

Introduction to the Book of Revelation

Revelation 1:1-8

Revelation...

- It is the last book of the Bible
- It was written in 95AD
- It was written by the Apostle John
- It contains 22 chapters
- It is a book of prophecy about the end times
- It is a book with a blessing promised to those who read and obey it

“Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.” (Revelation 1:3, NASB95)

“And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book.” (Revelation 22:7, NASB95)

Other themes in the book of Revelation

- The sovereignty of God
- The attributes of God
- The love of God for His people
- The wrath of God against sin
- The mercy of God toward sinners
- The suffering and persecution of believers
- The majesty and glory of Christ
- The defeat of Satan
- Personal instructions to the church from Jesus
- The desire of God for the salvation of the lost

Revelation invites unbelievers to come to Christ.

“The Spirit and the bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.” (Revelation 22:17, NASB95)

“And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. “You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.” (Revelation 5:9–10, NASB95)

Overview of Revelation

I. Chapter 1

- John introduces Himself as the human author of the book and the Triune God as the divine author
- The second coming of Christ is promised
- John receives a vision of Christ in His glorified state

II. Chapter 2-3

- Jesus has 7 individual messages for 7 actual churches that existed in John's day.
 - **Ephesus** – the church that lost its first love
 - **Smyrna** – A faithful church experiencing intense persecution
 - **Pergamum** – The church that was tolerating false doctrine
 - **Thyatira** – The church that tolerated an immoral false teacher
 - **Sardis** – the outwardly successful church that was really dead
 - **Philadelphia** – The faithful gospel preaching church
 - **Laodicea** – The apostate lukewarm church

These were not only actual churches of John's day, but they represent churches of every age.

Today, in the year 2020, there are churches like Ephesus, Sardis, and Laodicea.

These 7 messages from Jesus to the 7 churches of Revelation are also messages that every church today needs to hear and heed.

III. Chapters 4 -18

These 15 chapters are devoted to the Great Tribulation that is coming upon the earth.

This is the Great Tribulation Jesus spoke of to His disciples while He was on earth...

“For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will.” (Matthew 24:21, NASB95)

In these 15 chapters, John will tell us about 3 sets of judgments that God is going to bring upon the earth in order to judge the wickedness of man.

- A 7 sealed scroll that will be unrolled and as each of the 7 seals are broken a separate judgment is revealed.
- 7 trumpets that are blown and each trumpet blast brings a new judgment upon the earth
- 7 bowls that are poured out.
 - These bowls are described as containing the wrath of God
 - As each bowl is poured out a new judgment is poured out upon the earth.

These chapters detailing the Great Tribulation also describe the coming Antichrist and False Prophet.

IV. Chapter 19

This chapter describes the second coming of Christ as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

V. Chapter 20

Chapter 20 tells us about the Millennium, or the 1,000 years reign of Christ upon the earth and the confining of Satan to the abyss.

It also reveals the final judgment of unbelievers known as The Great White Throne Judgment, when those who do not know Christ are sentenced to the Lake of fire.

VI. Chapter 21-22

These final chapters describe the establishment of the new heavens and the new earth.