

THE BOOK OF REVELATION
Week 1 - Face-To-Face With Jesus!
September 6, 2016

Rev. 1:1-3

The book of Revelation reveals JESUS! We need to be face-to-face with Jesus. From the outset, we are given the most important truth about the Book of Revelation. This book does teach about the antichrist. It speaks about God's judgment on the earth – it shows us calamity on this planet. We are faced with mystery Babylon in dreadful detail. BUT, we need to know that above all else, this 66th book of the Bible is the REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST. If we catch everything else in this book, but miss Jesus, we have missed the book of Revelation. To many, Jesus is a person of the dim past, who set about to do admirable deeds. But, so many fail to recognize that Jesus entered this world as IMMANUEL – as GOD in the flesh, GOD with us. Jesus is GOD and He offers Himself to us.

Preliminary insight:

Revelation 1:1

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. Do you realize that we have been invited to grasp the relationship between God the Father and God the Son? This book that has been viewed as fearful, torturous, foreboding to so many, opens with more than a glimpse...it opens with a BEHOLDING – a fixed gazing on the love between the God the Father and God the Son. Here is the glorious gifting from God the Father to God the Son – a gifting of the Revelation of Jesus – of Who He is. This revelation of Jesus, God gave to Him to show us, Jesus' followers! It's glorious because in this revelation we see Jesus in His glory. Jesus SHOWS us these truths – clearly and graphically! John is told to write down what he SEES. We have graphic pictures in the book of Revelation. The readers are SHOWN these things. Show, deiknyo (DAK nu o) in the Gk. means to expose to the eyes, the connotation of which means to give evidence or proof of something.

Why this gift? Isa. 53:10 – Jesus, in eternity past, offered to lay down His life, He offered to take on the role of a guilt offering. *But the LORD (JEHOVAH) was pleased to crush Him, (Jesus) putting Him to grief; if He (Jesus) would render Himself as a guilt offering,* This is FOUNDATIONAL to understanding the book of Revelation. The book of Revelation completes the account of God's plan of RESTORATION. Jesus' death on the cross was essential to the plan.

In this book we are presented with the Revelation of Jesus Christ. The Greek word translated "Revelation" is apokalupsis (apocalypse) which means "a revealing, an unveiling, an uncovering, a disclosing of something or someone once hidden becoming visible!" Haven't you heard many say that they cannot possibly understand the book of Revelation which is so filled with symbolism and difficult language? Yet, God is telling

us this “most difficult” book reveals, unveils Jesus! How is that possible? What God intends as *revelation* – we see as *mystery*?

In order to grasp the meaning of this revelation, we need a foundation. That foundation is found in the OT! The OT speaks much of when God will bring justice and righteousness to the earth through the Messiah when He physically returns to this earth and sets up His kingdom (Deuteronomy, Psalms, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Zechariah. . .). Within Revelation there are approx. 550 references to the Hebrew Scriptures! Of the 404 verses in Revelation, 278 make some reference to the OT!

The two “bookends” of the Bible, Genesis and Revelation, are of foundational importance in revealing the purposes and plan of God. The book of Revelation is meant to clarify what we’ve already read/studied in the Bible.

Revelation 1:1

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, the anointed One. “Christ” is the Greek word for anointed. “Moshiach/Messiah” is the Hebrew word for anointed. Jesus/Yeshua – means God is salvation. This book is the Revelation *OF* Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the source of revelation:

- Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, told them that he was taught the Gospel – not by man - *For I neither received it (the Gospel) from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ* (Gal. 1:12).
- Peter told the Jewish believers to whom he was writing in I Peter that the prophets who wrote of Jesus through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, inquired and searched. . .*searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow* (I Pet. 1:11). Jesus testified to the prophets.

Jesus is the object of revelation:

- Luke 24:44 – Jesus told the two on the road to Emmaus, *These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.*
- I Cor. 1:7 – we eagerly wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. (See also II Thess. 1:7; I Pet. 1:7; Rev. 1:11-18; 5:6-10; 19:11-16)

Jesus provides the revelation about Himself!

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God (the Father) gave Him

God desires to reveal His Son throughout the book of Revelation. We need to know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that this book reveals what was once hidden. God is revealing His Son in this book. In the book of Revelation we see Jesus in all His majesty; we see Him in His GLORY! We’ve seen Jesus in His humiliation in the Gospels. Isaiah 53 not only speaks of His being bruised for our iniquities, Isaiah speaks of His being led as a lamb to the slaughter. Isa. 53:10 gives us a picture of God’s plan of redemption in eternity past: *But the LORD was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; if He would*

render Himself as a guilt offering. . . . Jesus submitted. He became man – 100% man/100% God. As man, He would die – He would take on the sin-bearer role.

In God's plan of redemption, blood had to be shed.

Lev. 17:11 – *the life of the flesh is in the blood and I've given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.*

To die, Jesus had to become man.

Jesus is Immanuel – God in the flesh – 100% God/100% man. Because Jesus is God, He is without sin. His blood was pure. His untainted, precious blood redeems eternally – for all who place their trust in Him.

Philippians declares that Jesus emptied Himself of the glory that He knew with the Father. REMEMBER please, that Jesus NEVER gave up His deity. Jesus is ETERNALLY God.

The OT and NT speak of His suffering, His being bloodied for us through His scourging and His crucifixion. Jesus took on our shame. He died a criminal's death! Do we comprehend what Jesus gave up for us? Because Jesus is God, He MUST return in glory. Take note of Jesus' words in His prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane: *Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You,*² *as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him* (John 17:1-2).

And, when Jesus returns in GLORY, He will be visible to the entire human race.

Matt. 24:30 - *Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*

We are told in Philippians that *...every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and , and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,*¹¹ *and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father* (Phil. 2:10-11).

At His first coming, His glory was veiled in human flesh – hidden from the eyes of man. Did some see Jesus' glory at His first coming? John 1:14 - *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.* John could write this in his Gospel, the Gospel of John, because he, John, James (his brother), and Peter beheld Jesus in His glory on the Mt. of Transfiguration (Matt. 17). And, here in the book of Revelation, we see Jesus in all His glory!

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him...to show His servants – the revelation is not for John exclusively, nor just for the seven churches. The revelation is for all the servants – all the believers in Jesus – all the followers of Jesus – all the bondservants of Jesus – fully committed to Him. A bondservant of Jesus is one who has been declared righteous by God – - justified - placed within a right relationship with God. A bondservant is one who has been redeemed – delivered – freed from bondage – bought with a price - forgiven of their sins – saved from God's wrath. A bondservant of Jesus is one who is sanctified by God – set apart by God for God's intended purpose.

God gave Jesus the revelation of Himself – Jesus - to SHOW to Jesus’ followers! SHOW!!! Gk – *deiknyo* (dak nu o) – expose to the eyes! And, this picture gives us evidence and proof of God’s revelation of His Son.

This book is *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants - things which must shortly take place*

Must – God’s promises that we read in Scripture are guaranteed to transpire. *Scripture cannot be broken* (John 10:35).

Isa. 14:24 - *The LORD of hosts has sworn, saying, ‘Surely, as I have thought, so it shall come to pass, and as I have purposed, so it shall stand:*

Isa. 46:10 - *Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure,’*

Matt. 24:6 - *And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.*

These events which will be unfolded to us MUST take place because of Who God is! He is faithful and true. He has sworn by Himself (Heb. 6:13).

Shortly take place – there’s been considerable discussion concerning this phrase. Three options have been presented:

- All of the events set forth in the book of Revelation have occurred within the lifetime of John’s initial readers.
 - So – the tribulation has already happened, the antichrist has already been revealed, Jesus has already returned and has judged the nations. The Millennial Kingdom has been established. The Great White Throne Judgment is past and we are now in the Eternal State.
- This phrase speaks of events which will occur in the future; however, when they happen, they will transpire in rapid sequence/succession.
- The phrase addresses closeness in time, but from **God’s perspective**.

How do we discern what *shortly* means?

The Greek word, *tachos*, translated as *shortly* is used twice in Revelation: Rev. 1:1 and Rev. 22:6 – bracketing the entire book. Rev. 22:6 - *Then he said to me, “These words are faithful and true.” And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place.*

Tachos literally means quickly, speedily.

BUT – we must view it from God’s perspective. And so...

we cannot dismiss Rev. 22:7 - *Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.*

Jesus, God the Son, is telling us of His timeframe.

Nor can we ignore Rev. 22:20 - *He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming quickly.” Again, these are Jesus’ words. The response, Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!*

“Quickly” (Rev. 22) is *tachy* from the same word in Rev. 1, meaning quickly, speedily.

The events bracketed by these two *shortly*'s, include letters addressed to churches that existed two thousand years ago (Rev. 2 & 3), clear descriptions of Jesus' physical return to this earth (Rev. 1:7; 19:19-20), and the beginning and completion of His 1,000 year reign. At the absolute minimum, when Revelation was written (circa AD 94-96), a period of approximately three thousand years was mapped out. This is quickly? How are we then to understand "shortly"?

Some have suggested, as already noted, a rapidity of action – a swiftness of action – a suddenness. Once the prophetic events begin to take place, they will occur with great speed. This revelation was given to Jesus to show His servants – to inspire HOPE. To say that relief will come "suddenly" – after who knows how long - offers no encouragement. But to say that it will come SOON does offer encouragement. Consider: Rev. 1:1 shows that for the first time the events prophesied by the prophet Daniel and foreseen by Jesus (Matt. 24) stood in readiness to be fulfilled. Therefore, John could speak of them as imminent – in the process – upon us – at any moment – whereas the earlier prophets could not say so. Here we have the promise of the imminent return of Jesus – His any moment return... Rev. 1:7a – *Behold He is coming*. . . . His return is upon us... The imminent return of Jesus is our great HOPE!

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants – things which must shortly take place. . . . Herein we read the WHY of the book of Revelation! God's revelation is reality! These events will indeed take place to vindicate (acquit, absolve, authenticate) Jesus – to show that God is in control of the universe and that what He has prophesied will indeed come to pass. How will these fulfillments of prophecy affect you? That is a crucial question.

An *angel* was specifically sent to show John the things which must shortly take place. Here, as elsewhere in Scripture, an angel serves as the intermediary by which revelation is given to man:

- Angels were used for the revelation of the Law of Moses (Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2)
- Angels were active in the presenting of the prophetic truth to Daniel (Dan. 7:16ff; 8:16-26; 9:20-27; 10:1-12:13) and of John's birth to Zacharias (Luke 1:11-20) and of Jesus' birth to Mary (Luke 1:26-38) and to Joseph (Matt. 1:20-21).

Revelation 1:2

John bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ – this is the reason John was exiled to the island of Patmos (v. 9) – for not denying the truth of the Bible and for not denying the witness of Jesus.

Patmos, located in the Aegean Sea off the coast of Asia Minor (modern Turkey), and part of a group of approx. 50 islands, is a barren, rocky island that is approx. 10 miles long and less than 6 miles at its widest point. Patmos served as a place of banishment during the Roman period. It appears that John was exiled to Patmos during the reign of Emperor Domitian (*Eusebius, ecclesiastical history, 3:18-20*). We have a record of this from Eusebius in his book on Church history. Eusebius was a Roman historian and the

Catholic Bishop of Caesarea. Eusebius records that Emperor Nerva (AD 96-98) released John from Patmos. Followers of Jesus are being persecuted to this day – perhaps more than in years past – for the proclamation of God’s word – for declaring Jesus! On this barren, rocky, secluded island intended to serve as an isolation cell, so to speak, for those accused of crimes against the Roman Empire, John was visited by the glorified Christ, the Messiah in all His glorious splendor.

Is your faith rooted in the glorified Christ Who lives within you? We are more than face-to-face with Jesus. Hold on to the truth we find in Col. 1:27 - *Christ in you the hope of glory.*

John bore witness *to all things that he saw....* While on this secluded island of Patmos, John saw Jesus. . . in His glory. John saw Jesus in His glory on the Mount of Transfiguration. And John wrote of it when the Holy Spirit inspired John to write the Gospel of John between 80 and 90 A.D. John 1:14 - *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.* Inspired by the Holy Spirit, John wrote I John during the A.D. 90-95 timeframe, perhaps from Ephesus – to the churches of Asia Minor over which John exercised leadership as an Apostle. John wrote of his vivid recollection of Jesus. Even 60 years later, John’s memories of Jesus were etched on his mind. And, even John’s life with Jesus during Jesus’ public ministry – 3 – 3.5 years – while Jesus had emptied Himself of His glory – John beheld Jesus’ glory. Hear John’s words in his first epistle:

I John 1:1-4 - *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life— (Jesus – the Word of God Who is God Who gives life) ² the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us— ³ that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. ⁴ And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.* I have seen Jesus – John is proclaiming. The verbiage is strong and affirms the physical reality of Jesus. John is writing that our joy may be full! Is our joy spilling over? Is our joy spilling over because of Who He is and of His soon return? Are we joyfilled because we KNOW HIM? “Jesus knows me, this I love”!

Oswald Chambers (7/2) – “Discipleship means personal, passionate devotion to a Person, our Lord Jesus Christ. There is a difference between devotion to a Person and devotion to principles or to a cause. . . . No man on earth has this passionate love to the Lord Jesus unless the Holy Spirit has imparted it to him. . . . Whenever the Holy Spirit sees an opportunity to glorify Jesus, He will take your heart, your nerves, your whole personality, and simply make you BLAZE and GLOW with devotion to Jesus!”

Revelation 1:3

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.

Blessed – Gk. word *makarios* – happiness. The state of God granting happiness to His servants is based on the time being near – upon us - the promise of the fulfillment of

this prophecy. Revelation does indeed speak to future events. Revelation is prophetic. We're going to look at things yet to come.

Blessed is he who reads – Gk *anaginosko* – to distinguish, to recognize, to know accurately, to acknowledge. What we see in this Gk. word for “read” is a progression toward a goal.

Blessed are those who hear the words of this prophecy – “hear” - Gk *akouo* to attend to, to consider what is being said or to what has been said, to perceive. More of a progression. We might liken “hearing” in this verse to listening – to perceiving.

prophecy – Gk *propheteia* - declaring the purposes of God; revealing things hidden; foretelling future events.

and who keep those things which are written in it – herein lies the goal. The Gk. for “keep” is *tereo* - to attend to carefully, to guard, to cause one to persevere or stand firm in what one believes. Keeping is action! Action occurs when someone is impacted by what he/she has, in this case, read and heard! I'm suggesting that “keeping” indicates that a heart has been impacted, a life has been changed.

God has promised His blessing to the person who takes time to read and to consider and to desire to know the accuracy of what is being read. . . blessing to those who then move on to hearing to the point of perceiving. . . blessing to those who take action in keeping those things perceived, which results in NOT compromising truth – but in standing firm.

Revelation promises this blessing. This book promises a blessing – at the outset and, at the end of this revelation, there is the promise of blessing for specifically keeping.

Rev. 22:-7 - Then he said to me, 'These words are faithful and true.' And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place.

⁷ Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.'

Why should we read, hear, and keep? . . . *for the time is near*

Time – ERA/EPOCH/SEASON which refers to the next great epoch of God's redemptive history – the next great event in God's end time program.

Near – Gk *eggys*– at hand; of times imminent – it's expected...NOT soon – but at any moment. Sooner than soon! *Imminent* means approaching, coming, on the way, in the offing, in the pipeline, on the horizon, in the air, just around the corner, coming down the pike...imminent means UPON US! What is “upon us”? WHO is “upon us”? Jesus' return!

Which return?

Jesus' physical second coming, when His feet will touch the Mt. of Olives (Zech. 14:4), is preceded by signs: the tribulation, the antichrist being revealed, 144,000 Jewish male virgins being sealed and used by God as His servants (for the purpose, it strongly

appears, of evangelism), the two Jewish witnesses coming on the scene and preaching, angels proclaiming the Gospel. . . .

Jesus' physical second coming cannot be imminent.

BUT, Jesus' return for us – His followers – Jewish and Gentile believers in Him – when we will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air – the Rapture of the Church (John 14:1-3; I Cor. 15:51-52; I Thess. 4:15-18)

How do we know this?

- Again – only the Rapture can come under the banner of imminency.
- We know this from God's calendar outlined in the feasts that He gave to Israel which we read in Lev. 23.
- We know God's timeframe – from understanding the years that God has carved out for Israel which we read in Dan. 9:24-27 – the timeframe that goes from rebuilding Jerusalem after the exile in Babylon, to Jesus' first coming, to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, to the Tribulation. The Church is not mentioned.
- From understanding the big picture of the Bible which spells out God's plan for Israel and God's plan for the Church.

Web site: www.jewishrootsofchristianity.org - lessons link! You can access the End Times lessons and Understanding the Big Picture of the Bible.

Who is Jesus? This book tells us. Who is Jesus to you?

QUESTIONS

Who is Jesus to you?

Have you studied Revelation?

How do you understand Revelation?

What questions do you have about Revelation as we begin this study?

Did you have any V8 moments during the lesson this morning? If so, what were they?

What questions do you have following the study today?

How can you apply what you learned to your life? To your walk with the Lord?

What do you hope to gain from this study in Revelation?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK

Read the handout for lesson 1 and look up the Bible verses/passages referenced.

If you don't agree with what was presented, with what is written in the handout...why?

What do you believe? Support your different view(s) with chapter and verse(s) from the Bible.

Concerning comments that were not clear, research by using your Bible and by using a word study book/online program.

Read the handout for week 2 when you receive it via Email.