

Revelation 1

Sunday, July 5, 2020

Outline:

I. Introduction (1-3)

1. The Revealing of Jesus, the Future, and the Word
2. The Blessing in Reading, Hearing, and Keeping the Word

II. Identification (4-8)

III. Revelation (9-18)

1. The Glory of Jesus
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IV. The Mission (19-20)

1. Of John
2. Of the Church

I. Introduction (1-3)

We now come to the final book of the Bible – it's not merely the Revelation of the future, - although that's inclusive in the book and we need to know those things about the future to always be ready, always be watching, we need to know what to look for and we need to know beyond a shadow of a doubt that the devil will be defeated, evil will end, Christians can look forward to our forever homes in heaven with God (imagine that) - all that is imperative to know, but, the book of Revelation actually begins and is rooted in the Revelation of Jesus Christ...and you'll see that emphasis as we study this book together.

Many people have a misconception of Jesus, they think He's only gentle, they think He's only love (they have a misconception of love as well), but there's more we need to know - the revelation is, He's not just gentle, He's also Judgmental in that He is the Judge; He's not just love, He's also holy.

He doesn't just ride a donkey peacefully, He will ride the white horse, vengefully. He doesn't just bear a cross to redeem us, He wears the crown to rule us. He's not just a man, He's God; and He doesn't just usher people into heaven, He will cast all the obstinate rebellious non-believers into hell.

This is the revelation of Who Jesus **really** is.

This is the truth, from the top; it comes to us from the Father - did you notice the flow of v. 1? (read)

The Father, gave it to the Son, who in the book predominantly gives it to the angels, who give it to His servant John, in order that he might give it to us His servants, as well.

"...things which must shortly take place..."

Someone might read that and say, "Hey, it's been 2,000 years." (see Psalm 90:4; 2 Peter 3:8)

This speaks of the fact that **when** the events of the last of the last days begin to materialize, things will escalate rapidly. Have you noticed the potential for that? That things **can** and **are** happening fast? Suddenly? Almost exponentially?

At the end of the day we don't know when - but it seems soon - and it **MUST** happen!
(don't miss the word "must")

V. 2 tells us that John bore witness, he faithfully reported everything he heard and saw in his visions - from the Father about the Son.

Adrian Rogers gave an illustration, *"Imagine a train station. In the train station is a station man whose main objective is to know as much as possible about all of the trains. He has all kinds of intricate charts to help him predict exactly where a train is and when it will reach the station. Imagine also that there is a young lady at the station. She is not nearly as informed as the station master, but she knows that her fiancé is on the train that is about to arrive, and she can hardly wait for him to get there."*

May our study of Revelation, be like the young lady whose heart beats in anticipation of the arrival of the one she loves. If you don't find Jesus in the Book of Revelation, you have missed the real point.

My prayer is that this will be an encouragement to you. After speaking of Christ's return, Paul wrote to the church at Thessalonica, **1 Thessalonians 4:18**, "Therefore comfort one another with these words."

³ Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.

This the first of 7 explicit blessings revealed in the book of Revelation; some students of Scripture call them beatitudes; we read the blessing here and then in (14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7; 22:14).

Here in v. 3 we see that you'll be blessed if you **read** it (it takes 1 hour and 23 minutes to read the book in its entirety)

You'll also be blessed if you **hear** it - more than likely in reference to it being read and explained.

And it's always true that you'll be most blessed if you **keep** it.

Luke 11:27- 28, "And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, 'Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!' But He said, 'More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!'"

John 13:17, "If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."

God blesses obedience.

"...for the time is near..." = extra incentive to obey.

Romans 13:11, "And *do* this, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation *is* nearer than when we *first* believed."

James 5:8, "You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand."

1 Peter 4:7, "But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers."

II. Identification (4-8)

John the Beloved is writing to the seven churches which are specifically named in v. 11 and chapters 2 and 3; all of them located in modern day Turkey.

But the book is not from John it's from God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

We see the Trinity in verses 4-5. This greeting from God of grace and peace, is from the eternally existent Father, from the Holy Spirit who is before God's throne, described as the seven Spirits here in Revelation (see Isaiah 11:2 where the seven characteristics of the Holy Spirit are listed), and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness (**Prophet**), firstborn from the dead (**Priest**) and the ruler of the kings of the earth (**King**). These are the three anointed offices in the Old Testament, Messiah (Hebrew) and Christ (Greek) mean "anointed." Jesus is the Anointed Prophet, Priest, and King...who loved us, and washed us from our sins...in His own blood (see also Acts 20:28).

Isaiah 1:18, "'Come now, and let us reason together,' Says the LORD, 'Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.'"

6 and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

One day we will rule with Him as kings (small k). (Revelation 5:10)

During the Millennial Kingdom we'll represent as "kings" royal representatives, today we can represent Him as priests, and share God with others through practice and preaching, and brings others to God, through prayer.

1 Peter 2:9, "But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."

Are we fulfilling this role? Why should I?

7 Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. 8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

He is coming, and He will be seen by every eye, as He descends from the sky, He is coming with the clouds, which is probably both literal and symbolic of His shekinah glory.

(Acts 1:9-11)

Every eye will see Him, and all the tribes, all the pockets of people in every nation will mourn because of Him? The Greek word translated "mourn" is the word "kopto" and it means to strike, to smite, to beat one's breast for grief.

He's even described as the Almighty there in v. 8 - a clear reference to deity!

III. Revelation (9-18)

History tells us that John the Beloved, the writer of Revelation was actually placed in boiling oil, for his faithful service to the Lord, but he survived the ordeal and was then banished to the Island of Patmos. But there he is, "in the Spirit," on the Lord's Day (probably a reference to Sunday) and he hears the voice of Christ as the voice of a trumpet informing John of who He is (the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End) it all started and culminates in Him.

Jesus then instructed John to write what he sees and send it to the 7 churches in Asia (modern day Turkey).

When John turned to see the voice he heard, what a glorious vision it was! It was Jesus in the midst of the seven golden lampstands. The number 7 is the number of completion and perfection within the Bible and we find it 32 times in the book of Revelation. The seven lampstands are the seven churches and there's Jesus in the midst of them. His robe covers everything but his feet, the gold band about His chest speak of deity. His head and hair which are as white as snow speak of his purity, His eyes of flaming fire symbolize the way He sees and sifts through everything, His feet of refined brass represent perfect steps of judgment that will take place (brass symbolizes judgment in the Bible), His voice as the sound of many waters reveal that in heaven His voice drowns out all other voices...what majesty! The seven stars in His right hand represent the seven messengers or pastors of the seven churches. The sword that protrudes from His mouth reveal that all He has to do is speak it, and it's done, and His countenance as the sun, reveal His unparalleled glory. The Gospels **veiled** His glory for the most part, but the book of Revelation **unveils** it.

And we'll see these features as we study the various churches...and we'll see much more!

Imagine seeing this vision!

John fell as dead, but Jesus touched him and lifted him up.

(The Glory and Grace of Jesus)

IV. The Mission (19-20)

1. Of John

2. Of the Church

1. John was to write the letter.

2. The church was to shine as a light.

1:19 provides an outline of the book of Revelation:

1. The "things which you have seen," refer to what John's seen in the vision of Jesus. (Chapter 1)
2. The "things which are," refers to the condition of the 7 churches. (Chapters 2-3)
3. The "things which will take place after this," concern the future. In the Greek language, the 2 words "meta tauta" are found here and in 4:1. This is in reference to the future, **after** the church age. Then come the Rapture, Tribulation Period, Second Coming of Christ, Millennial Kingdom, Eternal Judgment, and finally finishing in the New Heavens and the New Earth. (Chapters 4-22)

A tourist was exploring the sites of Lake Como in northern Italy and came to a beautiful castle called the Villa Asconiti. Feeling brave, he pushed open the gate and went inside. To his delight everything was beautiful. Flowers were blooming in a rainbow of colors. The shrubbery was luxuriously green and magnificently pruned to precision. Over to one side the man noticed a gardener on his hands and knees clipping nearly every blade of grass. The man asked, "May I look at the gardens?" The gardener replied, "You're welcome to come right in. I'm glad to have a guest." The man began to tour the grounds and asked the gardener, "Is the owner here today?" The gardener replied, "Oh, no. He's away." "When was the last time you saw him?" he asked. "Oh, about twelve years ago," said the gardener. "Twelve years? This place has been empty for twelve years?" exclaimed the tourist. "Yes," said the gardener. The tourist asked, "Who tells you what to do?" The gardener explained that the owner had an agent in Milan. "Do you ever see him?" asked the tourist. Still clipping, pruning, and trimming, the gardener answered, "Never. He just sends instructions." The tourist couldn't believe his ears. "But you have everything so beautiful. It looks like you are expecting him tomorrow." The gardener replied, "Today, sir. I expect him to come at any time—perhaps today."

Every child of God ought to be living that way—not as if Jesus Christ were returning far off in the future but as if He were coming today.

Someone said, "We ought to be living as though Jesus died yesterday, rose this morning, and is coming back this afternoon."