

An Introduction to the Revelation (Message #1)

Revelation 1: 1-3

Tonight we will begin a journey through a very captivating book, the Revelation. It is a book that few take the time to study. Many believe that it is impossible to understand. It is often misunderstood and misinterpreted. For these reasons, many avoid the book altogether.

However, the word revelation literally means “**an unveiling**”. It wasn’t written to mask or hide truth, but uncover and bring it to light. I believe, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we can learn much about our blessed Savior and the events yet to unfold. In order to properly interpret Revelation we must use [v.1:19](#) as our guide. The book is separated into three parts: [The things which thou hast seen, Chp.1](#); [The things which are, Chps.2-3](#); [The things which shall be hereafter, Chps.4-22](#), (Notice [4:1](#)).

Revelation was written during a very difficult time for the early church. The Apostle John penned this book around 95 AD. The Christians of that day suffered heavy persecution. The Revelation offered hope and encouragement to a troubled people in troubled times. Our trials and tribulations can’t compare to theirs, but we do live in difficult days. There is hope and encouragement for us as well in this blessed book!

We will see the plan of God clearly laid out and recorded. It involves the return of our Lord; the complete victory over Satan, sin, and the world system; the redemption of mankind; a view of the glorious homeland; and the crowning of our King. I trust you will join me on this magnificent journey into the future. Please take the time to study along with me, so we can be prepared for our study. Let’s begin our journey with: [An Introduction to the Revelation](#).

I. The Person of the Revelation (1a) – [The Revelation of Jesus Christ](#). This is a book about Jesus. As we journey through its pages we will encounter many images and events – judgment, suffering, tribulation, joy, victory, defeat, etc... All of this and much more is disclosed in Revelation, but it is a book about Jesus! When studying this book, Jesus must be kept at its center; its main focal point. He is the theme of the Bible; it’s the “HIM” Book!

- Remember, revelation means an unveiling. Many Bibles, including mine, have the title “The Revelation of St. John the Divine”. This is a title given by one of the translators. The book doesn’t reveal John, but Jesus, [v.1](#). I cannot emphasize enough; Jesus must be kept at the center of our study.
- Now, the 1st time He came, He wasn’t recognized as Lord. He wasn’t received as the Messiah. He came robed in flesh as a humble servant. This sinful world despised and rejected the holy Lamb of God. He wasn’t viewed as the Savior, but a servant. He wasn’t accepted as the Prince of Peace, but a pauper of poverty. Jesus is coming again and the next time will be far different! He won’t come as a sacrificial Lamb, but a sovereign Lord.

There won't be another crucifixion; this time there will be a crown! The world will see Him as He is; King of kings and Lord of lords!

I. The Person of the Revelation (1a)

II. The Purpose of the Revelation (1b) – *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass;* The purpose of Revelation is clearly defined. This book was written to a special people about a specific plan. In it we find God's sovereign plan for the future. Notice:

A. A Special People – The book was written to the servants of the Lord. This is the word Paul used to describe himself and Timothy in *Phil. 1:1 – Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:* It speaks of a bond slave; one who has given himself to the will of another.

- Revelation was recorded for the children of God, the redeemed! We have been bought with a price; we belong to Him. The prophecy of this book requires spiritual discernment that only the Christian possesses.

B. A Specific Plan – It reveals those things which must shortly come to pass. We serve a God who holds complete control and authority. Our world revolves around His sovereign will. He set the sun in place, created the heavens and the earth, gives life to all; He is God!

- We live in dark days. Many believe there is no God. Others believe that He created all things and then just stepped back, allowing the world to function as it will. God has a plan for the future of this world.

- Most of the prophecy contained in Revelation is yet to be fulfilled. The phrase "*shortly come to pass*" doesn't necessarily mean the near future, though it very well could happen at any moment. Rather, when these events begin to happen, they will continue in rapid succession. The return of Christ is imminent, it could be at any moment, and will be without delay. Once these events begin, they will not cease until they are all fulfilled!

III. The Presentation of the Revelation (1c-2) – *and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.* Remember, this is a book centered on Christ, given by God to a special people concerning a specific plan. The means by which Revelation was recorded is nothing less than divine. An angel, or divine messenger, brought it to John.

- This is the disciple whom Jesus loved, one of the inner circle, a close friend of our Lord. He had beheld His glory on the Mt. of Transfiguration. He was there at the crucifixion, the resurrection, and the ascension. Now, he is receiving the revelation, exiled on Patmos, presumably alone, but present with the Lord.
- The message was **signified** by an angel. It literally means “to give sign”. We have already discovered a key to interpreting the book. The Lord reveals that much of the book will be spoken in symbolic language. This was done for a purpose. God didn’t intend to make it difficult; the signs and symbols are usually explained in the text.
- We must remember that John was writing about people, places, and events of the distant future. He used the language and objects familiar to his day to describe the events of the future; no doubt, things he had never seen before or could humanly comprehend.
- Keep in mind, revelation means to unveil. The symbols we will encounter will be defined for us. With the help of the Scripture itself and the direction of the Holy Spirit, the Revelation will become clear to us.

I. The Person of the Revelation

II. The Purpose of the Revelation

III. The Presentation of the Revelation

IV. The Promise of the Revelation (3) – **Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.**

The book comes with a built in blessing. Our view and acceptance of the book will affect the blessing we receive. God set forth some requirements for this blessing:

A. It Requires Acceptance – “**He that readeth**” speaks of reading the book in a public gathering. This book must be accepted and regarded as the Word of God. For all who read this book, there is blessing.

B. It Requires Attention – “**They that hear**” refers to those who hear the Word read – the congregation of God’s people. If we will study and apply the Words of this book, we will be blessed.

- We must hear and accept this book as divine truth, not some myth or fairy tale. We ought to pay special attention to God’s Word, especially concerning the end times.

C. It Requires Action – “[And keep those things which are written therein](#)” Reading and hearing the Word is good, but it must be responded to! The Bible should move us to action toward the things of God.

- I believe, as we move through this book, we'll see that we are living in the last days. I pray this will create a spirit of service and obedience in us. For those who read, hear, and respond to God's Word, He will bless.

I want to leave you with a thought from [v.3b, for the time is at hand](#). We are seeing things come to pass that are setting the stage for the Lord's return.

My concern is, are you ready should He come tonight? Do we not all have friends and loved ones who are not ready? Jesus is coming again; it could be before we have said the last amen this evening. Only those who are saved will be caught out in the rapture. Those who are left behind will face the torments of the tribulation recorded in this book. If you or someone you know isn't ready, come while there's still time. The time is at hand!