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.