

The Study of the Book of Revelation
The Revelation of Jesus Christ
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION: THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Revelation 1:1

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:”

Quoting from the introduction to the Book of Revelation, from the New King James Version, Thomas Nelson Publishers, page 1080:

“Just as Genesis is the book of beginnings, Revelation is the book of consummation. In it, the divine program of redemption is brought to fruition, and the holy name of God is vindicated before all creation. Although there are numerous prophecies in the Gospels and Epistles, Revelation is the only New Testament book that focuses primarily on prophetic events. Its title means “unveiling” or “disclosure.” Thus, the book is an unveiling of the character and program of God. Penned by John during his exile on the island of Patmos, Revelation centers around visions and symbols of the resurrected Christ, who alone has authority to judge the earth, to remake it, and to rule it in righteousness.” “A better title comes from the first verse: [in Greek] Apokalypsis Iesou Christou, “Revelation of Jesus Christ.” This could be taken as a revelation which came from Christ or as a revelation which is about Christ - both are appropriate.”

As the above quotation notes, Revelation is book which focuses primarily of Prophetic events. It is a revelation from JESUS CHRIST to man regarding what would occur, from John’s day throughout the balance of earth’s history. In it we also gain Revelations about Jesus Christ - we see Revelations about the nature of Christ, and about how He cares for and loves His people.

BACKGROUND:

Since REVELATION is primarily a book of PROPHECY, before we begin our Study, let’s discuss the topic of Prophetic Interpretation:

THERE ARE THREE MAIN SCHOOLS OF PROPHECY:

1. PRETERISM
2. FUTURISM
3. HISTORICISM

1. PRETERISM

Preterism was developed by the Jesuit scholar Alcazar to defeat Protestantism. It teaches that the thrust of all prophecy is in the distant past during the days of the historical prophet. That all prophecies of the Bible were completed by 70 A.D.

2. FUTURISM

Futurism was developed by the Jesuit scholar Rivera to defeat Protestantism. Futurism teaches that the thrust of all prophecy is at the very end of time.

The Two Dangers in Satan's Counterfeits of Preterism and Futurism.

1. Preterism masks the antichrist from the eyes of the world by trivializing the prophecies of the Bible. By saying that all prophecies of the Bible were completed by 70 A.D. Satan takes the focus off the Little Horn (Papacy) and ascribes them to minor figures like Antiochus Epiphanes. It also denies the prophecies of Daniel chapters 2 and 7, which takes us down past the collapse of the Roman Empire, the divided kingdoms, the Little Horn, and the Judgment in 1844.
2. Futurism masks the antichrist by placing him so far into the future that his coming is not recognized in history. It also denies the prophecies of Daniel chapters 2 and 7, by not accounting for the kingdoms of Babylon, Medo/Persia, Greece, Rome, the 10 kingdoms, the Little Horn, and the Judgment that started in 1844. It also turns the focus of Daniel chapter nine's seventieth week, from the Messiah (Jesus), to the anti-Christ.

3. HISTORICISM

Historicism was given to the church by Jesus Christ. It teaches that Bible prophecy builds upon the patterns of the *past* to comfort God's people in the *present* and warn them of the dangers to come in the *future*.

Christ's Nature as God Embodies the Essence and Truth of Historicism.

In **Revelation 1:4** we see the message is:

"Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come..."

In **Revelation 1:8** He declares:

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."

Like the Living Word-Jesus Christ, The Written Word of Revelation Contains the Same Divine Qualities of Historicism.

In **Revelation 1:19** He tells John to:

"Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;"

OBSERVATION:

The Book Of Revelation Identifies Jesus As The Mighty God Of The Old Testament Who Can Predict Future History And Guide Our Lives Through It.

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.”

KEY POINT:

In light of Revelation 1:19, the book of Revelation was written to instruct John concerning "what is" and "what is coming." Thus, the prophecy of Revelation starts in John's day and goes all the way down to the destruction of sinners and establishment of the new heavens and new earth. It is an outline of history from John's day until the very end of time.

This Study: REVELATION CHAPTER 1

Revelation 1:1-3

*“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which [1] must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel [2] unto his servant John: Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. **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.**”* Cross references: [1] John 3:31-33 (testimony) [2] Revelation 22:6-7

Christ declares that the prophecy is given to declare unto His People what is to come. Remember, we have seen that GOD CARES for us, and wants us to know what is coming. He wants us to see from the historical accuracy of His Prophecies that already have occurred, that We Can Trust Him explicitly for what also is yet to come.

Revelation 1:4-8

*“John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from **him which is, and which was, and which is to come;** and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, **and the first begotten of the dead,** and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and **washed us from our sins in his own blood,** And hath **made us kings and priests** unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Behold, **he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him,** and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.”*

KEY POINTS:

“The first begotten of the dead” Jesus, who died, was buried and rose again as a promise of the resurrection of the just, to all who believe on Him.

Colossians 1:18

*“And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, **the firstborn from the dead;** that in all things he might have the preeminence.”*

“washed us from our sins in his own blood” Jesus paid the price for all who will come to Him and confess their sins. He stands as our High Priest in the heavenly courtroom willing to wash our lives clean with His blood that He shed on Calvary.

Hebrews 9:11-12

*“But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, **but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.”***

“made us kings and priests” As part of the New Covenant, Jesus has made us a kingdom of priests.

1 Peter 2:5, 9

*(5)“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, **an holy priesthood**, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”*

*(9)“But ye are a chosen generation, a **royal priesthood**, an **holy nation**, a peculiar people; that ye should **shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:**”*

“He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him” When Jesus comes the second time, it will be audible, visual, and glorious. He will be coming with Power and great Glory!

Matthew 24:30

*“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall **see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”***

Romans 14:11-12

*“For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, **every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.** So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”*

Revelation 1:9-11

*“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. **I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day**, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, **write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia;** unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.”*

KEY POINTS:

“on the Lord's day” What day was this? What day is Christ Lord of?

Mark 2:27-28

*“And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore **the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.”***

Matthew 12:8

“For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.”

Exodus 20:8-11

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: **For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.”**

As we can clearly see, the Lord’s Day is the Seventh Day Sabbath. From sundown Friday to sundown Saturday, the Lord has a special day and special appointment with you.

“...write it... to the seven churches” John is directed to write the Prophecies of Revelation and send them to the seven churches. As we shall see in a moment, this was not only for the literal “seven” churches existent in John’s time, but also was prophetically being sent to the “Churches” of history yet to come.

Revelation 1:12-20

“And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars; and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword; and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches; and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.” [Rev. 1:13 - Ref. Dan. 10:5 - golden girdle]

KEY POINTS:

“with a golden girdle” This gives a picture of the golden ephod worn by the High Priest, that contained the two onyx stones and breastplate where the names of the 12 tribes were inscribed.

Exodus 28:6-9

“And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work. It shall have the two shoulder pieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof; and so it shall be joined together. And the curious girdle of the ephod, which is upon it, shall be of the same, according to the work thereof; even of gold, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. And

thou shalt take two onyx stones, and grave on them the names of the children of Israel:”

WHERE IS THE LAMPSTAND? In the Holy Place of the Sanctuary. Thus, John is seeing Christ in His High Priestly role, as Our High Priest in the heavenly Sanctuary. [See also Heb. 7:22-26 & Heb. 8:1-5]

“out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword” The Sword is the Bible, the Word of God.

Hebrews 4:12

“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

Ephesians 6:17

“And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:”

“Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter” We once again see the historical view of prophecy. Beginning with the time of John and following time down to the second coming of Jesus.

“the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.” Referring both to the literal seven churches of John's day and the historical churches down through history.

KEY POINTS:

1. John sees Jesus, as the God of history, walking in the midst of the seven candlesticks (the 7 Lampstands) (Rev. 1:12-16)
2. The 7 golden lampstands represent the Seven Churches. (Rev. 1:20)
3. Christ our High Priest - Who Is, Was and Will Be - walks among the Churches in History. (Rev. 1:13 & 1:20)

From Revelation 1:19, we see:

1. **“which are”** indicates the Seven Churches existed historically in Asia Minor in John's day.
3. **“which shall be hereafter”** indicates the Seven Churches of John's day are historical pictures or types of seven crucial periods of church history yet to come.

Revelation chapter 1 sets the stage for the rest of the book of Revelation. The better we understand the Sanctuary, the better we will understand the book of Revelation, as it is written in Sanctuary language. We see that the seven churches come from the seven-branch candlestick in the Holy Place of the Sanctuary.

A look at the Sanctuary:

The Courtyard was 75 feet wide and 150 feet long. It had white linen for walls, held up by brass poles. The gate was on the East, and in the courtyard were two articles, the Laver and the Altar of Burnt Offering. The priest would take the blood from the lamb the sinner had just slain and go to the Laver. There he would wash his hands and feet, symbolically cleansing his life so he could mediate on behalf of the repentant sinner. Then he would take the blood and put some on the horns of the Altar of Burnt Offering, and part of the lamb would be burned as a sacrifice. We see Jesus as our High Priest at the Laver when He was baptized in 27 A.D. and then at the Altar of Burnt Offering when He died on the cross in 31 A.D. So the Courtyard represented Christ's earthly ministry.

The Holy Place contained three articles of furniture. The Seven Branch Candlestick, the Table of Showbread, and the Altar of Incense. The Seven Branch Candlestick was always lit and provided light inside the Holy Place. This represented Christ, the Light of the World. The Table of Showbread had 12 fresh cakes put on the table every Sabbath. This represented Christ, the Bread of Life. The Altar of Incense was where the High Priest would intercede on behalf of Israel. This represented Christ as our heavenly intercessor. The Holy Place represented Christ's heavenly ministry as our High Priest and intercessor. This is where Christ went after He went back to heaven in 31 A.D. He was there until 1844 A.D. Since Christ is pictured in Revelation chapter 1 walking amidst the golden candlesticks, we see He is in His heavenly ministry, in the heavenly Sanctuary after 31 A.D.

The Most Holy Place had one article of furniture, the Ark of the Covenant. In the Ark of the Covenant were three things: The 10 Commandments, a plate of Manna, and Aaron's rod that had budded. This is where the presence of God dwelt with His people. Only one time a year was the High Priest allowed to go into the Most Holy Place and this was on the Day of Atonement. Since Christ is not pictured at the Ark of the Covenant yet, we can see that the Seven Churches prophetic timeline starts in 31 A.D.

Another thing to notice is that the Sanctuary supports the historical view of prophecy! Starting with Christ's earthly ministry in 27 A.D. Then the Sacrifice (Cross) in 31 A.D. His ascending to heaven in 31 A.D. His moving to the Most Holy Place to begin Judgment in 1844, just as the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation point us to.

Sanctuary Diagram

