

REVELATION 1 - INTRODUCTION

1. The word "Revelation" means to unveil something, to take something away, to show something that had been unseen.

*Example: At an Art Show, the artist's painting is covered with cloth awaiting its unveiling.

- a. The book of Revelation is going to be the curtain that is to be removed to show the unveiling of the Person - the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - b. Revelation will also be the unfolding, uncovering, and the explaining of future events - so that we might see and understand God's purpose for Israel's Prophetic Program's fulfillment.
2. Always remember how we are to look at the Bible as dispensationalists.

- a. The Prophetic Program was and will be mainly to Israel. Israel's books are Genesis-Acts 7 (transition-28), then Hebrews-Revelation.
- b. The Mystery Body of Christ Program is the Dispensation of Grace. The Body Church books are Acts 9-28 (transition) and Paul's books, Romans-Philemon.

**So we divide scriptures by what dispensation the book is in. Is it in the Prophetic or the Mystery Program?

3. Amazingly, when people are saved or something happens in the Middle East, they want to look into the book of Revelation. Why?
- a. **Revelation should not be the first book to try and study. It should be after we have somewhat of an understanding of what took place previously:

<u>Israel Prophecy Kingdom</u>	<u>Mystery Body</u>	<u>Prophecy Fulfilled</u>
Genesis-Acts 7 (-28)	Paul - Gospel of Grace Acts 9 (-28) Rom.-Phil.	Israel - Kingdom Hebrews-Rev.

- b. It is only when we understand this dispensational truth that we will then understand that we, the Body Church, are not part of the main subject in the Book of Revelation. If we are any part, it would only be in Chapters 21-22.
4. So, Revelation is another Jewish book that actually is a continuation of the Old Testament, Matthew-John, and Acts. We know that God has temporarily stopped the Jewish time clock. Today, we are in the period of the Mystery Program (Rom.-Phil.). After we are Raptured (taken up to heaven), the Jewish Prophecy Program will resume (Hebrews-Revelation).

Note:

- a. "The times of the Gentiles" has to do with the prophetic future of Israel among the Gentiles. It is the times of the Gentiles' power that has control over the whole earth.

**Who did God intend to be the leader over nations? Answer: Israel

Luke 21:20-24 - And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Luke 21:21 Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. Luke 21:22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. Luke 21:23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for

there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. Luke 21:24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

- b. "The fulness of the Gentiles" - this is different. This has to do with God's work during the Mystery Program to fill up the Body of Christ in the Dispensation of Grace. When the Body is completed-full, God will take His Body home to heaven.

Romans 11:25 - For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

5. We also will find in Revelation that God is dealing with Israel to fulfill Daniel's 70th week. In Daniel, God promised Israel that He would deal with them 490 years to fulfill His purpose for them - a kingdom glory with Israel being the head over all other nations.

****Scripture shows that 483 years have been completed, with 7 years left to be fulfilled. Revelation deals with Israel's final 7 years before she can then go into the kingdom.**

6. We are to interpret the words in Revelation literally. Some say, how can you with all the signs and visions?

Answer: "Yes, there are a number of symbolic figures of speech. But figures of speech are designed to illustrate literal truth." ~Finck

- a. Someone said: "When the plain sense of scripture makes common sense, we seek no other sense; therefore we take every word at its primary, ordinary, usual, literal meaning - unless the facts of the immediate text and other related passages clearly indicate otherwise."
- b. Revelation gives a series of panoramic snapshots of prophetic events - the unfolding of what is to be. And above all, it shows us God is in control. In spite of what is taking place in a crazy upside-down and anti-God society, we know that God has a plan and He wins!
- c. Remember, if one can spiritualize the Word, then the authority becomes the interpreter and not the Word. Then there would be no consistency and little agreement, because everyone on their own sees differently.
- d. These prophecies in scriptures are about real events and can be understood only by literal interpretation. So scripture means what it says, unless context tells us differently.

- (1) Example of O.T. prophecies that have been fulfilled literally:

Isaiah 7:14 - Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Isaiah 9:6 - For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Malachi 3:1 - Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

- (2) In Revelation, even when symbolic figures of speech are used, it is telling us about a literal truth...real people and real events.

Example: Revelation 1:12, 16 - [And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; Rev. 1:16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance *was* as the sun shineth in his strength.]

Answer: Revelation 1:20 - [The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.]

Example: Revelation 13:1 - [And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.] ?

Example: Revelation 5:8-9 - [And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four *and* twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. Rev. 5:9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

7. The author of the book is Apostle John.

Revelation 1:1, 4, 9 - 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: Rev. 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; Rev. 1:9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

8. What is the date when Revelation was written?

- a. Most schools, commentaries, churches, and the Scofield Bible date the book of Revelation as being written in 96 A.D. (90-100 A.D.).

*Many hold to this date because they have heard that all their life.

Answer: There is no scripture support for this date...if that matters! To say that John wrote it in 96 A.D. - that would be 20-30 years after the deaths of Peter and Paul and 60-70 years after Calvary and the setting aside temporarily of Israel in Acts 7. Why would God have such a gap in N.T. dispensational chronology? John says in Rev. 1:3 that Christ's coming to earth was [at hand] or near. But hadn't Israel been set aside when Paul was saved? It has been 2000+ years. If John wrote Revelation in 96 A.D., it makes no sense. That is questionable and impossible! Revelation was written earlier. John could not have said to his hearers that it is the last days if he was writing in the Dispensation of Grace.

- b. 96-100 A.D. would mean Paul had died, all of his books (13) were written, the dispensation of grace was off the scene, and John was writing the last book saying these Revelation-Tribulation events were shortly going to happen - which they did not! [at hand]? 96 to 2021 - so far. It makes no sense!

9. I Peter was written somewhere around Acts 6-7. It says: [But the end of all things is at hand.] It is near.

Note: Acts 6:4 - [But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.]

- a. In II Peter he had changed his mind: II Peter 3:9 - [The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.]

*He is saying there has been a **delay** because God is longsuffering, wanting to reach more souls. Peter is telling them that neither he nor the Lord broke their promise of Christ's return.

**The reason for the delay was/is the Mystery Body today.

- b. Question? **When** did Peter hear or learn the different message that caused Israel's delay?

Galatians 1:11-12 - But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. Gal. 1:12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Galatians 2:1-2 - Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with *me* also. Gal. 2:2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.

Galatians 2:7-9 - But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as *the gospel* of the circumcision *was* unto Peter; Gal. 2:8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)

*It was subsequent to, or **after**, his meeting with Paul. Peter is saying there is now a delay. But before meeting with Paul, Christ's coming to Israel was near. The Great Commission went **out** of commission!

**I don't think Peter ever completely comprehended Paul's revelation of the Mystery: II Peter 3:15-16 - [And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; 2Peter 3:16 As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.]

- c. Question? Who else was at that meeting? Answer: **John** was!

(1) When John wrote Revelation, he does **not** say (as Peter said in II Peter) that these events will take place later, after Paul's ministry is finished. No! He says in Rev. 1:1 [things must shortly come to pass], as Peter wrote in I Peter.

(2) *John, when he earlier wrote Revelation, **expected** those Jews he was writing to would be alive (and even himself) when these prophetic events begin to happen. So I believe the Prophetic Program had to **still** be operating in John's mind when writing Revelation. He more than likely wrote it during the Acts 6-7 period. It seemingly had to be written **before** John had his meeting with Paul in Acts 15 (as recorded in Gal. 2). In Acts 15, they publically acknowledged the change in the Prophetic Program and approved Paul's **new** Mystery Program.

10. Remember, the Bible was not put together chronologically by **date**, but according to God's programs from beginning to end. When our Mystery Program is over ↑, the Jewish books of Hebrews-Revelation will cry out that the end is **near**! The Jewish believers in the Tribulation will be able to tell where they are, according to the prophetic events in Revelation.

11. I believe God told Paul to **fulfill** the Word of God, to finish the Bible. The Jewish scriptures had been completed when Paul wrote his **last** book - II Timothy (4:6-8).

- a. Colossians 1:25-26 - Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; Col. 1:26 *Even* the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

*Paul wrote his last epistle no later than 68 A.D. To have John come 20-30 years later (90-100 A.D.), writing more revelation from God and in the midst of the Dispensation of Grace, just does not make sense - or doesn't fit.

- b. In II Timothy, I think Paul considered the Bible complete.

II Timothy 3:16 - All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

- c. Question? Are there any verses that support Revelation being written in 90-100 A.D.? Are there any verses that support which book was written last? (II Tim. 4:6-8)!

Colossians 1:25 - Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;

12. Also note James and Peter:

James 5:8-9 - Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. James 5:9 Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.

I Peter 1:5, 13; 4:17 - Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 1Peter 1:13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 1Peter 4:17 For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God?

*Again, to write Revelation after the death of Paul (20-30 years after that), and in the Dispensation of Grace, makes little sense.

13. John says in Revelation:

Revelation 1:1, 3 - 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: Rev. 1:3 Blessed *is* he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time *is* at hand.

Revelation 22:6-7, 10, 12, 20 - And he said unto me, These sayings *are* faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. Rev. 22:7 Behold, I come quickly; blessed *is* he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. Rev. 22:10 And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. Rev. 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. Rev. 22:20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.