B. Interpreting Apocalyptic Literature

* Understand background
  + Looking and longing
* Understand genre
  + Multiple genres
  + “Unveil”
  + Symbolic language
* Understand purpose
  + To help churches face persecution
* Understand structure
  + Severn visions
  + Hearing turns to seeing

5 And one of the elders said to me, “Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.” 6 And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

* There is some debate

**How To Study the Bible Remaining Schedule**

* 1. Genre III: Gospels/Epistles & Prophetic/Apocalyptic Literature

1. Section III: Interpretive Tools
   1. Purpose and Context
   2. Structure and Parallels
   3. Linking Words
   4. Repetition
   5. Using Commentaries & Other Resource
   6. Studying Difficult Passages and Familiar Passages

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***Core Seminars—How to Study the Bible***

**Class 7: Gospels, Epistles, Prophetic**

**& Apocalyptic Literature**

*“When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.”* (Col. 3.4)

1. The Gospels (and Acts)
   1. Genre
   2. Chronology
   3. Harmony
   4. Distinctives
      1. Matthew

Central Concerns

* How Jesus fulfills the Messianic prophecies given to Israel
* Israel’s rejection of Jesus as the Messiah
  + 1. Mark

Action and authority

* + 1. Luke
* the sovereignty of God (God’s will)
* joy at the arrival of the Messiah
* Christ’s role as prophet
* Miracles that validate Jesus’ claims
  + 1. John
* concerned with showing Christ’s divinity
* responses to Jesus range from rejection to openness
  + 1. Acts

The story of the Gospel penetrating the Roman Empire, despite stiff opposition, through the boldness of witnesses drawing on God’s Spirit.

Speeches: Missionary and Defense

1. Epistles
   1. Structured in three parts:

* Opening
* Body
* Closing
  1. Studying Epistles:
* We often only have one side of the conversation
* Balancing original audience and modern audience

III. Prophetic and Apocalyptic Literature:

* 1. Interpreting the Prophets:
* Prophets **forth-**tell and **fore**tell
  + Salvation / Judgment

Numerous literary forms:

Allegories (Isa. 5:1-7)

Proverbs (Ez. 18:2)

Lamentations (Amos 5:1-2)

Prayers (Habakuk 3)

Narratives (Isa. 36-39)

Writing style diverse:

Jeremiah’s lamentations (8:18-9:1)

Ezekiel’s shocking statements (20:21-26)

Habakuk’s questioning (1:12-17)

Amos’ sarcasm and irony (3:12)

* Often multiple levels of fulfillment
  + 1. Discern the immediate **context** –structure and flow
    2. Discern the kind of **oracle** employed (judgment, salvation, or something else).
    3. Study the balance between **forth-telling** and foretelling
    4. Determine what **kind of language** is being used (Poetic? Disputation? Narrative?) Literary forms are often crucial in determining the author’s meaning and intent.
    5. Place these texts in their overall **place in redemptive-history**. In doing this, be careful not to make wrong associations between Israel and your nation or church.
    6. **Try not to impose your theological system** on the text (whether dispensational, covenantal, etc.).
    7. Be alert for certain **reoccurring and sweeping themes**, especially those that bear on the relationships between the testaments (e.g. eschatology, temple, marriage and spiritual adultery, new birth).
    8. Consider **how the New Testament authors employ your passage**, or at least your book.