

Lessons From Revelation

Introduction

(Rv 1:1-3)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Evening,
 - a. Greeting...
2. New series of lessons on the book of Revelation.
 - a. Today we will examine some introductory things that must be understood in order to have a proper understanding of the highly encouraging book.
3. Revelation
 - a. This is the most widely written about and yet widely misunderstood book of the Bible.
 - b. It is considered “mystical” and to “hard” to understand.
 - i. McDowell, “It is a strange book and to many a closed book.”
 - ii. Anonymous, “It either finds a man or leaves a man mad.”
4. Let us look closer at some things that will help us to better understand the magnificent book.

I. The Historicity Of Revelation

- A. The title
 1. The title is not...
 - i. Revelation(s)
 - ii. The revelation of John
 2. The title is...
 - i. From the Latin word “revelatio” which means to “draw back the veil.”
 - ii. In its original Greek “apokalypsis.” which means “to uncover.”
 - a. This is where we derive the term “apocalyptic writings.”
- B. The author
 1. John is pronounced the scribe of the revelation given by Christ.
 - i. **Rv 1:1, 4, 9; 22:8**
 2. There have been basically three Johns that have been associated with this book.
 - i. John the seer
 - a. An unknown prophet.
 - ii. John the elder
 - a. An elder in Ephesus mentioned by some of the patristic fathers.
 - iii. John the apostle
 - a. The unanimous choice of all the patristic fathers.
 - b. This is the most common view and the view I hold.
 3. John is on the island of Patmos.
 - i. “A small island in the Aegean Sea off the southwest coast of Asia Minor (Rev 1:9). According to a tradition preserved by Irenaeus, Eusebius, Jerome and others, John, the author of Revelation, was exiled there in the 14th year of the reign of Domitian and subsequently released to Ephesus under Nerva (96 AD).” (Halcomb, T. M. W. (2012). Patmos. In J. D. Barry & L. Wentz (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (J. D. Barry & L. Wentz, Ed.). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.)

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C. The date

1. The early date: 64-68 AD
 - i. Nero would be the emperor ruling at this time.
 - ii. Jews would be the persecutors under consideration.
2. The late date: 94-96 AD
 - i. Domitian would be the emperor ruling at this time.
 - ii. Rome would be the persecutors under consideration.
3. Most, including myself, hold the later date to be the most accurate.
 - i. This ought not to be a source of contention however.
 - ii. Both the early view and later view have their strengths and weaknesses.
 - a. As long as the theme of the book is held true one or the other could be true.

II. The Context Of Revelation

A. The recipients

1. The text clearly states this revelation was to go to the seven churches in Asia.
 - i. **Rv 1:4** “John to the seven churches that are in Asia...”¹
2. These seven churches in Asia are clearly stated.
 - i. **Rv 1:11** “... Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.”

B. The purpose

1. The purpose of the book was to comfort, console, and encourage.
 - i. **Rv 6:10** “They cried out with a loud voice, “O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?””
2. God comforts His people and this revelation is a great example of that.
 - i. **II Co 1:3-4** “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”

C. The message/theme

1. It is a message of hope in a time of despair.
2. It is a message of strength in a time of weakness.
3. It is a message of victory at a time of apparent defeat.
 - i. Thus things are not always as they appear.
4. Theme: Christ is victorious!!!!

¹ All Scriptures are taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted. If other translations are used this is not necessarily an endorsement of the translation.

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D. The apocalyptic language

1. **Rv 1:1** “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and **signified** it by His angel to His servant John” (NKJV) (emphasis mine)
 - i. The word “signified” means given in signs.
2. This is what we find the book written in symbolic language.
 - i. This was a coded message to Christ’s troops.
 - a. It was done this way so as to not alert Rome.
 - b. Today we do the same thing to our troops, coding the messages so that the enemy does not know what is being said.
 1. Example: Navajo code talkers of WWII.

E. The time frame

1. Revelation starts and ends with the same message concerning who long the prophecies of this book were to take to come to pass.
 - i. **Rv 1:1** “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which **must shortly take place**. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John” (NKJV) (emphasis added)
 - ii. **Rv 22:6** “...These words are trustworthy and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what **must soon take place**.” (emphasis added)
 - iii. **Rv 22:10** “And he said to me, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.” (emphasis added)

III. The Content Of Revelation

A. The outline

1. The Revelator **Rv 1**
2. The 7 Churches **Rv 2-3**
3. Reasoning With The Romans **Rv 4-16**
4. The Victory Of The Christ **Rv 17-22**

B. Key words

1. Blessed 12 times in 10 verses
2. Overcome/Conquers 7 times in 7 verses
3. Blood 19 times in 17 verses
4. Throne 47 times in 37 verses

IV. The Opening Statements Of Revelation

A. The revelation (1-2)

1. God gave it to Jesus though it’s Jesus’ revelation.
 - i. Notice the unity here.
 - a. **Dt 6:4** “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.”
 - b. **Ro 3:30** “since God is one...”
2. Jesus gave it to the angels.
 - i. Angel often declared God’s Word to man.
 - a. **He 2:2** “For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable...”

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3. The angels gave it to John.
 - i. **Rv 21:9** “Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, “Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.””
 4. John gave it to us.
 - i. **Rv 1:2** “who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw.”
- B. Blessed are those that... (3)
1. Read aloud the words of this prophecy.
 - i. This is the idea of “learning” the revelation of Christ.
 - a. We gain knowledge/learn from words by reading them.
 - ii. God has always expected His people to gain the knowledge of His Word.
 - a. **II Ti 2:15** “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.”
 2. Hear the words of this prophecy.
 - i. This is the idea of understanding the revelation of Christ.
 - a. There is more needed than simply “knowing” what the Bible says.
 - ii. God has always expected His people to understand the knowledge He has given them.
 - a. **Jn 8:32** “and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”
 3. Keep what is written in it (prophecy).
 - i. This is the idea of being obedient to the revelation of Christ.
 - a. Do what it says.
 - ii. God has always expected people to learn His Word, understand His Word, and obey His Word.
 - a. **Lk 11:28** “...Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!”

CONCLUSION

1. Henderson wrote concerning the book of Revelation, “Beautiful beyond description is the last book of the Bible, beautiful in form, in symbolism, in purpose, and in meaning.”
 - a. Why is that the case? Brother Ramsee said it best when describing that Revelation teaches us that, “Those that overcome will be able to come over.”
2. Question: Are you striving “your best” to study, understand, and keep God’s Word?
 - a. If so continue therein and grow thereby.
 - b. If not why not?
3.
 - a. For those that are Christians but are not living for Christ repent by confessing your sins to God that He may forgive you and dedicate your life/time back to Him.
 - i. **I Jn 1:7, 9** “But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

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- b. For those that are not Christians or for those that think they are Christians and want to know for sure notice what is required to become a child of God or Christian according to God and God only.
- i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
 - ii. Believe Jesus Is The Christ **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
 - iii. Repent/Turn To God **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
 - iv. Confess Jesus As Lord **Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9**
 - v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21**
 - vi. Live A Faithful Life **I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8**