



T H E B O O K O F R E V E L A T I O N

THE END

A S C O T T H A H N B I B L E S T U D Y

A university-level course in Scripture

Listening guide and Group study guide

Developed by Dr. Carol Younger

to accompany the audio series
The End: A Study of the Book of Revelation

SAINT JOSEPH
COMMUNICATIONS

DESIGN OF THIS BOOKLET

This workbook is intended to help the listener follow Dr. Hahn's presentation of the Bible Study Course: *The End: A Study of the Book of Revelation* by allowing you to fill in information in appropriate places and to take notes on the important aspects of each tape/CD in the series. Following the listening guide, there is a review of each section of *The End* together with study aids. Each section is followed by discussion questions, intended for either a Scripture Study group of friends or for further individual reflection on St. John's meanings and application in our daily lives.

Features which should benefit your learning and your encounter with Jesus Christ are:

- ❖ Easy fill-in-the-blank and note-taking format to capture key points without getting left behind while you are listening to Dr. Hahn. Simply (a) fill in the blanks or (b) circle the correct answer as you read
- ❖ References to the Bible cited on the page so that you may pause the tape and find the specific passages
- ❖ References to specific Catechism of the Catholic Church, Documents of Vatican II, or other writings that apply to the topic.

Catechism references are identified by CCC plus the paragraph number. For example, "CCC 105" refers to the paragraph beginning, "God is the author of Sacred Scripture."

Documents of Vatican II are identified by the Latin name (with the English title in parentheses), the section number, and the paragraph number, if any. For example, "Dei Verbum (The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation) 6 § 1" refers to the paragraph beginning, "By divine Revelation, God wished to manifest and communicate both Himself and the eternal decrees of His will concerning the salvation of mankind."

- ❖ Additional questions at the end of the section for each tape assist in your better understanding of the listening and the note/answers you have just completed. This, coupled with the study guide following all the tapes helps you to integrate what has been learned with other parts of the Bible and to apply insights gained to your own spiritual life.

In this guide, you will follow verse-by-verse commentary, explanations of key Greek and Hebrew words, background information on how key passages are used in Catholic and Protestant theology, and explanations of how various heretics misinterpreted words and phrases, as well as suggestions for further reading.

If you understand what is written by John in his *Apocalypse*, you will have a firmer grasp of the Christian message than many contemporary theologians! The life of Jesus Christ will come alive for you! Don't wait. Organize a Scripture Study Group with your friends and family today!

Table of Contents

	<u>Page #</u>
1. Introduction to the Book of Revelation Chapter 1	1
2. Heavenly Letters to the Church on Earth Chapters 2-3	13
3. Apocalyptic Liturgy in the Heavenly Temple Chapters 4-5	26
4. The Covenant Scroll in the Heavenly Courtroom Chapters 6-7	39
5. Spiritual Warfare on the Heavenly Battlefield Chapters 7-9	53
6. Divine Judgment on the Earthly Temple Chapters 10-12	68
7. The Woman and Her Child vs. The Dragon and the Beasts Chapters 12-14	81
8. The Lamb Overcomes the Harlot and the Beasts Chapters 14-17	93
9. The Marriage Supper of the Lamb Chapters 17-20	108

Table of Contents

Page #

10. A New View of the Millennium Chapter 20	126
11. The Glory of the Catholic Church Chapters 20-22	140
Review and Study Aids	151
Divisions of Revelation and Contents	163



A Prayer to St. Joseph

O blessed Joseph, faithful guardian of my Redeemer, Jesus Christ,
protector of thy chaste spouse, the virgin Mother of God,
I choose thee this day to be my special patron and advocate
and I firmly resolve to honor thee all the days of my life.
Therefore, I humbly beseech thee to receive me as thy client,
to instruct me in every doubt, to comfort me in every affliction,
to obtain for me and for all, the knowledge and love of the Heart of Jesus,
and finally to defend and protect me at the hour of my death.

Amen

Tape One - Introduction to the Book of Revelation

(Chapter 1)

Quote from St. Ephraim, the Syriac, and a deacon from the 4th century.

Lord, who can grasp all the wealth of just one of your words. What we understand is much less than what we leave behind. Like thirsty people who drink from a fountain, for your word, Lord, has many shades of meaning, just as those who study it have many points of view. The Lord has colored his word with many hues, so that each person who studies it can see in it what he loves. He has hidden many treasures in his word, so that each of us is enriched as we meditate on it. The word of God is a tree of life that from all its parts offers you fruit that is blessed. It is like that rock that is open in the desert, which from all its parts gave forth a spiritual drink. He, who comes into contact with some share in its treasure, should not think that the only thing contained in the word is what he himself has found. He should realize that he has only been able to find that one thing from among many others. Nor, because only that one part has become his should he say that the word is void, empty, and look down on it. Because he could not exhaust it, he should give thanks for its riches. Be glad that you are overcome and do not be sad that it overcame you. The thirsty man rejoices when he drinks, he is not downcast because he cannot empty the fountain. Rather let the fountain quench your thirst, than have your thirst quench the fountain. Because if your thirst is quenched and the fountain is not exhausted, you can drink from it again whenever you are thirsty. But if, when your thirst is quenched, the fountain also is dried up, your victory will bode evil for you. So be grateful for what you have received and don't grumble about the abundance left behind. What you have received and what you have reached is your share. What remains is your heritage. What at one time you are unable to receive, because of your weakness, you will be able to receive at other times, if you persevere. Do not have the presumption to try to take in one draft what cannot be taken in one draft. And do not abandon out of laziness what you may only consume little by little.

SOME BASIC QUESTIONS:

1. Authorship:

Who wrote this book? John the Elder or John the Evangelist (Beloved Disciple)?

Many scholars, both Catholic and Protestant, acknowledge the problems with attributing the entire book to John the _____ . However, there are many more problems denying that tradition.

Arguments of a French priest: Andre Feuillet, a great Catholic scripture scholar of this century. In his book, *The Apocalypse*, he has persuasive arguments for John the _____ being the author of *Revelation*.

◆He presents internal evidence: The same sort of (a)mystical / (b)analytical thought is present in both John's *Gospel* and *Revelation*. One example of this: Only in John's Gospel 7:37-39, appears the following image: *out of His belly shall flow rivers of living water*. Though it is uncertain what scripture Jesus was quoting or what reference John had in mind, the only other place where that kind of imagery is found is in *Revelation*, where living water comes forth from the center of the New Jerusalem, the Bride of Christ, the Mystical Body, the new Temple.

◆He presents external evidence: The early Church Fathers in 2nd, 3rd, 4th centuries.

The Navarre Bible is an excellent reference for the Book of Revelation, particularly on the question of authorship. It goes through the testimony of these _____ of the Church.

◆St. Justin of the 2nd century refers to "a man named John, one of the apostles of Christ" as the author of *Revelation*. This is important because St. Justin Martyr was converted to Christianity in _____ around 135 AD. _____ is where John the Apostle served as Bishop, one of the churches addressed by Christ in the seven letters in *Revelation*. Justin is in touch with the ancient traditions concerning the visions and the book's author.

◆ There is a commentary on it written by St. Melito, Bishop of _____. The commentary itself is missing, but there are references made to it by Eusebius and other early writers. This church of _____ is another Church mentioned in the letters. St. Melito attributes the Book of Revelation to St. John as well.

◆ Other 2nd century writers who support this same authorship include St. Irenaeus, who was disciple of St. Polycarp, who was a disciple of St. John. Papias also believed this to be St. John's work.

◆ 3rd Century: Origen of Alexandria, Tertullian.

◆ 4th Century - St. Athanasius, St. Basil, St. Gregory of Nyssa.

♣ The only real contention arose in the school of (a) Antioch / (b) Corinth, where the authenticity and the apostolicity of *Revelation* were denied. Even St. John Chrysostom didn't appeal to *Revelation* in his preaching in and around (a) Antioch / (b) Corinth during the 4th century because of what the heretics were doing to misinterpret and abuse the text. St. Cyril of Jerusalem questioned the book also. However, by the late (a) 3rd / (b) 4th century, the council of Hippo in 393 AD, or the council of Carthage in 395 AD, authoritative decisions on the canon of the Bible were made, on the New Testament particularly. These decisions were then sent on from these councils to (a) Jerusalem / (b) Rome to be approved by the successor to Peter.

There are many strong arguments, therefore, both internal and external, for Johannine authorship. However, there are in vogue presently, or in academic fad, arguments against Johannine authorship.

2. Date of writing

When did John have the vision?

There are two basic positions: the majority report and the minority report

The majority report says that *Revelation* was written by John near the (a) end / (b) middle of his life, near the end of the 1st century, around 96 AD, during the reign of Emperor Domitian, during the persecution of Domitian.

The minority report believes that it was written by John shortly before (a) 60 / (b) 70 AD, during the Neronian persecutions, while Caesar Nero was ruling over the Roman empire, launching the first and the worst persecution against the Christians in the first century.

Scholars are shifting from the majority to the minority view because there is only scanty evidence that _____ ever persecuted the Church. There is no persuasive testimony that he did, it is only mentioned in passing by Irenaeus' writings. Irenaeus seems to be saying that John had this apocalyptic vision late in his life, during the reign of _____. Two things to say about Irenaeus' testimony on historical matters that seem to point to a later writing.

◆ Irenaeus' testimony on historical matters is not always to be taken at face value - in his writings, e.g., he argues that Jesus was 50 years old when He was crucified. And no one believes that. But Irenaeus is emphatic on the point. Irenaeus' (a) biblical insight / (b) accurate historical testimony is much better than his (a) biblical insight / (b) accurate historical testimony.

◆ Irenaeus' grammar in the sentence allows for two different translations. (1) It could be read that John had the vision near the end of his life during the reign of Domitian, or (2) it could also be translated as John had this vision and then lived on to the time of Domitian before he died. Thus, the testimony of Irenaeus on historical matters is not final or authoritative.

Kenneth L. Gentry wrote *Before Jerusalem Fell*, a recently published book which is a popularized version of his doctoral thesis on the dating of *Revelation*, using both the internal evidence and external testimony. He finally posits that the date of writing is earlier. His position is that _____ and John are concerned about the same persecution: the one just before the second fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD. The persecution they were both concerned about was the persecution launched by the _____ themselves against the Church in the first generation after the Ascension. This led to the (a) Jews / (b) Romans besieging the city of Jerusalem and destroying it in 70 AD. Thus, it was not the one at the hands of the Romans in 96 AD.

In the Gospels and the Book of Acts:

The _____ leaders were the persecutors of Jesus Christ in the Gospels.

The _____ leaders launch the persecutions of the Apostles and early Christians.

The Roman Centurion recognizes Christ as _____ in the Gospels.

A Roman begs for health from Jesus for his son or servant in the Gospels.

The Gospels do not in any way depict Christianity as a political revolutionary force setting out to topple (a) Jerusalem / (b) Rome. There is no anti-_____ sentiment in the Gospels. Nor is there any (a) Jewish / (b) Roman persecution of Jesus in the Gospels. Even the first 8 chapters of Acts show persecution of _____ exclusively coming from Jerusalem: the priests, rabbis, and the ones sent from the Temple in Jerusalem, the Jewish militia. There are even Jews in Jerusalem who swear never to eat another meal until they slay St. Paul who defected from their ranks.

Instead, throughout the whole Book of Acts, covering more than a decade, constant persecutions against the Apostles are reported in different cities outside of Jerusalem. In every case, without significant exception, these persecutions are launched by (a) Jews / (b) Romans who resent the kerygma of the gospel and its implications. The Apostles are preaching that the (a) Jews / (b) Romans as a nation missed the Messiah, and the very leaders of the Jews murdered Jesus. This is a huge indictment of the (a) New / (b) Old Covenant institutions in Jerusalem of the time. Almost all of (a) Jewish / (b) Roman society was thus arrayed against the Apostles who are beginning a new Church founded on Jesus the Messiah. Any Jew's acceptance of Christ implies that their friends and relatives have missed the long prophesied _____ of Israel. Further, the gospel is going out to _____, the unclean and defiled, not of the chosen nation and the promise of God.

Both psychologically and theologically, it makes sense to accept the scholarly position that the (a) Jews / (b) Romans are the primary instigators of initial persecutions of Christians and the Church leading up to 70 AD [and the predicted fall of the Temple].

A few scriptural passages which present evidence for Revelation to demonstrate this line of thinking follow:

Revelation 2:9 *I know your tribulation and poverty, but you are rich. And I also know the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.*

Romans 2:25 ff. *Circumcision, to be sure, is of value if you obey the law; but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law (the moral code), will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? [by (a) Jews / (b) by God] Then those who are physically uncircumcised but keep the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law, for he is not a real Jew who is one outwardly, nor is true circumcision something external and physical. He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart, spiritual and not literal. His praise is not from men but from God.*

Galatians 6:13 *For even those who receive circumcision do not themselves keep the law, ... (15) for neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. [What matters is becoming a new creation.] {16} Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon the Israel of God.*

The "rule" referred to here is "_____". The true Jew is the one who keeps the Law from (a) a mind / (b) a heart filled with faith, and all who do this together constitute the new _____ of God.

The implications of this (for Paul, for John, for the other disciples) are that those among the Jews who reject _____ and cling to circumcision, the law and the outdated covenant, -- these people are not TRUE Jews, but have been disinherited. They are not the true "_____" of God, just because of ethnic origin. What is being proclaimed now is a spiritual connection, a spiritual Jewish-ness, a bond with God that is established by (a) faith / (b) hope in Christ. Believers, be they Jew or Gentile, constitute the true Israel, and the persecutors of the Apostles and of the new Christians are the Synagogue of (a) Sinners / (b) Satan.

Revelation 3:7-9 .. *to the angel of the church in Philadelphia, write this: 'The holy one, the true one, who holds the key of David, who opens and no one shall shut, who shuts and no one opens'... ... Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie, behold I will make them come and bow down before your feet and learn that I have loved you.*

Isaiah 22 identifies the Key of David with the true ruler of the city of Jerusalem. The person who holds this key to the city of David (Jerusalem) is the (a) prime minister / (b) heir in David's house, the King of Israel. _____ is the son of David, the real king of Israel, the true heir, the real ruler. So, only loyal subjects of _____ are the true Israel.

Eschaton - Greek word for "the _____ things" and *eschatology* - the Study of the _____ Things. As scripture students we need to remember the covenant context for all Scripture. A scholar's statement: "The gospel is a covenant gospel that reveals the fulfillment of a covenant promise. But when gospel eschatology is abstracted from its covenant frame of reference, any eschatological interpretation of man's choosing can be extracted." We have to recreate as we read the basic categories that the Apostles had. They were all (a) Jews / (b) converts, steeped in the Old Testament. The central idea of this culture or worldview is that "God made Covenant with Jews."

He has promised to fulfill this (a) worldview / (b) covenant and bring it to perfection. This needs to be applied to the whole of *Revelation*.

The last few chapters of *Revelation* (19-22) describes a city as a harlot, a whore, (a) purified / (b) burned up with fire. Some scholars think this is Rome. But nowhere in scripture is Rome called a harlot. But _____ is called a harlot many times over in scripture (Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Isaiah, and other prophets). And, second, (a) Rome / (b) Jerusalem was not consumed in fire. But there was a city entirely burned - (a) Rome / (b) Jerusalem. It was the city both described as a harlot, persecuting God's people, and destroyed and burned completely. Then in 20-21 is the unveiling of the Bride of the Lamb. The New Jerusalem descends as a virgin bride out of heaven after a harlot city has been burned with fire here on earth. Contrasting the two cities shows the whore and the virginal bride. The virginal bride of Christ, the new city, comes from heaven. The whoring city of persecution on earth must then be the old (a) Rome / (b) Jerusalem.

The Church of the New Covenant is not revealed in its fullness until the old _____, which was a prototype of the new covenant and its temple is done away with. It is not destroyed because it was a prototype, but because it is the source of all the (a) conversions of Christians / (b) persecutions of Christians in the first generation of the Church.

Just before Jesus describes how (a) Rome / (b) Jerusalem and the Temple will be destroyed, he pronounces the seven "woes" or curses to the leaders of the city

Matthew 23:29 *Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, saying, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.' Thus you witness against yourselves, that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers. You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell? Therefore, I send you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from town to town, so that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of innocent Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. Truly, I say to you, all this will come upon this generation.*

Jesus pronounced these words about _____ AD. A generation was a _____ year time span. Together these equal 70 AD, the date of the destruction of Jerusalem, the fulfillment of Jesus' words with absolute accuracy. 1.2 million Jews were besieged in Jerusalem and slaughtered. Even though the city only held a few hundred thousand inhabitants, it was a festival time when the Roman legions descended. However, there is good reason to believe that not a single Jewish Christian perished in that battle. This is because the Jewish Christians heard and read the gospels' accounts of Jesus' words and perhaps also the book of Revelation of John. They knew the "day and the hour" to escape from the city.

Matthew 24:37 *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! [The "you" here refers to the _____ of Jerusalem.] So, behold, your house [meaning the _____] is forsaken and desolate.*

This is the backdrop for the Apocalypse, or *Revelation*, the record of the visions of John. Matthew, Mark and Luke all describe what Jesus prophesies in Matthew 24, called "the little _____" or "The Olivet Discourse." It is Jesus' last discourse before His trial and execution. This is where He talks about wars, rumors of wars, famines, earthquakes, pestilence, persecution, etc. He closes by saying that all of this will occur within this generation. Historically, all of it did occur by _____ AD.

Why would only John skip recording this final discourse of Jesus in his Gospel? The most obvious reason is that he wanted to write it as a separate book, the "big apocalypse" of *Revelation*.

Four Options for Interpretation of the Book of Revelation

1. Prederist Interpretation of Revelation: The fulfillment of this book is largely past. The Book had a meaning that was primarily designed for the Church in the (a) first / (b) fifteenth century. There are two divisions of this view: the downfall of Jerusalem and the Old Covenant, or the downfall of Rome (not as prevalent a view, not as supported by external, historical evidence). Regardless of Jerusalem or Rome, prederists would agree that the primary meaning of Revelation is fulfilled in the past, near the time it was written.

2. Historicist Interpretation of Revelation: The book predicts the various stages of church history, from the first generation to the end of _____. An unfolding panorama of the various phases that the church will pass through as it goes through New Testament Salvation History. Many valuable and valid insights can be derived from this viewpoint. It can build upon the first view of being fulfilled in the past and predict the same experience in the various historical periods. Jesus' words can apply to the Church as it passes through (a) crises / (b) history.

3. Futurist View of Revelation: This is the most (a) unusual / (b) common view in America today among the evangelical Protestant churches. Even Catholics who listen to these radio and TV evangelists are influenced by this viewpoint. This view argues that the real meaning of this book was not disclosed to the first century Christians. It only makes sense at the "end of _____." Only at the end of New Testament history will readers truly understand the visions. An example of this is Hal Lindsey's book *The Late Great Planet Earth*, which is the 2nd best selling book of the last 30 years, next to the Bible. The Catholic Church has condemned this view, as heresy previously and by the Pontifical Biblical Commission in this century again. There are valid and valuable insights in reading this view, though care must be taken. It is valid, e.g., to see the fall of Jerusalem as a prophecy itself of an even greater fulfillment at the end of time.

The only way to safeguard these other views as having some truth is to build them on the foundation of a 1st Century fulfillment of the Apocalypse.

4. Idealist View of Revelation: Held by more of the Church Fathers, this view contends that the Book of Revelation is basically a description of the on-going (a) intellectual / (b) spiritual struggle that every believer faces in life and that the Church faces in every generation. It takes place on earth and in _____ simultaneously. It involves the world, the flesh and the devil, the principalities, powers, the archangels, angels, dominions, etc. - all of the spiritual world. The Church overcoming the persecution on earth is reflected and simultaneous with St. _____ the Archangel contending against Satan "above." Creatures at every level of the universe struggling as the battle between good and evil draws near to the end of time when Christ will bring it to a decisive conclusion. The Idealist View explains Revelation in terms of the moral struggle between good and evil, the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. Many valuable insights can be gained from this view as well. This 4th view will probably be the most spiritually edifying as the Apocalypse is read today.

Though we read and understand how the first century events fulfilled the discourse of Jesus and the vision of John, the Holy Spirit wants to show through *Revelation* that Christ is Lord of _____, as well as Lord of Lords and King of Kings. No matter how intense the persecutions that come, no matter how few believers seem to be overcoming evil and heresy, the temptations and trials around them, nevertheless, Christ is enthroned. He sends His angels to assist those who hold fast to faith and overcome in the end.

Interpreting *Revelation* as initially and primarily fulfilled in the First Century is indicated by the (a) Church / (b) the book itself. Time references suggest an immediate fulfillment within the lifetimes of the first readers.

Rev 1:1 *The Apocalypsis of Jesus Christ which God gave him, to show to His servants what must soon take place. And He made it known by sending His angel to His servant John who bore witness (the word here is 'martorya' or _____) to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. Blessed is he who reads aloud the words of the prophecy and blessed are those who hear and who keep what is written therein for the time is near.*