

The only thing that matters is that you are reading God's word regularly. While that is still true with this schedule, the goal with this one is to get a better understanding of the entire story of the bible. There is no substitute for reading God's word. Keep reading! My website is at <http://graceofourlord.wordpress.com>. I encourage you to get the actual reading plan I am currently following. You can get it from the same place I do - at [this link](#). They have some great guidance for the reading plan there as well, and they have it all in both PDF and in Kindle format!

December 2012						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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2	3 (Week 49)	4 Eph 2	5 Eph 3	6 Eph 4	7 Eph 5	8
9 (Week 50)	10 1 Peter 1	11 1 Peter 2	12 Hebrews 3	13 Hebrews 4	14 Hebrews 5	15
16 (Week 51)	17 Hebrews 6	18 Hebrews 7	19 Hebrews 8	20 Hebrews 9	21 Hebrews 10	22
23 (Week 52)	24 Hebrews 11	25 Rev 4	26 Rev 5	27 Rev 21	28 Rev 22	29
30	31	Notes:				

December Week 4 (Week 52) Summary

Hebrews 11, and Revelation 4, 5, 21, and 22- Click the chapter below to go to the ESV Bible passage for that chapter and read or listen.

[Hebrews 11](#) - Famous for the great description of faith in verse 1 ("faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen"), Hebrews 11 is (arguably most unfortunately) often called the "Hall of Faith" or the "Faith Hall of Fame." Most of the accounts of people in this chapter are familiar to most people. Some of the references are not so clear, and

some maybe not so familiar. Verse 33's reference to those who "quenched the power of fire" is likely of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from [Daniel 2:49-3:30](#). Verse 35's women who "received back their dead by resurrection" is likely (among others) of Elijah raising the son of the widow of Zarephath ([1 Kings 17:17-24](#)) and Elisha raising the son of a Shunammite woman ([2 Kings 4:18-37](#)). Verse 37's gruesome deaths may refer to the extra-biblical accounts of the deaths of Jeremiah and Isaiah.

But this chapter is not an account of extraordinary men and women with supreme faith. It is rather the story of ordinary men and women like you and me, who because of their faith in God, were blessed with the power and grace of His mighty hand. It is the story of their endurance and perseverance through all manner of evil against them and bitter times, and how that endurance saw them through it by their faith. It is the assurance that the recipients of this letter can persevere by their faith through the endurance the writer encouraged them to have in [chapter 10](#). It is the assurance that we can do it as well. We have a better promise, through a better covenant, and if we are faithful, we will receive our reward - which will be the same perfect reward those mentioned in this chapter will ultimately receive (verses 39-40).

[Revelation 4](#) - John's vision here begins with a door open into heaven. The first voice he hears in verse one is generally accepted to be that of Jesus. John had heard that voice on earth. As John is then aware of being fully in the manifested presence of the Holy Spirit, the visions that occur after that remind us of a similar reference in [Ezekiel 3:12-15](#). Much interpretation of the detail of the imagery that follows has been made to the point of extremity. One writer noted: *"One who adapts Biblical images as freely as he (John) has in this chapter should not be expected to preserve an undeviating consistency in his pictures. They are for kindling the imagination, not for transference to the drawing board."*

No matter what interpretation you give each of these eleven verses, keep in mind the original audience. These were persecuted Christians, many of whom may have known people - even had loved ones - that had been killed because of their faith in the Lord. But they were holding on to that faith while looking toward heaven. Here, as instructed by the Lord in [Revelation 1:10-11](#), John gives them a grand glimpse of that splendor in the sort of literary imagery that was common to their day. In the middle of the Lord's battle with Satan, John gets that look at the throne of our Creator in heaven, and the worship that He worthily receives there.

[Revelation 5](#) - The image here of God holding the scroll that no one in heaven or on earth was worthy to open is certainly a symbol of the fulfillment of God's plan for the redemption of man and our salvation. Jesus is the only one that could fill that post. The image of the Lamb who is the Lion of Judah (a reference to [Genesis 49:9](#)) from the root of David all point back to Isaiah ([Isaiah 11:1, 10](#), [Isaiah 53:4-7](#)). Taking the scroll from the hand of God is clearly symbolic of Jesus, the Lamb, having been crucified, thereby fulfilling God's plan and taking His place there with God, having proved himself worthy to be praised and worshiped as God was in the previous chapter (verses 9-11).

[Revelation 21](#) - With all of the imagery amid these chapters, just what is meant by a new heaven and a new earth is highly debated. Many see it as a literal renewal of earth after the old has passed away. But much about what is spoken of in this chapter simply does not fit into such a

notion. [2 Peter 3:10-13](#) affirms that the earth and the heavenly bodies will be destroyed - burned up - after the judgment. Just how this imagery of a new heaven and a new earth does fit into the coming of the faithful to heaven is uncertain. What is certain is that there will be a literal new home for the faithful that is so wonderful than our minds probably could not grasp it without the imagery contained here that is full of references to precious metals and jewels and such.

No sun or moon will be needed because "*the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.*" No temple is there because God will be in the midst of his faithful, and they shall be His people. This is an echo of the prophetic language in [Isaiah 60:19-20](#). The description of John being carried away in the Spirit to the high mountain to view the new Jerusalem is reminiscent of the time after "Gog and Magog's" destruction [Ezekiel 38-39](#), when Ezekiel was transported to "a very high mountain" ([Ezekiel 40:2-3](#)) to see the future temple of God. The measurements done this time are enormous (a stadia was about 185 meters) and all are multiples of twelve; and the number is repeated in other descriptions here as both the twelve apostles and the twelve tribes of Israel are mentioned. Both of these groups were important, after all, in both the old covenant and the new covenant.

The last word of comfort in this chapter for these first century Christians - and for us - is that once in heaven, no longer will they have to live among those who do evil in the world or, most especially, do evil to them, as verse 27 says "...*nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.*"

[Revelation 22](#) - The imagery used here to describe heaven, the dwelling place of God and our Lord Jesus (and one day us as well) in these first few verses harkens back to [Ezekiel 47:1-12](#). No longer will there be anything accursed, verse 3 says; and the tree of life will be there (see [Genesis 2:9](#)). This seems to be a symbol for the restored condition of things as they were between man and God before the fall ([Genesis 3](#)).

Verse 6 is a reminder that the other events spoken of in this book are to occur soon, but Jesus reminds that He is coming back (verse 7). John affirms in verse 8 that it was he that received all of these visions; and he fell down to worship the angel who showed him, but was rebuked for doing so, as the angel reminded him that only the Lord was to be worshiped.

Jesus again promises that He is coming to bring his recompense for each of us for what we have done ([Isaiah 62:11](#)). Verse 13 ("*I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end*") signifies the eternal supremacy of God and His Son. Verse 17 repeats the promise that eternal life is available freely to all who will come - Jesus paid the price for it already.

John finishes the New Testament with the yearning call to Jesus as Lord to come. Then finally, and appropriately: "*The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.*"

Amen, indeed!

