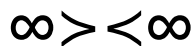


Introduction to Revelation

Outline:

- I. THE TITLE OF THE BOOK
- II. THE AUTHOR, PLACE, AND DATE OF THE REVELATION
- III. VARIOUS FASCINATING THINGS ABOUT THE BOOK
 - A. A book of prophecy
 1. Is Bible prophecy worth all the fuss?
 - B. Genesis and Revelation
 - C. Numbers in Revelation (especially the number 7)
 - D. 7 more epistles
- IV. THE VARIOUS METHODS OF INTERPRETATION
- V. GOD'S DIVINE OUTLINE OF THE BOOK
- VI. THE FIRST THREE VERSES



- I. THE TITLE OF THE BOOK
 - A. It is "THE" (singular) Revelation of Jesus Christ. One revelation containing many details and many parts but singularly it is the revelation of Jesus Christ.
 1. The title (the first phrase of the book) is indeed telling us what to look for throughout the book. Or better yet it tells us who to look for throughout the book.
 2. We may have all of our Bible prophecy packaged up just the way we like it and think we have a complete grasp on the book as we study it but if we have all of that and miss Jesus then we have not seen what and or who the Book is seeking to portray.
 3. In fact, the Book of Revelation displays Christ in His glory. Consider the other books of the Bible in comparison to the Book of revelation...
 - a) The Old Testament says...Behold, He comes!
 - b) The Gospels say...Behold, he dies!
 - c) The book of Acts says...Behold, he lives!
 - d) The epistles say...Behold, he saves!
 - e) But the book of revelation is the book that portrays our Lord Jesus Christ in His glory and proclaims...Behold, he reigns!
 - B. In verse 1:1 of Revelation this word occurs. It says "The revelation of Jesus Christ..."

- C. The word in greek is *apokalypsis*, we get our english word apocalypse from this word in verse 1. It literally means to lay bare, to make naked, it is a disclosure of truth or a manifestation of something, an unveiling.
- D. The very meaning of the word revelation should dispel all doubt as to whether or not people are to have an understanding of this great book.
- E. Many in our day and age and many throughout history in fact have steered clear of this awesome book. Many think that it's too difficult to make any sense of and to try and teach it from the pulpits would only confuse people and not help them. So they let it rest and merely quote from it time to time.
- F. But if God wanted us to let it rest or to never take it up and read and studied through because no one could possibly be sure of what it is saying, then why does the very name of the Book assert definitively that we can know what it is saying and we should study it through?
- G. If God wanted to write something that was to be kept a secret or to put down on paper something that we just wouldn't ever understand then why didn't he name it apocrypha instead of apocalypse?
- H. God named this book apocalypse and gave this revelation that it might be shown, not hidden. And that is why God did not name it "The Apocrypha" because this is an apocalypse - a revelation, not an apocrypha or something hidden which is what the word apocrypha means.
- I. Similar to *apokalypsis* the word revelation (which the translators used) means the making known of something that was previously secret or unknown. Also unveiling means to show or announce publicly.
- J. There should be no hesitation in the way of any Bible student to dive into this book. Guided by the Lord and the rest of His word we can only be blessed by studying this great Book of prophecy.
- K. This brings us to our next point...

II. THE AUTHOR OF THE BOOK

- A. The Book of revelation was written by John the Apostle. This is stated very clearly and unmistakably in verses 1:1-4, 9
- B. John lived a very interesting life. He was...
 - 1. Born in Bethsaida
 - 2. A fisherman by trade. He was called to follow Jesus as he was mending his fathers nets and thus became...
 - 3. one of the early followers of Jesus in His earthly ministry.
 - 4. He was well connected; he knew the high priest (john 18:15) and Nicodemus (John 3)
 - 5. He was committed with the care of Jesus' mother (John 19:26-27)
 - 6. John was the last of all the apostles to die. He lived till he was good and old and died a natural death. Perhaps Jesus alluded to the way he would die when he said in John 21:22 "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me."

C. But where was John when he was used by God to pen this Book?

1. He was on the island of Patmos as it says in verse 1:9 of Revelation
“I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.”
2. John was in exile on the Isle of Patmos, as it says, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.
 - a) In this statement that John makes we can see that he thought that the OT and the writings of the NT were the word of God. He said that he was in exile for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. The only “word” he could be referring to would be the “word” that had already been written down. Of course the OT was written down but also the the entire new testament had been penned already at the time that John wrote down the Revelation.
3. The date of this book is somewhere around 90-96 AD and all other writings of the NT, with the exception of a few, had been penned prior to the destruction of the temple in AD 70.

D. John was exiled by Domitian (AD 81-96), Domitian was the brother of Titus who destroyed Jerusalem. When Domitian died John was freed and he returned to Ephesus and retired there for the remainder of his time on earth. Domitian was the son of Vespasian

1. Irenaeus, Clement, and Eusibius all record that after Domitian died John returned to Ephesus, went to the churches, appointed leaders and set things in order.

III. VARIOUS FASCINATING THINGS ABOUT THE BOOK

A. A book of prophecy

1. The book claims to be a prophetic Book. In verse 3 of chapter 1 it says
“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.”
2. Should we be concerned about Bible prophecy?
 - a) Some say yes and some say no. But what about God? How does he feel about the issue? What do we see when we look through the Bible?¹
 - (1) Old Testament
 - (a) 1,845 references to Christ’s rule on earth
 - (b) 17 OT books give prominence to the event
 - (2) New Testament
 - (a) Of the 216 chapters, there are 318 references to the second coming
 - (b) It is mentioned in 23 of the 27 books
 - (3) For every prophecy relating to Jesus’ first coming, there are eight treating his second coming!
 - (4) This should show us why we should study prophecy in the Bible.

¹ Chuck Missler, Commentary on Revelation

B. There are very interesting comparisons found between the book of Genesis and the Book of revelation.

1. “‘Genesis’ means ‘beginnings,’ being derived from the Greek Septuagint translation of the Hebrew *toledoth* (‘generations’)... Thus Genesis is the ‘Book of the Worlds Beginnings,’ while Revelation is the ‘Book of Unveilings of the worlds Future.’ The great themes of scripture commonly have their beginnings in Genesis, then are progressively developed throughout the Bible, and finally come to their climactic consummation in Revelation”²

2. Some of these comparisons include

	Gen	Rev
• Earth Created	1:1	
• Earth Passed Away		21:1
• Sun Governs Day	1:16	
• No Need of Sun		21:33
• Darkness Called Night	1:5	
• No Night There		22:5
• Waters He Called Sea	1:10	
• No More Sea		21:1
• A River flowing out of eden	2:10-14	
• A River Flowing From God’s Throne		22:1-2
• Earth’s Government (re: Israel)	37	
• Earth’s Judgment (re: Israel)		16:8
• Entrance of Sin	3:6	
• End of Sin		21:27
• Curse Pronounced	3:14-17	
• No More Curse		22:3
• Death Entered	3:19	
• No More Death		21:4
• Man Driven Out of the Garden	3:23	
• Man Granted Free Access to the City		22:14
• Tree of Life Guarded	3:24	
• Right to Tree of Life		22:14

² Henry Morris, The Revelation Record, Pg. 21

	Gen	Rev
• Sorrow and Suffering	3:17	
• No More Sorrow		22:4
• Nimrod Founds Babylon	10:8-10	
• Babylon Falls		1,718
• God's Flood to Destroy Evil Generation	6-9	
• Satan's Flood to Destroy Elect Generation		12
• A Bow of God's Promise	9:13	
• A Bow of Remembrance		4:3; 10:1
• Sodom and Egypt: corruption and judgment	1,319	
• "Sodom and Egypt" (Jerusalem)		11:8
• A Confederation vs. Abraham's People	14	
• A Confederation vs. Abraham's Seed		12
• A Bride for Abraham's Son	24	
• A Bride for Abraham's Seed		21
• Marriage of the 1st Adam	2:18-23	
• Marriage of the Last Adam		19
• Mans Dominion Ceased; Satan's Begun	3:24	
• Satan's Dominion Ended; Man's Restored		22

C. Numbers in Revelation (especially the number 7)

1. The book of Revelation is full of numbers. There are some more prominent than others but none are as prominent as the number 7. This is a heptadic book (hepta is the Greek word for seven)
 - a) Seven show up in many places in Revelation. Some of these include
 - (1) Seven Churches; 1:4,11,20; 2; 3
 - (2) Seven Seals; 5; 6
 - (3) Seven Trumpets; 8; 9
 - (4) Seven Bowls; 15; 16; 17:1; 21:9
 - (5) Seven Lamp-stands
 - (6) Seven Spirits

- (7) Seven Stars
- (8) Seven Lamps
- (9) Seven Promises to the overcomer
- (10) Seven Horns
- (11) Seven Eyes
- (12) Seven Angels
- (13) Seven Thunders
- (14) Seven Thousand
- (15) Seven Heads
- (16) Seven Crowns
- (17) Seven Plagues
- (18) Seven Mountains
- (19) Seven Kings
- (20) Seven Beatitudes

- i) 1:3 “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy”
- ii) 14:13 “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth”
- iii) 16:15 “Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments”
- iv) 19:9 “Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb”
- v) 20:6 “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection”
- vi) 22:7 “blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book”
- vii) 22:14 “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”

(21) Seven Letter Divisions

- i) Salutation
- ii) Identification of Christ as the sender
- iii) Assertion of knowledge
- iv) Comment and Exhortation
- v) Promised (or warned)
- vi) Admonition to Heed
- vii) Promised blessing

(22) Seven Personages in 12 & 13

- i) Women
- ii) Man-child
- iii) Red Dragon
- iv) 7-Headed Beast
- v) False Prophet

- vi) Michael
- vii) Lamb

(23) Seven Years of Judgment

(24) Seven "I Am's" of Christ

- i) 1:8 "I am Alpha and Omega"
- ii) 1:11 "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last:"
- iii) 1:17 "I am the first and the last"
- iv) 1:18 "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore"
- v) 21:6 "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end"
- vi) 22:13 "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last"
- vii) 22:16 "I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star"

(25) Seven Doxologies in Heaven

- i) 4:9-11
- ii) 5:8-13
- iii) 7:9-12
- iv) 11:16-18
- v) 14:2-3
- vi) 15:2-4
- vii) 19:1-6

(26) Seven New Things 20,21

- b) This is only a few. There are hundreds of these through the Book. Some more subtle than others but this could only be by design and that of someone wise enough to design it. God truly is the one who sent and signified this Book to John by His angel!
- c) There are also other significant numbers in the Book

- (1) Some of these are 666, 144,000, twelve gates, four horsemen, ten kings and 1000 years.

D. Seven More Epistles in the Bible

1. Another interesting thing found in the Book of Revelation is that there are 7 more epistles to be added to the count in The NT.
2. We all know about the Pauline (14) and the general epistles (7) which make 21 in total in the NT. But what about the 7 epistles more found here in Revelation which were written by our very Lord!

- (1) Ephesus
- (2) Smyrna
- (3) Pergamos
- (4) Thyatira
- (5) Sardis
- (6) Philidelphia
- (7) Laodicea.....There truly are 28 epistles in the NT, not only 21.

IV. THE VARIOUS METHODS OF INTERPRETATION

A. It should be noted that there are several viewpoints or ways to interpret the Book of Revelation. These are predominantly broken down into four groups:

1. Preterist Interpretation

- a) “This interpretation regards the Book of Revelation as applying specifically to the problems and persecutions of the early church at the time of it’s writing. The many symbolic expressions in the book represent devices to encourage the church throughout it’s trials under the imperial Roman empire, and were deliberately intended to prevent the book from being understood by any who were not believers.”³
- b) It was only applicable in the first century. It was for then and then only.
- c) “The Preterist View: This approach believes that Revelation deals only with the church in John’s day. In the Preterist approach, the Book of Revelation doesn’t predict anything. John simply describes events of his current day, but he puts them in symbolic “code” so those outside the Christian family couldn’t understand his criticism of the Roman government. In the Preterist view, the Book of Revelation was for then.”⁴

2. Historical Interpretation

- a) “By this approach, the events symbolically described in Revelation represent the chronological sequence of historical events from the time of it’s writing until the coming of Christ and the establishment of His eternal kingdom. Much of it, especially the chapters dealing with Babylon and the “beast,” are Identified in particular with the Roman Catholic Church and the pope, with other symbols tied to such events as the rise of Islam and the Napoleonic wars.”⁵
- b) “This approach believes that Revelation is a sweeping, disordered panorama of all church history. In the Historicist approach, Revelation predicts the future, but the future of the “church age” - not the future of end-time events. In the Historicist view, Revelation is full of symbols that describe now.”⁶

3. Idealist Interpretation

- a) “No attempt is made by idealistic or mystical interpreters to relate the events described in Revelation to any historical events at all—past, present, or future. Rather, it is all treated as a series of parables or allegories designed to encourage troubled believers to trust in the ultimate triumph of good over evil and of Christ over satan.”⁷
- b) “Also known as the “The Poetic View”: This approach believes that Revelation is a book full of pictures and symbols intended to encourage and comfort persecuted Christians in John’s day. In the Poetic or allegorical view, the Book of Revelation isn’t literal or historic. Revelation is a book of personal meaning.”⁸

³ Henry Morris, The Revelation Record, Pg. 25

⁴ David Guzik, Commentary on Revelation, taken from www.blueletterbible.org

⁵ Henry Morris, The Revelation Record, Pg. 25

⁶ David Guzik, Commentary on Revelation, taken from www.blueletterbible.org

⁷ Henry Morris, The Revelation Record, Pg. 26

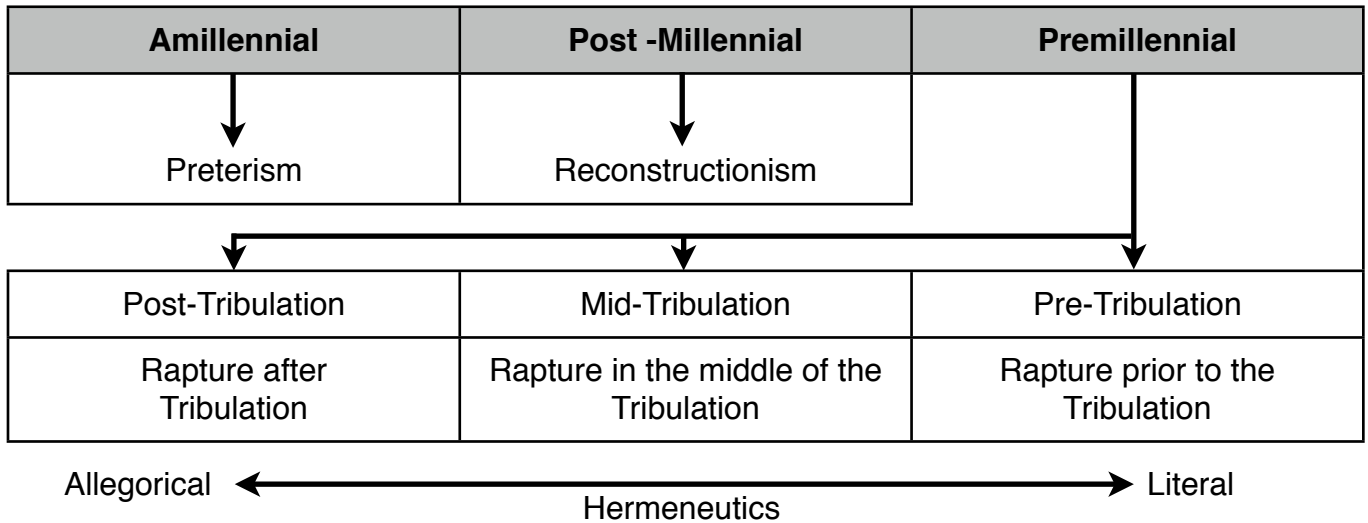
⁸ David Guzik, Commentary on Revelation, taken from www.blueletterbible.org

4. Futurist Interpretation

a) "Futurist interpreters, though differing among themselves in various details, generally regard all of revelation from chapter 4 to 22 as describing events at the very end of the church age and thus still future. Many futurists still employ much symbolism, while others take most of these future events in a very literal sense."⁹

B. The Futurist view is the way we will be looking at the Book together. I believe this is a book of Prophecy speaking of yet future events which will take place shortly before the second coming of Christ.

C. A little chart of differing approaches to the book



V. GOD’S DIVINE OUTLINE FOR THE BOOK

A. This is the only book of the Bible that gives itself an outline.

B. In revelation 1:19 it says "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter"

C. Verse 19 of chapter one is the key to understanding how this book is laid out.

D. The Book, according to itself, is laid out in three parts:

1. The things thou hast seen (Chapter 1)

2. the things which are (Chapters 2-3)

3. and the things which shall be hereafter (Chapters 4-22)

a) The word "hereafter" is *meta tauta* which means "after these things." John was to write about what he had seen (Chapter 1), the things which were (Chapters 2 and 3), and the things which would be "after these things" (Chapters 4 through 22).¹⁰

b) This is exactly what John does. He writes about the vision of Jesus which he saw in chapter one. Then in chapters 2-3 he writes to the seven churches (things which are)

⁹ Henry Morris, The Revelation Record, Pg. 26

¹⁰ Chuck Smith, Study Guide for Revelation, [Chapter 1](#)

and immediately following chapter 3 chapter four opens with the words “After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven...etc.” The words “After this” are the words “meta tauta” in the greek. And the rest of the book falls under that meta tauta.

VI. THE FIRST THREE VERSES

A. “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him” (1:1)

1. The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave to Jesus Christ. This is the Father revealing to the Son!
2. From the Father to the Son and then to John through signs that were supervised by an angle.

B. “to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass” (1:1)

1. The purpose of the Book is to show us things which will come to pass (predictive prophecy)
 - a) “This describes when the events of this book will take place - they will happen shortly, and they must happen shortly...When John says these things must shortly take place, what does he mean? How short is short? How near is near? Short and near are relative terms, and this is God’s timetable, not man’s. Yet for 2000 years, history has been on the brink of the consummation of all things, running parallel to the edge, not running towards a distant brink.”¹¹
 - b) Shortly is the ancient Greek phrase *en tachos*, which means “‘quickly or suddenly coming to pass,’ indicating rapidity of execution after the beginning takes place. The idea is not that the event may occur soon, but that when it does, it will be sudden.” (Walvoord)
2. It is to “his servants”
 - a) The word servants is “bond slave” in the Greek
 - b) If you are his servant then listen up because this book is written to you!
 - c) This book should bring excitement and great hope to every believer as he or she reads it because it was written for that purpose and to every believer.

C. “and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John” (1:1)

1. This tells us how John received the book. The Revelation was sent to John by and angel who put it into signs.
2. The signs are not un-decipherable but decipherable. They can be converted from sign to language which we can understand. But not without the rest of the Bible. The Bible is the thing which deciphers the book of Revelation for us. particularly the OT.
3. “the Book of Revelation is accessible to those who have an understanding of the first 65 books of the Bible, and especially an understanding of the first 39 books of the Bible, the Old Testament. The Book of Revelation is rooted in the Old Testament. It contains more than 500 allusions to the Old Testament, and 278 of the 404 verses in Revelation (that is

¹¹ David Guzik, Commentary on Revelation, www.blueletterbible.org

almost 70%) make some reference to the Old Testament.”¹²

4. So as we study this book we will get a greater understanding of the OT. In fact we will need to make reference throughout our study on a regular basis to the OT. I look forward to becoming more familiar with the OT as we study the book together.

D. “by His Angel” (1:1)

1. We don’t know who this angel is we only know that in 22:6-9 he is called a “fellow-servant” of John and other servants of Christ.
2. This angel was given the ability to signify and shew (22:6) these things to John in Christ’s authority.

E. “Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.” (1:2)

1. Notice the threefold record that John wrote:¹³

(1) “the word of God,” stressing that the entire book was verily inspired by God

(2) “the testimony of Jesus Christ,” referring the many statements made by Christ Himself to John throughout the book

(3) “the things that he saw,” recording the great future events in heaven and on earth which he was permitted to “see” through the special ministry of the angel...

2. We can see from this statement that the book of Revelation is an eye witness account of real events and real people.

a) John 19:35 “And he that *saw* [it] bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.”

b) 1 John 1:3 “That which we have *seen* and *heard* declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship [is] with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”

c) In fact the words “I heard” occur 28 times in the book (thats 4 sevens). And the words “I saw, I looked, or I beheld” (all the same word in the Greek) occur 49 times (thats 7 sevens). These phrases happen more in this book than any other book in the NT. John wanted us to understand that what he was writing was not contrived or a product of his imagination but things he actually saw and heard and then recorded.

F. “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.” (1:3)

1. This is the Only book in the entire Bible with a promise of blessing for those who read hear and do the things that are written inside. Thats amazing! All scripture will bless you when reading it but this book God has placed a special blessing for those who read and study it.

a) “He who reads is in the singular. It speaks of one person who reads. Those who hear is in the plural. It speaks of many people hearing. The idea is probably from custom of the

¹² David Guzik, Commentary on Revelation, www.blueletterbible.org

¹³ Henry Morris, The Revelation record, Pg. 35

early church, where attention was given to the public reading of Scripture, which would often be explained. In our modern way of speaking, John might say “Blessed is the pastor who teaches Revelation, and blessed is the congregation who hears it.” But most of all, pastor or congregation, blessed are those who keep those things which are written in it.”¹⁴

b) Rev 22:7 “Behold, I come quickly: blessed [is] he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.”

2. Josh 1:8
3. Psalm 1
4. Psalm 119
5. Psalm 138:2

I Look forward to studying yet another great book of the Bible with you all!
Amen!

¹⁴ David Guzik, Commentary on Revelation, www.blueletterbible.org