

## ***'The Revelation of Jesus Christ & His Appeal to the Seven Churches'***

### **Why Should We Study Revelation?**

It reveals truth relative to every fundamental of Biblical Theology:

*'Confusion in biblical interpretation will increase confusion in the understanding of the Book of Revelation'* (J.F. Walvoord, 2011)

**§ While there are no direct quotations from the O.T. there are over 550 refs.**

### **Seven Reasons Why We Should Study Revelation:**

1. It is the 'apocalypse' or unveiling of Jesus Christ (cp. **Luk 2:32**).
2. All key things in the Bible find an echo therein – and their end.
3. The goal to which the purposes of God are moving, 'Alpha - Omega'.
4. Things in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, brought under God's final authority, in Jesus Christ, the "King of Kings..." (**1Cor 15:25**).
5. New heaven and new earth = end of death, Hades, grave, and all the enemies of God and opponents of His authority.
6. It is part of our destiny: not just O.T. (Kingdom) saints, or Tribulation martyrs / saints. Our destiny is there too, as the, "Bride of the Lamb".
7. It should regulate our manner of life now – and our "hope" (**22:20**).  
(partly cited W.A. Criswell, 1995)

### **What is Revelation About?**

#### **God's Future Program:**

- a.) The last 7 years of Daniel's 490 Year Timeline (**Dan 9:26**)
- b.) The 1,000 years of Kingdom Reign (**Rev 20**)
- c.) The new heaven & earth – Eternal State (**Rev 21**)
- d.) The fulfilment of O.T. Prophecies (e.g. **Zech 14**)
- e.) The Covenant Promises fulfilled (**Gen 15; 2Sam 7; Jer 31**)

**OR:** (preterism / historicism)

Only the distant past? Up to AD70, and the destruction of Temple?

Or only Church history? All a spiritual 'tribulation' & no literal kingdom?

**OR:** (idealism)

Future, but not literal? The 'kingdom' is in us ... therefore;

'We are preparing the world for His kingdom?'

## How Should We Study Revelation?

1. Prayerfully and with humility (Never dogmatically; with an open mind).
2. Read it first as a WHOLE (less than 1 hour).
3. Note things you read that seem familiar (a whole Bible perspective).
4. Read with hope, faith, and courage – it is for US too (Church saints).
5. Do not over speculate – stay close to the text (sound exegesis).
6. Take note of the “*blessings*”. They are specific, within the book.
7. Allow your study to exalt Jesus Christ – in your own heart.

(partly cited Paige Patterson, 2012)

## Where are WE in the Book of Revelation?

(i.e. ‘Does the Church go through the Tribulation?’ NO.)

John is OUR representative – the “*beloved disciple*”, the brother of James. Author of Gospel, 3 Epistles; last disciple addressed personally (Jn 21:22), “*If I will...*” Does live to see (in vision) the Coming of Jesus (95AD).

(Chp 1) John is in ISOLATION – but in personal fellowship with Jesus Christ.

(Chp 2-3) Jesus is ASSOCIATED with local Church testimony – testing their fellowship with, and obedience to Him ... (present day).

(Chp 4-19) John is “*in spirit*” VIEWING the future – 7 Years of Tribulation.

(Chp 20-22) John is “*in spirit*” VIEWING the Kingdom Age & Eternal State.

(Chp 22) John is with us AWAITING the Coming of our Lord Jesus.

§ That is a 5-Fold Division, but (Chps 4-21) are ALL future...

### § The Threefold Division:

The Sight of Christ (Chp 1) “*things which you have seen*”

The Sayings of Christ (Chp 2-3) “*things which are*”

The Supremacy of Christ (Chp 4-22) “*things which shall be after these things*”

His Glory: The Person (Chp 1)

His Grace: The Purposes (Chp 2-3)

His Government: The Power (Chp 4-22)

(cited J. Allen ‘Revelation’, 1997)

## What Did John See?

John saw a 'vista' across **Three Major Prophetic Periods:**

1. "The Acceptable Year of the Lord" (Isa 61:2; Luk 4:19)
2. "The Day of Vengeance of our God" (Isa 61:2, 63:4)
3. "The Year of My Redeemed" (Isa 63:4)

**Key words:** "hear / heard" 45x (Rev 1: 3) 'writings...'  
"see / saw" 27x (Rev 1:11) 'vision of Christ'  
"look / looked" 5x (Rev 4:1) 'door in heaven...'

### § NOTE the SIGNIFICANCE of SEVENS in the BOOK:

- 7 References to the "revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:2)
- 7 Blessings – beginning to end. (1: 3 – 22:14)
- 7 Spirits of God (1:4)
- 7 Churches in Asia (1:11; 2-3)
- 7 Lampstands (1:12)
- 7 Aspects of Jesus Christ (1:13-16)
- 7 Church Epistles (1:11; Chps 2-3) (all seen in Chp. 1 Only)

### Seven Physical Aspects of Jesus Christ: (as John had not seen Him before)

1. "head and hair" **PERFECTION** "white as wool...as snow"
2. "eyes" **PENETRATION** "flame of fire"
3. "feet" **PURITY** "fine brass...burning..."
4. "voice" **POWER** "sound of many waters"
5. "right hand" **POSSESSION** "seven stars"
6. "mouth" **PROTECTION** "sharp sword"
7. "countenance" **PRE-EMINENCE** "sun shining in his strength"

### The Sayings of Jesus...

To One <u>Saint</u>	"Prisoner"	<b>WORSHIP</b>
To Each <u>Church</u>	"Lampstand"	<b>WORK</b>
To The <u>Body of Christ</u>	"Bride"	<b>WATCH</b>

## Who Was John Writing To ..?

Place:	Meaning:	Contrasts:
1. <b>EPHESUS</b>	<i>'Desirable'</i>	Love v Hate
2. <b>SMYRNA</b>	<i>'Suffering'</i>	Poverty v Riches
3. <b>PERGAMUM</b>	<i>'Elevated /joined'</i>	Hold v Cast
4. <b>THYATIRA</b>	<i>'Weary of sacrifice'</i>	Last v First
5. <b>SARDIS</b>	<i>'Things remaining'</i>	Living v Dead
6. <b>PHILADELPHIA</b>	<i>'Brotherly love'</i>	Open v Shut
7. <b>LAODICEA</b>	<i>'Rights of the people'</i>	Cold v Hot

## Who Was Addressing the Churches? - Jesus Christ the Head - HIS:

1. Ephesus: **INTEGRITY** "walks...holds"
2. Smyrna: **IMMORTALITY** "alive...not hurt of second death"
3. Pergamum: **INVINCIBILITY** "fight with the sword..."
4. Thyatira: **INCORRUPTIBILITY** "eyes of fire..."
5. Sardis: **IMMEDIACY OF APPEARING** "come as a thief"
6. Philadelphia: **INCENTIVE TO ACTIVITY** "set...an open door"
7. Laodicea: **INDIVIDUAL APPEAL** "if any man..."

## **Problems Being Addressed – Progressive Deterioration? – Warning!**

- "deeds of Nicolaitanes..." (2:6)
- "doctrine of Nicolaitanes" (2:15)
- "doctrine of Balaam..." (2:14)
- "teaching of Jezebel..." (2:20)
- "seat of Satan..." (2:13)
- "Satan's dwelling..." (2:13)
- "depths of Satan..." (2:25)

**§ Note:** Progression of wickedness / corruption IN professing churches!

## What are the Promises Being Delivered?

As Seen In:

- |                 |                              |                   |
|-----------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. EPHESUS      | "tree of life..."            | (lost in) Adam    |
| 2. SMYRNA       | "crown of life..."           | Joseph            |
| 3. PERGAMUM     | "hidden manna..."            | Moses / Joshua    |
| 4. THYATIRA     | "power nations..."           | David / Solomon   |
| 5. SARDIS       | "name in a book..."          | Isaiah / Jeremiah |
| 6. PHILADELPHIA | "pillar in the Temple..."    | Ezekiel           |
| 7. LAODICEA     | "any man...sit on my throne" | Daniel            |

§ Both the O.T. saints (Israel), and the Church, have their place in the future Kingdom. We should not be surprised if we see links and connections in the promises being made to **us**; as well as to **them**.

## The Themes of ALL Unfilled Prophecy:

(Topic 2)

(‘Eschatology’ = the doctrine of last things; resurrection, judgment, the Messianic kingdom, the afterlife.)

### Four Great Biblical Themes:

- |                            |                   |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Rebirth of Israel:      | <b>National</b>   |
| 2. Realignment of Nations: | <b>Political</b>  |
| 3. Rapture of the Church:  | <b>Essential</b>  |
| 4. Return of Messiah:      | <b>Millennial</b> |

§ We are seeing indications in all areas of a ‘meeting point’ – of end times’:

Israel reborn Spiritually	} may not be more than 7 years away
Kingdom of Satan (Antichrist) destroyed	
The Church / Bride with Christ	
The Kingdom established	

### § QUESTIONS to ASK:

Israel – besieged – in the Land in unbelief?  
Nations – Globalized for -ve purposes (WEF / UN / WHO etc.)?  
Church – Is she effectual – according to her commission?  
Evil / Wickedness – has it almost peaked? (2Thess 2)  
Is His Coming near?

“He must reign, till He hath put all His enemies under His feet” (1Cor 15:25)

## **The Threads of ALL Prophecy & the “Apocalypse”:** (Topic 3)

§ Promise of a “*Deliverer*” – Conflict between Satan & Christ (the two seeds)

The ‘**Red Thread**’ of Prophecy (25% of all scripture was given as prophecy)

§ 33 separate prophetic passages fulfilled in ONE day – at Jesus’ death.

### **Trace the Threads:** (28 Chps. 1 x night x 4 weeks)

1. (Deut 28-31) Last words & warnings - Moses
2. (Isaiah 27-28; 66) “*covenant with Hades*” - Rebirth
3. (Ezek 37-39; 48) Northern war / Tribal Divisions (12)
4. (Dan 2-3; 7-9; 12) Global Empires – “70 weeks” – End ...
5. (Hos 14) Ephraim (N Israel) & Judah - combined
6. (Joel 2-3) “*last days*” – “*day of Jehovah*” (Acts 2)
7. (Amos 9) Millennial bounty, plenty & prosperity
8. (Zech 9-14) Mourning / Smiting / Salvation / Kingdom
9. (Luke 21) Signs of Coming of “*Son of Man*”
10. (John 14) “*prepared place*” – “*come again*”

### **Theological Framework:** (Rev 1:1-2, 19; 19:10) (1Cor 15:23)

**CHRISTOLOGICAL** – from **Christ Himself** – Eight times:

“*God ... Christ ... angel ... servants ... John*” – Divine conduit

- a. “*the things which thou **hast seen***” **Past**
- b. “*the things which **are***” **Present**
- c. “*the things which shall be **after\_these\_things***” **Future**

§ This **KEY** phrase is a major divider of the Book: occurring 7 times more.

§ **TWICE** in one sentence (Chp 4:1) – a KEY repetition by John.

§ Each time indicates a ‘moving’ stage. Sequential ....

§ Last use (Chp 20:3).

## **PNEUMATOLOGICAL** – from the **Holy Spirit** – Four times:

- a. “*in Spirit on the Lord’s Day*” (1:10) - Patmos
- b. “*in Spirit – in the throne room*” (4:2) - Heaven
- c. “*in Spirit into a wilderness*” (17:3) - Babylon
- d. “*in Spirit to a great high mountain*” (19:10) - Bride

(**Note:** 1 & 3 and 2 & 4 have spiritual links)

## **THEOLOGICAL** – from **God Himself** – Seven times:

- a. “*open door*” (4:1) – in Heaven - link to (f.)
- b. “*open scroll*” (5:1) - link to (g.)
- c. “*open Abyss*” (9:1) - link to (g.)
- d. “*open inner Temple*” (11:19) - link to (e.)
- e. “ “ “ (15:5)
- f. “*open heaven*” (19:11)
- g. “*open books*” (20:12-14)

## **CHRONOLOGICAL** - “*after\_these\_things*” (*mèta\_taûta*) – From Christ:

- a. “*after\_these\_things ...*” (1:19) – Present to end Church Age
- b. “ “ “ (4:1) x 2 – End of ‘Day of grace’
- c. (9:12) – After “*Seals*” & “144,000”
- d. (15:5) – After 1<sup>st</sup> “*woe*” (5 months)
- e. (18:1) – After religious “*Babylon*”
- f. (19:1) – End of Tribulation – “*Armageddon*”
- g. (20:3) – After “1,000 years” – “*Kingdom*”

**§ Note:** “*I saw*” x 44 “*I heard*” x 27 - John is a “*seer*” in the O.T. sense.

## **THE ‘TOPOGRAPHY’ of the BOOK** – ‘Configuration & Divisions’ (Topic 4)

### **§ Twelve KEY Sections:**

1. (1:1-9) General Introduction – Christ Revealed
2. (1:10-20) The Lampstands & the Head – Christ Ruling
3. (2:1-3:22) Church in Profession as God’s Witness – Deterioration?
4. (4:1-5:14) Redeemed in Glory – Risen Lamb Central – The Scroll
5. (6:1-8:1) The 7 Seals Opened – Legal Judgments
6. (8:2-11:18) The 7 Trumpets Sounded – Judgment Intensified

7. (12:1-15:4) The 7 Key Characters in the End Times (parenthesis)
8. (15:5-16:21) The 7 Bowls Poured – Judgment on the Beasts Kingdom
9. (17:1-18:24) The Two Babylons Judged (parenthetic)
10. (19:1-21:8) The ‘Coming in Power’ & Kingdom Reign – Eternal State
11. (21:9-22:5) The Bride & The New Jerusalem
12. (22:6-22:21) Final Warnings, Appeals & Encouragement – NOW

## § The CHRONOLOGY of the Book: - Timeframe

(Chps 2-3) **Church Period** – 2,000+ years (to date ...)

“*The Acceptable Year of the Lord*” (Isa 61:2; Luke 4:19)

(Chps 4-19) **Judgment Period** – 7 years – ‘tribulation’

“*The Day of Vengeance of our God*” (Isa 61:2; 63:4)

(Chp 19-22) **Kingdom Period** – 1,000 Years + ‘Eternal State ...’

“*The Year of My Redeemed*” (Isa 63:4)

## § The PARENTHESSES of the Book: (para + thesis)

- a. (Chp. 7) Between the 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Seal – 144,000 Sealed
- b. (Chp. 10-11:13) Between the 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet
- c. (Chp. 11:19-15:4) Between Trumpets & Bowls
- d. (Chp. 16:13-16) Between the 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Bowl
- e. (Chp. 17-18) Between the Bowls & the Battle – Babylon
- f. (Chp. 21:9-22:5) After ‘Eternal State’ – New Jerusalem

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### SUMMARY:

§ Try and read the whole Book, at one sitting (can take less than 1hr.).

§ Find and mark the 7 “*blessings*” – from Chps 1 – 22.

§ See how many other 7’s you can find ...

§ Read **Chp 1** in preparation.

§ Look for all the Key words used in the Notes.

§ Read **ALL** the ‘*Thread*’ passages referred to (Topic 3).



