

Revelation 1

Recommended reading: *The Book of Revelation*, Spiritual Sword Lectureship, 1998, Jim Laws, ed.

Please notice that the word *Revelation* is singular, not plural

-In fact, the complete title is "*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*" [given to the Apostle John]

-But it is never given in the plural form, it is always singular

-Note: The title of the book of *Psalms* is always plural, but each individual Psalm is always singular – Example: *Psalms 23*

Who is the author? "John" – *Rev. 1.1, 1.4, 1.9, 22.8*

Which John?

-**John the Baptist?** – No, he died back in the Four Gospels

-**John Mark?** – No, he is always referred to with both names "John Mark"

-**The Apostle John?** Yes – many proofs of that

What do we already know about the Apostle John?

-The "*disciple that Jesus loved*"

-Very humble (he never used his name in the Fourth Gospel)

-He took care of Mary after the crucifixion of Jesus

-He was arrested with Peter in *Acts 4*

What other books did he write? *Gospel of John, 1-2-3 John, Revelation*

To whom was the *Revelation* written?

-The 7 churches in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey): Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea

When were the events in *Revelation* to take place?

-Read *Rev. 1.1* – "*shortly*"

If I said that I was going to visit you "shortly," would that mean 2000 years later? No

-So this book is not about events thousands of years later (except for *Rev. 19-22*, about the Second Coming of Jesus and the end of time)

-But *Rev. 1-18* are about events concerning the 7 churches of Asia, their problems, and how they could endure persecution, and the fall of the Roman Empire because of its attempt to stamp out the Lord's church

Examples:

-**To whom was the book of *Philippians* written?** To the church at Philippi

-**Did everything in the book of *Philippians* apply to the situation at Philippi?** Yes

-**Was there anything in *Philippians* that did not apply to the church at Philippi?** No

-**If everything in *Philippians* applied to the church at Philippi, and nothing was said to the other churches, then why should we study the book of *Philippians*?** Because we will have some of the same problems that the church at Philippi had, and we can learn from Paul's instructions to them and apply that to our congregation today 2000 years later

This same principle applies to the book of *Romans, 1 Corinthians, Ephesians*, etc.

Some people used to say that Ronald Reagan was the "666" and the "mark of the beast" because his full name was "Ronald Wilson Reagan" (6 letters in each of his three names)

But what good would it have done to the 7 persecuted churches in Asia Minor to know that

2000 years later, there would be a president of the United States with three names of 6 letters each?

The point: We must study the book of *Revelation* as we study any book in the Bible

-We find out what it meant to its original readers (persecution, false teachers, other warnings, the need for encouragement, etc.), and we then apply it to our current generation if it does, in fact, apply to us

Revelation 1.1-3

V1 – Define "revelation" – uncovering what was hidden

-Who is the author of this revelation? Jesus Christ

-What was the means of transmitting this message to John? An angel of Jesus Christ

-Reread *v 1* very carefully – very important

-The angel is leading John down a difficult path and will explain things to John

V2 – What part does John play in this book? Records all that he sees

V3 – Name for such a blessing? A beatitude

-There are 7 beatitudes in the book of *Revelation* – they are all conditional, and they are all from God

-Location of other beatitudes in the New Testament? *Matt. 5* (Sermon on the Mount) and *Acts 20.35*

-What blessing is given in this first beatitude in *Rev.*? blessings from God

-What is the condition of this blessing? If we read and hear and obey the warnings of this book (notice the progressions of these three conditions)

Revelation 1.4-8

V4 – "Him"? God the Father

-What does John say about God the Father? *Is* = alive now, *was* = from the beginning, *to come* = the Second Coming of Jesus Christ

-The 7 spirits before God's throne? Possibly a guardian angel for each congregation

V5 – How is Jesus described in *v 5*?

-Faithful witness

-Firstborn from the dead

-Ruler of the kings of the earth

-Loves us

-Has released us from our sins by his blood

Notice how much was packed into this one verse!

V6 – How would *v 6* encourage persecuted Christians?

V7 – Description of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ?

-Coming with the clouds

-Every eye will see him (no secret coming, as the Jehovah's Witnesses teach)

- Even those who pierced him (the Roman soldiers) will see him at his coming
- All the tribes of the earth will mourn over him
- Again: notice how much information is packed into one verse!

V 8 – **What title is given to Jesus Christ?** The Alpha and the Omega (the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet) – a very beautiful and impressive title
 -Like calling Jesus the A and the Z of all life and eternity

Revelation 1.9-16

V 9 – **How does John identify himself?** "Your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation..."

V 10 – John was a prisoner worshipping God on a Sunday

V 10-11 – **What did John see and hear?** He heard a loud voice as a trumpet behind him
 -**What was he told to do?** He was told to write everything down and send it to the 7 churches of Asia

V 12 – **Why 7 golden lampstands?** A lampstand for each congregation

V 13 – **The clothing of Jesus?** Floor-length robe with golden sash (the dress of a king)

V 14 – His head and hair were like white wool, with eyes like fire

V 15 – Feet like bronze

V 16 – **What was in his right hand?** 7 stars
 -**What did they represent?** The 7 churches of Asia

Revelation 1.17-20

V 17 – **What was John's reaction?** Fell to the ground as a dead man

V 18-20 – **The message of Jesus Christ to John?**

- That Jesus had the keys to death and Hades
- Write down all that you see in this revelation
- The 7 stars and 7 golden lampstands represent the 7 churches of Asia

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