

## Christ Church Detroit Adult Bible Class September 2017 – June 2018



← painting of the *Prophet Daniel*, Nicholas Javier Goribar, 18<sup>th</sup> century  
Iglesia de la Compania (Society of Jesus/Jesuit Church), Quito, Ecuador

***The Book of the Prophet Daniel*** ~ accounts of Daniel, Jewish youth deported to Babylon in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE: his encounters, dream interpretations, and revelations from an angel ~ chapters 1-6 suggest earlier authorship of the text (after Babylonian captivity); chapters 7-12 may reflect later Maccabean or “2<sup>nd</sup>-Temple” writings (2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE); chapters 13-14 are found in ancient Greek texts but not in the Aramaic (of the “folk tales,” chapters 2-7) or Hebrew (chapters 1, 8-12) ~ Jesus’ later self-identification as “Son of Man” comes from this book

1	Sept 10	1:1-21	<b>Introduction</b> & Babylonian exiles from Judah
2	Sept 17	2:1-3:97	Nebuchadnezzar’s first dream & the Fiery furnace
3	Sept 24	3:98-6:29	Nebuchadnezzar’s second dream, Writing on the wall & Lion’s den
4	Oct 1	7:1-8:27	Visions of history: Four beasts & the Ram and the he-goat
5	Oct 8	9:1-27	Redefining the exile
<b>October 15 ~ Detroit Marathon</b>			
6	Oct 22	10:1-12:13	A theology of history
7	Oct 29	13:1-14:42	Susannah & Bel and the dragon



***The Book of the Prophet Zechariah*** ~ one of the books of the “Twelve Minor Prophets” of the Old Testament, thought to be divided into two segments: “1<sup>st</sup> (or proto-)” Zechariah, chapters 1-8, a series of visions, written late in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE after the Babylonian exile; “2<sup>nd</sup>” Zechariah, chapters 9-14, a series of oracles whose date of composition is in dispute, and Zechariah is not mentioned ~ *The last six chapters are among the most obscure and difficult passages in the Hebrew Bible.* [John J. Collins] However, they provide background themes found later in the ***Gospel of John*** and apocalyptic references found both in ***Daniel*** and the New Testament ***Book of Revelation***

8	Nov 5	1:1-6	<b>Introduction</b> & 1 <sup>st</sup> Zechariah: Introductory oracle
9	Nov 12	1:7-3:10	1 <sup>st</sup> – 4 <sup>th</sup> visions: horses, measuring cord, lampstand & olive trees
10	Nov 19	4:1-6:8	5 <sup>th</sup> ~ oracle ~ 6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> visions: scroll, bushel, four horse-drawn chariots
11	Nov 26	6:9-8:23	Oracle ~ about fasting ~ the ideal future
<b>Advent</b>			
12	Dec 3	9:1-10:12	2 <sup>nd</sup> Zechariah: many oracles ~ Judah’s neighbors, Messianic king, shepherds
13	Dec 10	11:1-13:1	...oracles ~ destruction, allegory of shepherds, destiny of Judah & Jerusalem
14	Dec 17	13:2-14:21	...oracles ~ end of prophecy, the sword, the final battle

**Happy Christmas & Epiphany! ~ December 24 thru January 13**



***The Gospel of John: Jesus’ “Farewell Discourse”*** ~ four of the 21 chapters in this gospel (chapters 14-17) are placed immediately after the end of the “Last Supper,” where (only in this gospel) Jesus has admonished his disciples: *I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.* As Jesus’ final instructions to his disciples, the discourse is divided into three parts, with the 1<sup>st</sup> part repeated. “The speeches of the first 12 chapters are largely to unbelievers; now the Fourth Gospel turns our attention to Jesus’ message for believers, gathering all such material into one place.” [Raymond. E. Brown] ~ some of the most loved passages of John are found here

15	Jan 14	14:1-31	review the gospel with an eye for themes from Zechariah ~ many mansions
16	Jan 21	15:1-17:26	promise of the “Paraclete-Spirit-Advocate” ~ vine and branches

**Three Epistles of John** ~ along with the **Gospel of John** and **The Book of Revelation** (also called *The Apocalypse of John*), this group of writings have been called the “Johannine corpus” and are probably attributable to different writers, perhaps in different generations, of a “community,” which Johannine scholar Raymond Brown has called “the community of the beloved disciple” – a character at the end of John’s Gospel who appears with that title in no other gospel ~ the 1<sup>st</sup> letter is not written in letter form, however the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> are ~ the “writer” is a presbyter in the church community; the first two letters emphasize Jesus’ commandment of loving one another, but also condemn “deceivers” (called the antichrist), who have left them and gone forth into the world

17	Jan 28	I:1:1-3:10	<b>Introduction</b> & Prologue ~Part 1: Walk in the Light of God
18	Feb 4	I:3:11-5:12	Part 2: Walk as Children of the God of Love
19	Feb 11	I:5:13-21; II & III	Epilogue of 1 <sup>st</sup> letter & very brief 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> letters

**Lent**

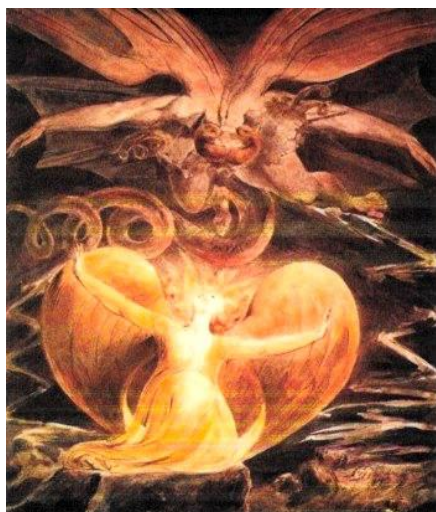


← **The Great Red Dragon & the Woman Clothed with the Sun**

William Blake (1805-10), English poet, painter & engraver

pen, black chalk & watercolor,

Rosenwald Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington DC



**The Book of Revelation** ~ Catherine Ann Cory, PhD, in the *New Collegeville Commentary on the Book of Revelation* (2006) offers this thought: ‘More than any other part of the New Testament, the book of Revelation evokes greatly varying reactions among its readers. Some find it surreal and confusing or simply silly and therefore want to ignore it completely. Others find it endlessly fascinating because of its many colorful and sometimes grotesque images. Others, fearful about the future, view the book as an illustrated timeline that will help them better prepare for the events of the end of the world. Still others see it as a kind of ‘war manual,’ explaining how they should conduct themselves in the impending battle between the righteous ones and the forces of evil in the world.’ The best

surmise about the book’s author is that he was an early Christian prophet by the name of John, who is referenced nowhere else in early Christian literature ...although two early church writers of the late 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyon, identified him with the apostle John and the writer of the Fourth Gospel; this is highly unlikely because of the book’s most plausible dating -- is about 95 CE ~ the book was commonly accepted as part of the New Testament canon in the latter half the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE.

20	Feb 18	1:1-20	<b>Introduction</b> & Prologue & 1 <sup>st</sup> vision: “One like a Son of Man”
21	Feb 25	2:1-3:22	Letters to 7 churches: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea
22	Mar 4	4:1-5:14	Vision of God’s throne and the lamb
23	Mar 11	6:1-16	Vision of the Seven Seals: 1 <sup>st</sup> thru 6 <sup>th</sup>
24	Mar 18	7:1-17	Vision of the Seven Seals: Interlude & 7 <sup>th</sup>
25	Mar 25	8:1-9:21	Vision of the Seven Trumpets: 1 <sup>st</sup> thru 6 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Easter Sunday ~ April 1</b>			
26	Apr 8	10:1-11:14	Vision of the Seven Trumpets: Interlude & 7 <sup>th</sup>
27	Apr 15	12:1-18	2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle of visions: Woman and dragon & War In heaven
28	Apr 22	13:1-18	Vision: Beasts of the sea, earth
29	Apr 29	14:1-20	Visions: Lamb on Mount Zion ~ Imminent judgment
30	May 6	15:1-16:21	Vision of Seven bowls
31	May 13	17:1-18:24	The Fall of Babylon
32	May 20	19:1-21	Seven visions of the Last Things: John witnesses the heavenly liturgy 1 <sup>st</sup> – horse & rider; 2 <sup>nd</sup> – God’s great supper; 3 <sup>rd</sup> – beast & false prophet destroyed
33	May 27	20:1-15	4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> – “thousand year” visions; 6 <sup>th</sup> – judgment before God’s throne
34	June 3	21:1-27	7 <sup>th</sup> – vision of the new Jerusalem: bride of the lamb & the new temple
35	June 10	22:1-21	the New creation & epilogue

With the aid of thoughtful Biblical scholars, our challenge will be to see what we make out of these extra-ordinary visions: what insights they may have intended to reveal, and what links we can uncover between the texts!