

REVELATION – 101

8/3/25 – PM

Introduction: This last of the inspired 66 books of the Bible is “the Revelation of Jesus Christ”. It is one message (singular) “revealing” or “unveiling” Jesus Christ and eternity future. It is the timeline for Christian people, from the first coming of Christ unto the second coming of Christ. It presents His person, His power, and His program. The human author of the book is John the Apostle. The one who the gospel says “Jesus loved”. He is also the author of the Gospel of John, and the epistles of first, second, and third John.

The book was written around 95 A.D. while John was exiled to the Isle of Patmos, as persecution for his preaching ministry. This island served as a penal colony for many of Rome’s criminals and political prisoners. It is located in the Aegean Sea about 24 miles west of Asia Minor and is about 60 square miles in size. John wrote most likely while Domitian was the Roman emperor. While worship of deceased emperors had been practiced for many years, Domitian was the first to demand that he be worshiped while he was still alive. It is said that he “bathed his empire in the blood of Christians.”

John may have been between 80 and 90 years old when he received this prophetic book from the Lord. It is the only book of prophecy in the New Testament. The Greek word for “revelation” is apokalypsis, where we get the word apocalypse. There are four apocalyptic books in the Bible: Daniel, Ezekiel, Zechariah, and Revelation. The term refers to the use of symbolism to communicate an absolute truth. In order to interpret apocalyptic themes in the Bible, the interpretation comes by comparing scripture with scripture. In fact, Bible scholars say that Revelation contains some 350 references to the Old Testament.

There are 4 primary approaches to interpreting the book of Revelation:

1. Non-literal or allegorical approach (fable, legend, myth, fairy tale). A story of the ongoing struggle between good and evil.

2. The Preterist approach – those who believe that Revelation was written in or before 70 A.D., when Titus, the Roman general came and destroyed the Temple, devastated the city, and dispersed the Jewish people to the four corners of the earth. Preterists deny future events ever taking place. This approach is to be rejected, as the book was written in 95 A.D., so it could not be symbolic of the early church. The word preterist means “past”.
3. The Historical approach – This approach uses the symbols and events in Revelation as pictures of the total Church Age leading to the second coming of Christ. This approach leaves out Israel and its importance in the book as the 70th week of Daniel’s prophecy is fulfilled.
4. The Futuristic approach – It looks at the events of Revelation as literal (while certainly recognizing the symbols of apocalyptic literature used in the book of Revelation). This approach includes the premillennial return of Christ to the earth, and the pre-tribulational rapture of the church.

*This is the approach of this series, and requires a deeper study of the book. It also recognizes you have to study Revelation chronologically. The events of the book unfold chronologically. Chapters 4-22 haven’t taken place yet.

The most simple outline of the book of Revelation is actually found in chapter 1:19 – “write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.”

1. The things John knew from the past (ch.1)
2. The things John knew presently (ch. 2-3)
3. The things which shall be hereafter (ch. 4-22)

In his book on Revelation, Dr. Jimmy DeYoung outlines it further like this:

1. The prelude to the tribulation (Rev. 1:1-4:1)
2. The tribulation period (Rev. 4:2-19:10)
3. The postlude to the tribulation (Rev. 19:11-22:21)

While the book of Revelation is not easy, we understand 2 Timothy 3:16 – “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” God wants us to study ALL of His word, and not to shy away or ignore it, but to rightly divide the Word of Truth. So this series will be a journey for sure – but I believe it will be valuable time spent in God’s Word – especially as we find ourselves increasingly closer to these days of prophecy.

I. CHAPTER 1 (Revelation 1:1-8)

A. Vs. 1

- a. The “revealing” or “unveiling” of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, (God the father gave this purpose / plan to the son) - John 5:22-23
- b. show unto his servants (us) things which must “shortly” come to pass. The word is not necessarily about timing, but that it will be “suddenly”, or “swiftly” when it does come.
- c. Sent and signified by his angel unto his servant John. Angels bear messages from Heaven, and this was a sign to John of the importance of the message. (Gabriel? Book of Daniel)

B. Vs. 2

- a. John bare record (“to testify as an eyewitness in court”)
 - i. Of the word of God (His gospel – “in the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.”)
 - ii. Of the testimony of Jesus Christ (3.5 years as disciple)
 - iii. Of all things that he saw (then and on Patmos)

C. Vs. 3

- a. The first of 7 blessings in the Book of Revelation (the number 7 (completion) appears in Revelation 54 times, including 7 churches, 7 spirits, 7 candlesticks, 7 stars, 7 lamps, 7 seals, 7 horns, 7 trumpets, etc.)
 - i. Blessed is he that readeth

- ii. And they that hear the words of this prophecy (and keep those things which are written therein)
- iii. For the time is at hand (the period of these events is impending) Luke 21:28 / James 5:8

D. Vs. 4-8 – The formal salutation for John to the 7 churches

- a. These churches are in Asia minor (western Asia). They are addressed individually in chapters 2-3
- b. A message of Grace and Peace from the Father (I AM), the Spirit (7 spirits is a description of the perfection and completeness of the Holy Spirit's person and power. He is before the throne because he is the executor of God's purposes. And from Jesus Christ (vs. 5) description.
- c. The praise of our salvation – vs. 5-6. Loves us, washed us from our sins in his own blood, made us kings and priests. Glory to him for ever and ever.
- d. Vs. 7 – a reference to his second coming (not the rapture)
 - i. Acts 1:9-11 – “clouds”
 - ii. “they also which pierced him” (Israel)
 - iii. Even so – amen (so be it)
- e. Vs. 8 – the first words of Christ himself in the book, identifying himself as Alpha & Omega. These are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, signifying the comprising of everything. He is the beginning and the ending. He is the author and finisher of our faith. He is, and was, and is to come the almighty. It means He is the totality of all things, and by Him all things consist. Christ also uses this title in the last chapter of Revelation.

E. Vs. 9 – Now John begins to tell the prophecy in the first person.

He identifies himself as a brother and companion in tribulation, in the kingdom, and the patience of Jesus Christ. He explains where he was and why he was there. Prisoners at Patmos labored in the mines of the island. History tells us that after Emperor Domitian's

death, that John was allowed to return to Ephesus, where he once pastored the church.

- F. Vs. 10-20 – His first vision of Christ during this prophecy
 - a. “in the Spirit” refers to his experience of being carried beyond normal sense into a state where God could reveal supernaturally the contents of this book. Ezekiel, Peter, and Paul had similar experiences. The phrase is used 13 times in the New Testament, and refers to the individual being controlled by the Spirit for prophetic purposes.
 - b. On the Lord’s Day (Resurrection Day) the first day of the week. (Not “the day of the Lord” – the second coming)
 - c. Christ speaks to him (alpha and omega – Isaiah 44:6) with a voice of a trumpet, telling him to write what he sees and to send it to the 7 churches (by name). Several applications:
 - i. Those local churches of that time (specific issues)
 - ii. All churches for all time (issues to avoid)
 - iii. Personal (individual Christians – Rev. 3:20)
 - iv. Prophetic (the church age – dispensations)
 - d. He sees and describes Christ as the Son of man (Daniel 7:13-14)
 - i. Garment – Judge
 - ii. Golden girdle – Priest of Israel
 - iii. Hair – white like wool, white as snow – Purity
 - iv. Eyes as a flame of fire – all seeing, searching
 - v. Feet like unto fine brass – judgment (furnace)
 - vi. Voice like many waters – (ill. Niagara Falls)
 - vii. Right hand – 7 stars – complete control
 - viii. Mouth, a sharp, two-edged sword – word of God
 - ix. Countenance – as the sun in its strength – light/world
 - 1. Not the baby in a manger. Not the carpenter’s son. Not the Savior on the cross – but the Son of God in power and great glory

- e. John collapses / faints at the sight.
 - i. Jesus begins speaking in verse 17 and doesn't stop until Revelation 4:1. He identifies himself again:
 - 1. The first and the last
 - 2. He that liveth and was dead; and behold I am alive forevermore.
 - 3. Have the keys of hell and death.
- f. Vs. 19-20
 - i. Jesus tells him to write – the past, the present, and the future.
 - ii. He explains the mystery of the seven stars in his hand and the seven candlesticks. The candlesticks are the seven churches (vs. 11). The seven stars are the angels (messengers) to the churches. Most believe these messengers are the pastors of the churches (each of the 7 letters is addressed to the angel of the church, as the pastor would be the messenger from God to the congregation).

NEXT WEEK – Chapters 2-3 – The Messages to the Seven Churches