?

*For prayer:*

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Thank you.