

## Book Study: An Overview of Revelation Rev. 1.1-3

### Purpose of Studying Revelation Why would I bother?

- **1.3:** Spiritual blessing in **reading, hearing** (responsively) and **keeping** (obey) the word (22.7).
- **1.1:** 'Revelation' = *apokalypsis*, an unveiling, a full disclosure.  
*Revelation takes the lid off the future. Prophecy and Revelation can be understood!*
- **1.1:** 'Revelation of Jesus Christ' – He is the one *revealing* and the one *revealed*.
- Revelation completes the *circle* of divine truth. Prophecies are *fulfilled*; What *began* in Genesis is *concluded* in Revelation. *NY Central Station of the Bible where all trains of thought terminate.*
  - » Genesis introduces the curse; Revelation shows the curse lifted (22.3);
  - » Genesis records the first death (4.8); Revelation promises 'no more death' (21.4);
  - » Genesis begins with a king (Adam) and his queen (Eve) reigning over the earth...

### Preparation for Studying Revelation How would I go about it?

- **Read** the book = 404 verses, 11,995 English words (AV). 45 mins to read.
- **Scan read** a second time and create a *note table*. Key events; key words; titles of Christ etc.
- Gather **resources**. Jensen (Survey of the NT); J Sidlow Baxter (Explore the Book).
  - » **Commentaries:** Jim Allen (WTBT); John Walvoord (Revelation); RL Thomas (Revelation).
  - » **General:** Mark Hitchcock (101 Answers; The End); J Dwight Pentecost (Things to Come).
  - » **Magazines:** Believer's Magazine (charts of John Grant); Precious Seed; Truth & Tidings.
  - » **MP3s:** Rowan Jennings (Overview of Revelation); Jim Flanigan (Christ in Revelation).
- Learn a simple **overview** of Bible prophecy and future events (rapture/tribulation/millennium).

### Principles in Studying Revelation CAUTION!

- **Literally.** *If the plain sense makes good sense, seek no other sense lest it become nonsense.*
  - » At the first coming of Christ, over 300 prophecies were fulfilled literally, e.g. Bethlehem.
- **Symbols.** Many are explained (seven lampstands). Look to context and elsewhere in Scripture.
  - » Rev. 12: Woman given two wings of a great eagle. *US Air Force* or God's loving deliverance (Ex. 19.4)?
- **Interpretation.** *Four* main schools. **Preterist:** All prophecy fulfilled by AD70. *K Gentry & RC Sproul.*
  - » **Futurist:** Real people and events yet to occur. *John MacArthur, Tim LaHaye, Thomas Ice.*
- **Millennium.** *Three* main views. **Amillennial:** No future, literal 1,000-year **reign** of Christ. Spiritual.
  - » **Premillennial:** Christ will return after tribulation to establish a literal 1000-year **reign** on earth.
- **Rapture.** *Three* main views. **Pre-tribulation:** Rapture is imminent. No tribulation for the church!

### A Panorama of the Book of Revelation Putting it all together, what did I find?

- **Significance:** *Caretaker reading Bible. Do you understand it? Oh yes! It means Jesus is gonna win.*
  - » Prophetic. God is in control. His promises and purposes will not fail.  
Christ will be acknowledged as **Lord** on *earth* (reign); **God** will  *dwell* eternally with His people.
  - » Pastoral. Christians, enemies of the state/despised. To encourage perseverance/separation.
- **Setting:** *Author* = John (1.4); *Date* = AD96; *Recipients* = seven churches (1.4); blessed is he... (all).
- **Structure/Sections:** Divine outline given in 1.19. *Thou hast seen* (past, Rev. 1); *things which are* (present, Rev. 2-3); *things which shall be hereafter* (future, Rev. 4-22).
  - » **Other outlines:** **John** – at the *feet* of Christ (1); caught up to *heaven* (4); at the *sea shore* (13); in the *wilderness* (17); on the *mountain* (21).
  - » Rowan **Jennings** (see chart). **Six visions.** Each *begins* with John *seeing* and something being *opened* in heaven. **Vision 3 = Rev. 8.1-2:** *And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And I saw...*
  - » Reference to (heavenly) *tabernacle* made – golden altar (8.3), lampstand (1.13), ark (11.19).
  - » Each section *ends* with a summary comment or song. **Rev. 11.16-17:** *And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.*

- **Subjects:** See key words. *Nouns* = **God** (x99); **earth/land** (x82); **angel** (x76); **heaven** (x54).
  - » *Adjectives* = **great/loud** (x82, voice, tribulation, day, wonder); **seven** (x51). Full of numbers.
  - » Revelation repeats the history of the OT. **Rev. 1-3:** Tree of life and paradise of God (Genesis); manna (Exodus); Balaam (Numbers); Laodicea, *spue thee out of my mouth* (exile).
  - » **Rev. 4-22:** Babylon overthrown (Daniel); Antichrist (Antiochus Epiphanes, Daniel); two witnesses (Zechariah); Israel restored (Haggai); coming of Christ (end of both testaments).
  - » *Rev. 20: Christ comes, not now to die, not now as the Lamb, but as the **Lion** to conquer and reign.*

**Panorama: Chapter Overview**

- Revelation is a book of action. ‘And’, most frequent *English* word, occurs 1174 times.
- There are *pauses* in the action (parentheses).

Chapter	Outline
4	John is caught up to the throne room of heaven.
5	Worthy is the Lamb to open the seven-sealed book (title deed to earth).
6	Lamb opens the first six seals: four horses, martyrs and an earthquake
7	<i>Parenthesis: Panorama of God’s saving work during the tribulation. 144,000 sealed (from Israel) in vv.1-8. A resultant innumerable company of saved Gentiles seen in vv.9-17.</i>
8	Great tribulation. Seventh seal is opened revealing seven trumpet judgments. Trumpets 1-4 affect nature.
9	Trumpets 5-6 reveal supernatural satanic soldiers and a 200 million strong army (from the east) beginning their march towards Armageddon.
10	<i>Parenthesis: A mighty angel gives John further revelation concerning the future. He must prophesy again.</i>
11	<i>Parenthesis: Two witnesses are called to testify for 1260 days. Trumpet 7 sounds to announce the kingdom and reign of Christ.</i>
12	<i>Parenthesis: Great wonder – woman clothed with the sun (Israel) gives birth to a man child (Christ) who is caught up to heaven. War in heaven as the Devil is cast down to earth by Michael and his angels. Satanic persecution of Israel (the woman), miraculously preserved by God.</i>
13	<i>Parenthesis: Two beasts introduced: antichrist and false prophet.</i>
14	<i>Parenthesis: Seven cameos largely describing events at the end of the great tribulation.</i>
15	Company of victorious martyrs from the tribulation seen in heaven. Preparation of the seven vials or bowls.
16	Seven vials poured out rapidly at the end of the great tribulation. Vial 7 includes the greatest earthquake of all time, destroying many cities including Babylon.
17/18	<i>Parenthesis: Religious Babylon (representing all false religion) destroyed by the beast at the mid-point of the tribulation (17.16). Commercial Babylon (centre of economic power) destroyed by God at the end of the tribulation.</i>
19	The great crescendo – the Lord God omnipotent reigns in the person of His Son (19.6). The marriage of the Lamb. Heaven is opened and Christ rides forth to conquer. Armageddon.
20	Devil cast into bottomless pit (1000 years). Released at the end, but rebellion destroyed. Reign of Christ with His saints on earth (1000 years). Great White Throne judgment of all the wicked dead.
21/22	New heaven and a new earth – the eternal state. The eternal city, <b>new</b> Jerusalem is described externally, internally and spiritually. We shall dwell in intimate fellowship and communion with God – <i>I am coming quickly!</i>