

**VICTORIOUS LIFE CHURCH BIBLE STUDY SERIES:
THE BOOK OF REVELATION
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“Revelation, God’s stamp of sovereignty on history.” (Dr. R. Hollis Gause)

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION

DATE:

The book was probably written during the reign of the Roman Emperor Domitian about A.D. 95. Domitian demanded that public worship be rendered to himself: he was to be worshipped as both lord and god. The Christians refused to obey, and the second great wave of persecution against the church was launched. The Christians were subjected to public ridicule, economic boycott, imprisonment, exile and death. As would be expected, many were discouraged, disillusioned and were undoubtedly experiencing a crisis of faith. The book of Revelation was God’s answer to the reign of terror. Christians could see, in a dimension never before revealed. That God was still on the throne.

THE AUTHOR OF REVELATION

Revelation 1:1

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:

Verse 1:1 “John, the Servant of Jesus Christ” He uses his name addressing the seven churches in Asia. Most books of this nature, prophetic, do not name their author or make false claims of authorship. He describes himself as a “brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.”

Three things to note in the Introduction of Himself.

1. The author makes no grandiose claims for himself.
2. He refers to himself in a humble manner
3. The author seems to expect that the readers know who he is and simply refers to himself as John.

He was also known as "**John the Elder**." According to the Book, this John was on the island of Patmos, not far from the coast of Asia Minor, "because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus" (Rev. 1.10). According to Christian tradition, **John** is the author of three letters (1 John, 2 John, and 3 John). He is also given credit for writing the fourth biblical narrative of the Gospel known as the book of John. Some traditions say that the Romans dropped John into a vat of boiling oil, but when the apostle did not die, they instead banished him to the barren rock of Patmos. John is believed to have been the last of the Apostles to die and is said to have died of natural causes.

PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BOOK

Many years ago, the city of Chicago was given an original sculpture by Pablo Picasso to adorn the blaze outside the new city hall. As the stature was being erected, it was heavily screened from the curious gaze of the passersby. When it was finished, it stood in the plaza thickly veiled. The day came when Mayor Daley unveiled the statue to the astonished gaze of Chicago and the world. There it stood in all of its glory, the latest offering at the altar of art. Chicago's own giant Picasso. What Mayor Daley did for Chicago when he unveiled the statue is what the book of Revelation does for us. It draws aside the veil.

Revelation 1:1

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:

The Book of Revelation is called the Apocalypse. The Greek word meaning “an act of uncovering or laying bare.” The book of Revelation is a series of symbolic visions designed to reveal

1. The Person of Jesus Christ is Revealed

When Jesus Came to earth the first time, it was in meekness with His glory veiled. He came to be “obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” (Philippians 2:8) He was God manifested in the Flesh (John 1:14) but only the eyes of faith could recognize Him. Revelation reveals to us a Christ who is coming back in all of His glory unveiled to conquer all the opposition of the world. In this book we see the glorious Christ who fills the heaven with His praise. The key to understanding the book of Revelation is to simply remember why it exists: to testify of the mission, mercy, and majesty of Christ. Before they have even finished the opening chapter, readers encounter different Christ than that which was seen on earth, a mysterious figure variously identified as “the Son of man” (verse 13), “the first and the last” (verse 11), and “Alpha and Omega” (verse 8), out of whose mouth appears “a sharp two-edged sword” (verse 16).

Names or Titles of Jesus in the Book of Revelation

1. Jesus Christ Revelation 1:1
2. Faithful Witness Revelation 1:5
3. First Begotten of the Dead Revelation 1:5
4. Prince of the Kings of the Earth Revelation 1:5
5. Alpha and Omega Revelation 1:8-13
6. First and Last Revelation 1:8, 11, 13
7. Son of Man Revelation 1:13
8. He that liveth and was dead Revelation 1:13, 18
9. He that holdeth the seven stars Revelation 2:1

10. He who walketh midst the golden candlesticks Revelation 2:1
11. He who hath the sharp sword with two edges Revelation 2:12
12. Son of God Revelation 2:18
13. He which searches the reins and hearts Revelation 2:23
14. He that hath the seven Spirits of God Revelation 3: 1
15. He that hath the seven stars Revelation 3:1
16. He that is holy and true Revelation 3:7
17. He that hath the key of David Revelation 3:7
18. He that openeth and no man shutteth Revelation 3:7
19. He that shutteth and no man openeth Revelation 3:7
20. The Amen Revelation 3:14
21. The faithful and true witness Revelation 3:14
22. The beginning of the creation of God Revelation 3:14
23. Lord Revelation 4:11
24. Lion of the tribe of Judah Revelation 5:5,9
25. The root of David Revelation 5: 5,9
26. A lamb as it had been slain 5: 6,7
27. The Lamb Revelation 5: 8,9
28. Lord of Lords Revelation 17:14
29. King of Kings Revelation 17:14
30. Faithful and true 19:11
31. Rider of the white horse 19:11
32. The Word of God Revelation 19: 13-16
33. Christ Revelation 20: 4
34. The Lord God of the Holy Prophets Revelation 22:6
35. Beginning and the end Revelation 22:13
36. The bright and morning star Revelation 22: 16

2. The Purpose of God Unveiled

At the beginning of Revelation, John tells us that while he was on the Isle of Patmos, where he was banished because of his religious faith, he heard a loud voice telling him to write what he saw and then to send the writing to the seven churches in Asia. The voice was that of Jesus Christ, who had been raised from the dead and who had ascended to heaven. Christ's messages are addressed to seven angels, each one of which is the guardian for a particular church: Ephesus, Smyrna, Thyatira, Pergamum, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. Christ commends these churches for the good works that they have performed, but for five of them, he also sends a

message of warning and reproof. The letters were applicable to the churches of their day and are still applicable to the church of today which finds itself still wrestling to overcome church tendencies that John addressed to the Angels (pastors) of the seven churches.

While that was one of the purposes Gods intent in the writing of this book extended beyond their day and still resonates today. It was a book with a present message for their time, with a prophetic message for the times in which we live and the tomorrow in which we anticipate.

V.1to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass;

God has a plan for this earth and for humanity. The Book of Revelation draws all the strands of Biblical prophecy together and weaves them into a detailed picture of things to come.

The scenes of the book alternate between heaven and earth. Chapters 1 is set in Heaven.

Chapters 2-3 are set on Earth. Chapters 4 and 5 are back in Heaven

The Book begins in heaven and ends in heaven

1. In Heaven: Blessings from God (1:1-8)
2. On Earth: John Imprisoned (1:9)
3. In Heaven: The glory of Christ (1:10-20)
4. On Earth: Letters to the Churches (2:1-3:22)
5. In Heaven: The Lamb and the Throne (4:1-5:14)
6. On Earth: The Seals Broken (6:1-17)
7. In Heaven; The 144,000: Silence (7:1-8:6)
8. On Earth: The trumpet judgments (8:7-9:21)
9. In heaven: The Little Book (10:1-11)
10. On earth: The Two Witnesses (11:1-13)
11. In Heaven: Worship (11:14-19)
- 12: On Earth: Israel persecuted by the beast (12:1-13:18)
13. In Heaven: the 144,000 in glory; angelic activity (14:1-15:8)

- 14: on Earth: The seven vials; the two Babylons (16:1-18:24)
- 15. In heaven: The Marriage of the Lamb: its consequences (19:1-16)
- 16. On Earth: Final judgments (19:17-20:10)
- 17. In heaven: The last judgment: the celestial city (20:11-22:21)

The reason for alternating scenes is that this book is giving us the full and final answer to the Lords Prayer:

Matthew 6:10

10 Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

In this book we see God's will being declared and decreed in heaven, then we see that will being done on earth. This shows us that no power in heaven, on earth or hell can frustrate the fulfillment of God's plan. The book of Revelation is occupied for the most part with events that have little bearing on our lives because most of the events will take place after the church has been removed from the scene. But there are two abiding values for us in this book which are the **Person of Christ and the purposes of God**. We must adore the Person and accept those purposes. In the Book of Revelation, the apocalyptic hopes of the early Christian community find their clearest and most complete expression. Apocalypticism was not a new phenomenon among Christians; it was a well-established belief among Jews, who held that the coming of the kingdom of God would not be brought about by a gradual transformation but by a sudden intervention, when God would end the present age and establish his kingdom in the world made new. This conception of coming events is associated with the belief that prior to this future time, the struggle between the forces of good and evil will become more intense. As the evil powers grow stronger, they will inflict persecution and in some instances even death upon those who follow a course of righteousness. The struggle will eventually reach a climax, at which time God

will intervene, destroy the forces of evil, and set up a new order in which the righteous will live for all time to come. The appearance of the Messiah will coincide with the coming of these events.