

# The Revelation

## Lesson 1 – Revelation 1:1-3, Introduction

The Bible is comprised of sixty-six individual letters or books, but it is ONE book. The canon of the scriptures is so comprised that it begins with the beginning and ends with the ending. It records the beginning of all creation, the beginning of man and woman, and the family. The beginning of temptation and sin which resulted in spiritual death and the separation of man from the presence of God is found in the first three chapters of the book of Genesis.

The book of Revelation on the other hand, shows us the end of all things and the restoration of many things which were lost in Genesis. In his book, *Treasures From Revelation*, Dr. Rod Mattoon gives this comparison:

*“In Genesis, we find the entrance of sin and the curse; in Revelation, its end. In Genesis, we find the dawn of Satan and his activities and his doom in Revelation. In Genesis, the Tree of Life is relinquished and in Revelation, it’s regained. In Genesis, Death makes its entrance and in Revelation, its exit. Genesis records the beginning of sorrow and in Revelation, it’s banished. Genesis records the commencement of prophecy and Revelation records the consummation.”*

### I. The Prophecy of the Book

1. The book of Revelation is the only book in the New Testament devoted to the theme of **PROPHECY**. According to *Webster’s 1828 Dictionary* prophecy is defined as:

*“A foretelling; prediction; a declaration of something to come.”*

Since only God knows future events with certainty, no being but God or some person informed by him, can utter a real prophecy. The prophecies recorded in Scripture, when fulfilled, afford most convincing evidence of the divine origin of the Scriptures. The prophets of old who uttered the prophecies could not have foreknown the events predicted without supernatural instruction. Such instruction is known as “INSPIRATION” in the scriptures.

**2 Timothy 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 2 Peter 1:20-21 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.**

It has always been true, and is so especially in our times, that people are interested in the future. With horoscopes, fortune tellers, so called prophets and prophetesses the unknown has always intrigued people. There is only One who knows the unknown, and His name is God Almighty.

Isaiah 42:8-9 I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images. Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them. Isaiah 44:6-8 Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God. And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them. Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? ye are even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any.

## II. The Peculiarities of the Book

1. The book of Revelation is the only book in the entire Bible which begins by promising a **BLESSING** on those who read, hear and keep the things that are written in it.

**Revelation 1:3 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.**

2. It also ends with a special **CURSE** on those who add or take away from its **WORDS**.

**Revelation 22:18-19 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.**

3. The Revelation is one of **FIVE** books written by the Apostle John; the others being the Gospel of John and the epistles of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> John. In the Gospel of John, John reaches as far back as any writer could ever carry anyone's mind when he penned these words:

**John 1:1-3 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.**

And yet this same writer carries us as far into the future with this same Word when he writes The Book of Revelation.

**Revelation 19:11-13 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.**

4. The book of Revelation is also a book of sevens. God uses the numbering system of sevens. Seven is the completion of a series of events or things that God deals with throughout His book. The book of Revelation informs us of: 7 spirits, 7 stars, 7 lamps, 7 seals, 7 horns, 7 eyes, 7 angels, 7 trumpets, 7 thunders, 7 heads, 7 crowns, 7 plagues, 7 vials, 7 mountains, and 7 kings. Seven seems to indicate the sum total of everything. So, the book of Revelation is the seven or completion of all things future.

5. The book of Revelation is also comparable to the book of Daniel of the Old Testament. Daniel was given much prophecy and told to seal up the things which he had seen.

**Daniel 12:4 But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. Daniel 12:9 And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.**

Notice that Daniel is told that the words of his prophesy are closed and sealed till the “time of the end”. But when John writes the Book of Revelation, he is told the opposite.

**Revelation 22:10 And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.**

As a matter of fact, John is told in the first chapter (**Revelation 1:3**) and in the last chapter (**Revelation 22:10**) of The Revelation that, “the time is at hand.”

This statement refers to the things which John sees and writes about in The Revelation could happen at any time.

It is also interesting to note that the book of Daniel is the 27<sup>th</sup> book of the Old Testament, and the book of Revelation is the 27<sup>th</sup> book of the New Testament. Also, Daniel was in exile when he wrote the Book of Daniel, and John was in exile when he wrote the Book of Revelation.

### **III. The Purpose of the Book**

1. The title of the book informs us as to the PURPOSE of its content, which is to **REVEAL**. The word revelation defined means, *“The act of disclosing or discovering to others what was before unknown to them; appropriately, the disclosure or communication of truth to men by God himself, or by his authorized agents, the prophets and apostles,”* (Webster’s 1828 Dictionary). There are many things revealed throughout the Book of Revelation, such as:

- 1) The sights and sounds of heaven
- 2) The future Tribulation period which Jesus Christ spoke about (**Matthew 24:21**)
- 3) The anti-christ’s reign on earth and his ending
- 4) The judgment of Satan and his final abode
- 5) The second coming of Jesus Christ
- 6) The millennial reign of Jesus Christ on earth
- 7) The creation of the new heaven and the new earth
- 8) A glimpse into eternity with God.

2. The exact purpose of the Book of Revelation is to reveal God's Son, his soon coming judgment on all the earth, and the New Heaven and the New Earth which he will create! It reveals the end of sin, suffering, sorrow and Satan but it also reveals the beginning of all things new! Genesis began with man being separated from God's presence, but Revelation reveals God dwelling with His people forever. The study of this book is not to be feared by any one saved, but rather cherished and read for encouragement because the saved are on the winning side!

3. The things contained in Revelation are given to God's children to encourage, enlighten, and enable us to tell others of the things coming upon the earth!

**Deuteronomy 29:29 The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law. 1 Peter 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:**

In Jerusalem there is a group of Orthodox Jews which have taken on the task of preparing to rebuild the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. Many of the things necessary to construct the temple are in store and ready for God's timing. Most of the furnishings for the Jewish Temple have also been readied, and one of the latest pieces to be crafted was the "golden menorah" or candlestick.

Much preparation and work were demanded to accomplish the task at hand, and finally, the day came that the "golden menorah" housed in a glass case would be revealed to the public eye. Anyone interested could come and see. A great ceremony was planned and announced. The day arrived, and many gathered to see this magnificent sight. The menorah was in place atop a staircase and lifted high so that everyone could see it. The crowd gathered, two trumpeters sounded their horns and finally the blue velvet covering was lifted for all to see this amazing sight which only a few had ever seen before. And there it stood in all its grandeur, "the golden menorah" of Israel.

This is what the book of Revelation does for the reader. John pulls the veil off all the writings of the prophets before him and reveals to those interested, the greatest revelation of all the ages – the Lord Jesus Christ! The Book of Revelation lifts Jesus Christ to his rightful place in Heaven and on Earth. There is no mistaking who it reveals – it is God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He has been given a name above every name and one day, every knee shall bow to him and every tongue will confess his name.

**Philippians 2:5-11 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

#### **IV. The Person of the Book**

1. The very first verse of Revelation chapter one tells us WHO this book is all about; JESUS CHRIST.
2. From the very first prophecy of the Bible found in **Genesis 3:15**, to the very last prophecy in Revelation, the person of prophecy is Jesus Christ. When John fell at the feet of the angel revealing these things to him, he said:

**Revelation 19:10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.**

When he tells John that Jesus is the spirit of prophecy, he is telling him that Jesus Christ is the, "*breath, the essence, the life,*" of prophecy.

3. Every prophecy points us to Jesus Christ. It was prophesied in **Isaiah 53** that Jesus Christ was going to come, be stricken and smitten of God for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. It has been revealed to ALL that Jesus Christ is God's Son, so that ALL may believe and be saved.

**Acts 17:30-31 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead.**

4. The book of Revelation lists more titles for the Saviour than any other book in the Bible. In this one book Jesus is referred to as:

Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first begotten from the dead, the Prince of the kings of the earth, the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the Son of man, the Son of God, the Keeper of David's keys, the One who has the keys to death and hell, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, the Lamb slain, our Lord, the man Child, the King of saints, the faithful and true witness, the Word of God, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the Beginning and the End, and the Bright and Morning Star!

5. The one title that is emphasized more than any other of the Lord Jesus Christ in the book of Revelation is the "LAMB". TWENTY-EIGHT times Jesus is referred to as the Lamb. In **Genesis 22**, Isaac asked the question of his father Abraham, "But where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?" John Baptist in the Gospel of John heralded the great proclamation, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." And now, Revelation REVEALS this Lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world!

6. The book of Revelation is a book about the Lamb of God! He is first introduced as the SLAIN Lamb, and lastly as the SITTING Lamb!

**Revelation 5:6 And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. Revelation 22:3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:**

As the Jews were preparing to leave the land of Egypt, each household was instructed to secure a lamb. They were to kill the lamb, dip hyssop into its blood, and strike the blood on the two side posts and upper posts of the door of their houses. These instructions were emphasized to the congregation and they were told the reason for the preparation.

**Exodus 12:12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am* the LORD.**

God had drawn the line, and it was time for God to exact judgment upon the land of Egypt. The Jews were also told God's reasoning for the lamb and its blood being placed upon their doors.

**Exodus 12:13 And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye *are*: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.**

They were to be very careful when selecting the lamb for the sacrifice and were to make certain the blood was applied as God had said.

Within the instructions given in this passage of scripture is a very beautiful picture of the personal application of this narrative. The first mention of the lamb is recorded with these words:

**Exodus 12:3 ...they shall take to them every man a lamb,...**

The next verse carries the thought a little further when it proclaims:

**Exodus 12:4 ...make your count for the lamb.**

Then finally, God personalizes the progress with these words:

**Exodus 12:5 Your lamb shall be without blemish,...**

A lamb, the lamb, your lamb! Have you received Jesus Christ as YOUR LAMB who takes away your sins? That is the most important question and decision of your life. Your eternity depends on it. God's judgment is coming – don't get caught without God's provided Lamb – Jesus Christ.

**John 1:36-37 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.**