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The Lamb Is My Shepherd

CAPITOL COMMISSION BIBLE STUDY

(weekly: every Tuesday at 12 Noon)

TUESDAYS @ 12 NOON in 318 CLOB
(IN-PERSON AND ZOOM)

☞ LUNCH PROVIDED FOR THOSE ATTENDING ☞

Capitol Commission Bible Studies are held every Tuesday during the legislative session. The *weekly Bible studies* are *nonpartisan* and *non-denominational*, in addition to being *open-to-all* (i.e. the entire Capitol community). We are continuing an exposition of Scripture begun in December with the New Testament book of Revelation.

We have an in-person Bible study in 318 CLOB (Senate Committee Room) and also use Zoom. The *members' only Bible Fellowship* probably will be on Tuesday mornings from 7:00-7:50am. The room and start date are not yet determined.

If you would like to learn more regarding the ministry of Capitol Commission, please visit <http://www.capitolcom.org>. Capitol Commission's prayer is that this study will be edifying to you. The sole intent of this ministry is to serve you, as a resource for pastoral attention, counsel, and prayer. The present Bible study is just one aspect of that desire.

— Dr. Ron J. Bigalke, Georgia State Minister, Capitol Commission

Capitol Commission Bible Study

is
Tuesday, 14 January 2025

Revelation 7—8 — “The Lamb Is My Shepherd”

Albert Simpson Reitz (1879-1966) was a Baptist pastor. He also was a hymnwriter, having composed more than 100 songs in his lifetime. His tombstone simply reads, “With Christ, which is far, far better.”

While visiting the home of a friend, Reitz read what he thought was a peculiar biblical motto: “The Lamb is my Shepherd.” He thought the saying was a foolish confusion of biblical metaphors and texts. He could not understand how a lamb could be a shep-

herd. He adjusted his bifocals as he moved closer to the frame, and realized he misread the quotation since it referenced the familiar assertion “The Lord is my Shepherd” from Psalm 23.

Reitz smiled as he considered his initial misreading. However, as he continued to ponder the biblical metaphors and texts, Reitz made a stunning conclusion. The Lord Jesus Christ is presented in the New Testament as both the Good Shepherd and the Lamb of God. He recalled the vision of the Apostle John and how the Lamb that was slain shared the throne with the Almighty and will safely guide his people to their celestial home (Rev 5:6-14). Now, he was thankful to have misread the saying, realizing the motto could truthfully read, “The Lamb is my Shepherd.”

The very words of Revelation (7:17) are emphatic: “For the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the water of life; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes.” Jesus is the Lamb of God both in sacrifice (6:9-10) and in victory (6:12-13; 7:17). The fullness of God's purposes for redeemed humanity is realized in the triumphant and worthy Lamb!

THE REMNANT AND MULTITUDE

(Rev 7:1-17) Matthew 24:15 references “the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet.” The desecration will be distinct by indicating the coming of Christ and “the end of the age” (Matt 24:3). At that time, Jesus instructed his people to flee Jerusalem because of resulting persecution, which appears to parallel events of Revelation 7. The narrative preview involves a remnant (7:1-8) and a multitude (vv. 9-17) and is related to this time period. As a result of persecution intensifying, the days will be shortened (Matt 24:22).

Revelation 7 begins with “four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth” so that “another angel” can seal God's servants (vv. 1-3). The vision is important because it answers the question, “Who is able to stand?” (6:17). The implied response is those who have the seal of God upon them are able to stand. God's seal is obviously quite different than “the mark” in Revelation 13:16-17.

One of the distinguishing and sometimes complicated aspects of biblical prophecy is differing interpretations. The word eschatology is derived from two Greek words, *eschatos* (“last”) and *logos* (“doctrine”), meaning the doctrine of last things. Among those seeking to understand biblical prophecies, three primary views as regards last things have been developed: amillennialism, postmillennialism, and premillennialism. The word millennium is derived from the Latin *mille* (“thousand”) and relates to a statement in Revelation 20:4, and whether one interprets “thousand years” there as literal or symbolic.



Capitol Commission Bible Study
Tuesday (14th of January) from 12 Noon - 12:45pm, 318 CLOB (& Zoom)

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Amillennialism is the view that the “thousand years” are not literal; rather, the kingdom of God is present either in the church on earth or God’s people currently in heaven. Postmillennialism also understands the “thousand years” as symbolic. Advocates believe Christ will return subsequent to a golden age of progress in the church age, which will affect every aspect of life. Premillennialism teaches that Christ will return at the end of the church age and He will establish his kingdom on earth for a literal one thousand years. Unlike the other views, premillennialism affirms that Christ will be physically present; He will return bodily and personally to begin the millennium.

... SALVATION ... CAN NEVER BE EARNED; IT IS A DIVINE GIFT....

One’s understanding of the millennium means a person will either interpret the two groups in Revelation 7 as symbolic of the church or as 144,000 converted Jews from the twelve tribes of Israel (Rev 7:4-8) and the great multitude as a company of people from every nation (both Gentiles and Jews). Scripture identifies the innumerable multitude as coming “from every nation and *all* tribes and peoples and tongues.” They are a redeemed people since they stand before the Lamb “in white robes” (holiness) and victoriously wave “palm branches” (v. 9).

The great multitude recognizes God as the source of salvation because that can never be earned; it is a divine gift (v. 10). Similar to an antiphonal choir, all heaven joins the great multitude in worshipping God (vv. 11-12). One should note the similarity between the attributes named of the Lamb and those of God in the angelic exaltation (5:12; 7:12).

The great multitude is identified as those “who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” (7:13-14). They are pictured as already standing “before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple” (v. 15). The innumerable multitude is a redeemed company (perhaps mostly Gentiles), who are seen as already in heaven, though no specific mention is made of them having been martyred to arrive there.

The multitude is protected from every affliction and provision is made for every need (v. 16). The redeemed of God know the loving care and nurture of their Savior (v. 17). The blessings described of those in the direct presence of God indicate an end to the negative effects of sin and the eternal delight of the redeemed (vv. 15-17).

THE SEVENTH SEAL

(Rev 8:1-13) The seventh seal is opened in Revelation 8:1, with silence in heaven resulting for approximately “half an hour,” which most likely is in consideration of the coming judgments (cf. Hab 2:20; Zech 2:13). The silence is a dramatic contrast to the prior celebratory shouting. “Seven trumpets were given” to seven angels (Rev 8:2).

An expanding development of the seal, trumpet, and bowl judgments can be recognized, meaning they have a sequential relationship (i.e. the series are not parallel and simultaneous in the sense of recapitulation). Each series follows its antecedent, so that the seventh seal judgment leads to the seven trumpet judgments. Each series of judgments does increase in destruction and intensity. The heavenly scene (vv. 3-6) is parallel to the earlier vision of the twenty-four elders (5:8; cf. 4:5).

The first trumpet brings fire and hail (v. 7). The second trumpet involves a fireball being cast into the sea (vv. 8-9). The third trumpet involves the pollution of fresh waters (vv. 10-11). When the fourth trumpet is sounded, there will be air pollution and darkness on the earth (v. 12). While it may be difficult to imagine how such judgments will be fulfilled, there is not any reason to doubt that the results will be precisely as described. Whatever method is used, the earth dwellers recognize the events as coming from God (6:17; 16:9; 16:11; 19:19). “Woe” is pronounced in regards to the last three trumpets because they involve angelic and demonic forces (8:13), and allow one to comprehend the ultimate spiritual warfare raging in the heavens.

While it is possible to regard ordinary means of comfort, knowledge, and subsistence as impersonal, perpetual forces, Revelation 8 declares God’s Lordship in their disruption. God’s mercy is also recognized because the trumpet judgments are intended to lead people to repentance. Today is the day of salvation! Be certain you have departed from the ranks of the earth dwellers to join those whose citizenship is in heaven.

Thank you for the privilege in providing you with the Capitol Commission Bible study. If we can serve you in any manner, please talk with us, or contact by email or phone.

About Capitol Commission

Capitol Commission exists to minister gospel hope and spiritual strength to legislators, staff, lobbyists (i.e. the entire Capitol community). The focus of our ministry is people as opposed to politics, and thus to be a spiritual resource to the legislature. Our ministry strategy is expressed by pastoral presence, the proclamation of the Bible, and fervent prayer for every legislator.

God values civilization. The Hebrew word *shalom* (“peace”) testifies to the Lord God’s desire for society. When peace describes society, it refers to a prosperous and wholesome civilization. God has a high standard for governing authorities, referring to them as his ministers (Rom 13:4). He desires their salvation and for them to have knowledge of his truth (1 Tim 2:1-2). Our passion is the same as the Lord God, which is why Capitol Commission provides hope “behind the scenes” through a ministry of presence.

The gospel “is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (Rom 1:16). The Bible provides equipping “for every good work” (2 Tim 3:16-17). Capitol Commission state ministers value prayer because we exist as a ministry to people. God hears and answers prayer! “The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much” (Jas 5:16b).

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NEXT CAPITOL COMMISSION BIBLE STUDY:
Tuesday, 21st of January @ 12 Noon