

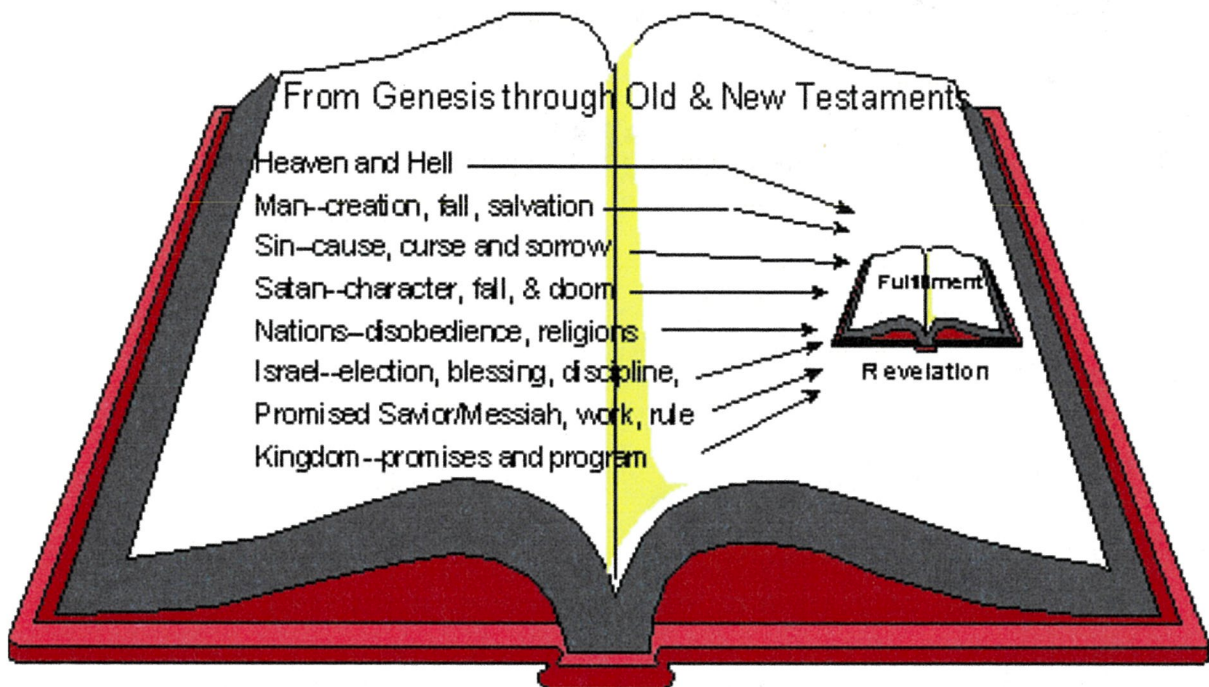
# The Prophetic Book of the New Testament

## Revelation

### 1. INTRODUCTION

With the book of Revelation, we have the conclusion and consummation of the Bible as God's revelation to man. As Genesis is the book of beginnings, Revelation is the book of consummation which anticipates the end-time events, the return of the Lord, His end-time reign, and the eternal state. As one moves through the Bible a number of great themes are introduced and developed beginning with Genesis like heaven and earth; sin, its curse, and sorrow; man and his salvation; Satan, his fall, and doom; Israel, her election, blessing, and discipline; the nations; Babylon and babylonianism; and the kingdoms and the kingdom. But ultimately, all of these find their fulfillment and resolution in the Book of Revelation. The gospels and epistles begin to draw these lines together, but it is not until we come to Revelation that they all converge in one great consummation. We may chart this as follows:

## REVELATION, THE FULFILLMENT OF THE SCRIPTURE



### 1. AUTHOR AND TITLE:

According to the book itself, the author's name was John (1:4, 9; 22:8). He was a prophet (22:9), and a leader who was known in the churches of Asia Minor to whom he writes the book of Revelation (1:4).

Traditionally, this John has been identified as John the Apostle, one of the disciples of our Lord. That the style is different from the style of the Gospel of John stems only from the difference in the nature of this book as apocalyptic literature.

An early church father, Irenaeus, states that John first settled in Ephesus, that he was later arrested and banished to the Isle of Patmos in the Aegean Sea to work in the mines, and that this occurred during the reign of the Roman emperor, Domitian. This supports the author's own claim to have written from Patmos because of his witness for Christ (1:9).

### 1. DATE: A.D. 90S

Domitian reigned in Rome from A.D. 81-96. Since Irenaeus tells us that John wrote from Patmos during the reign of Domitian, and since this is confirmed by other early church writers, such as Clement of Alexander and Eusebius, most conservative scholars believe the book was written between A.D. 81-96. This would make it the last book of the New Testament, just shortly after John's gospel and his epistles (1, 2, and 3 John). Other conservative scholars believe it was written much earlier, around 68, or before Jerusalem was destroyed.

## 1. THEME AND PURPOSE:

One's understanding of the theme depends to some degree on one's method of interpretation of Revelation (see below). Following the futurist view of interpreting Revelation, the prominent theme of the book concerns the conflict with evil in the form of human personalities energized by Satan and his world-wide system, and the Lord's triumphant victory to overthrow these enemies to establish His kingdom both in the Millennium (the 1,000 years of [Revelation 20](#)) and in eternity.

This is accomplished by taking the reader and hearers (1:3) behind the scenes through the visions given to John to demonstrate the demonic nature and source of the awful evil in the world. But Revelation also demonstrates the conquering power which rests in the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David. This Lion is also the Lamb standing, as if slain, but very much alive, angry, and bringing the judgment of God's awesome holiness against a sinful and rebellious world.

However, in the study of this book, the real issue is how one interprets the book. Ryrie summarizes the four principal views as it regards the interpretation of Revelation. He writes:

There are four principal viewpoints concerning the interpretation of this book: (1) the preterist, which views the prophecies of the book as having been fulfilled in the early history of the church; (2) the historical, which understands the book as portraying a panorama of the history of the church



from the days of John to the end of time; (3) the idealist, which considers the book a pictorial unfolding of great principles in constant conflict, without reference to actual events; and (4) the futurist, which views most of the book (Rev. 4-22) as prophecy yet to be fulfilled. The futurist is the viewpoint taken in these notes, based on the principle of interpreting the text plainly.<sup>101</sup>

For more on the interpretation of this book and its importance, see *Studies in Revelation* on the Biblical Studies Foundation web site at [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org).

Regardless of one's method of interpretation, most acknowledge that it was written to assure the recipients of the ultimate triumph of Christ over all who rise up against Him and His people.

#### 1. KEY WORDS:

As declared in title of the book, and as the book unfolds the person and work of Christ in His ministry to the church today (chaps. 1-3) and in the future (4-22), the key word or concept is *the Revelation of Jesus Christ*.

#### 1. KEY VERSES:

2. 1:7. Look! He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all the tribes on the earth will mourn because of him. This will certainly come to pass! Amen.
3. 1:19. Therefore write what you saw, what is, and what will be after these things. 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and the seven golden lampstands is this: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.
4. 19:11-16. Then I saw heaven opened and here came a white horse! The one riding it was called 'Faithful' and 'True,' and with justice he judges and goes to war. 19:12 His eyes are like a fiery flame and there are many diadem crowns on his head. He has a name written that no one knows except himself. 19:13 He is dressed in clothing dipped in blood, and he is named the Word of God. 19:14 The armies that are in heaven, dressed in white, clean, fine linen, were following him on white horses. 19:15 From his mouth extends a sharp sword, so that with it he can strike the nations. He will rule them with an iron

rod, and he stomps the winepress of the furious wrath of God the All-Powerful. 19:16 He has a name written on his clothing and on his thigh: "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."

## 5. KEY CHAPTERS:

Deciding on the key chapters in a book like Revelation is not easy, but certainly, **chapters 2-3**, containing messages of the promises and warnings written to the seven churches are key chapters. Also **chapters 4-5** which prepare the reader for the great conflict unfolded in the chapters that follow are key as well. Here we see how only the Lord Jesus, the Lion and the Lamb is worthy to open the book of seals and pour out their contents on the earth. Finally, **chapters 19-22** are key in that here we see the end of history which is radically different from what we see today.

... In [Revelation 19-22](#) the plans of God for the last days and for all of eternity are recorded in explicit terms. Careful study of and obedience to them will bring the blessings that are promised (1:3). Uppermost in the mind and deep in the heart should be guarded the words of Jesus, "Behold, I am coming quickly."<sup>102</sup>

## 1. KEY PEOPLE:

There are a number of key people or persons in this book because of the roles they play. These are first of all, the Lord Jesus, then John, the author, but also the two witnesses, the beast out of the sea and the false prophet. Finally, the bride who returns with the Lord in chapter 19 forms a key group of people.

## 1. CHRIST AS SEEN IN REVELATION:

Since Revelation is indeed "The Revelation of Jesus Christ" it demonstrates His glory, wisdom and power (1), and portrays His authority over the church (2-3) and His power and right to judge the world (5-19). But as the revelation of Christ, it is loaded with descriptive titles. In particular, it describes Jesus Christ (1:1) as the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, the ruler over the kings of the earth (1:5), the first and the last (1:17), he who lives (1:18), the Son of God (2:18), holy and true (3:7), the Amen, the faithful and true

Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God (3:14), the Lion of the tribe of Judah, The Root of David (5:5), a Lamb (5:6), Faithful and True (19:11), The Word of God (19:13), King of Kings and Lord of Lords (19:16), Alpha and Omega (22:13), The Bright and Morning Star (22:16), and the Lord Jesus Christ (22:21).

1. OUTLINE:

1. I. The Prologue (1:1-8)

II. The Things Past (1:9-20)

III. The Things Present (2-3)

1. A. The Message to Ephesus (2:1-7)

B. The Message to Smyrna (2:8-11)

C. The Message to Pergamum (2:12-17)

D. The Message to Thyatira (2:18-29)

E. The Message to Sardis (3:1-6)

F. The Message to Philadelphia (3:7-13)

G. The Message to Laodicea (3:14-22)

2. IV. The Things Predictive (4:1-22:5)

1. A. The Tribulation Period (4:1-19:21)

1. 1. The Throne in Heaven (4:1-11)

2. The Seven Sealed Book and the Lion Who Is Also a Lamb (5:1-14)

3. The Seal Judgments (6:1-17)

4. An Interlude: The Redeemed of the Tribulation (7:1-17)

5. The First Four Trumpet Judgments (8:1-13)

6. The Fifth and Sixth Trumpets and the First Two Woes (9:1-20)

7. The Angel and the Little Book (10:1-11)

8. The Temple, the Two witnesses, and the Seventh Trumpet (11:1-19)

9. The Angelic Conflict (12:1-17)

10. The Beast and the False Prophet (13:1-18)

11. Special Announcements (14:1-20)

12. Prelude to the Seven Last plagues (15:1-8)

13. The Bowl Judgments (16:1-21)

14. The Judgment of Religious Babylon (17:1-18)

15. The Judgment of Commercial Babylon (18:1-24)

16. The Second Coming of Christ (19:1-21)



2. B. The Reign of Christ (the Millennium) and the Great White Throne (20:1-15)

1. 1. Satan Bound ((20:1-3)

2. Saints Resurrected (20:4-6)

3. Sinners in Rebellion (20:7-9)

4. Satan Doomed (20:10)

5. Sinners Judged (20:11-15)

3. C. The Eternal State (21:1-22:5)

1. 1. The Descent of the New Jerusalem (21:1-8)

2. The Description of the New Jerusalem (21:9-27)

3. The Delights of the New Jerusalem (22:1-5)

4. D. The Epilogue (22:6-21)