

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION

PART 1

The book of Revelation is the last written message that God has given to man. While Genesis reveals the beginning of all things, the book of Revelation reveals the conclusion of all things. While Genesis reveals why God broke His fellowship with man, Revelation reveals that God restores full fellowship with those that invite Jesus Christ into their lives (Rev 3:20). In the New Testament, the Gospels reveal the shame that Christ endured on the cross to save sinners, while Revelation reveals the glory that Christ will receive when He puts on His crown to rule all nations. The Gospels reveal how Christ seeks and saves lost sinners from the depths of their sin, while Revelation relates how He glorifies saved sinners in His Kingdom, but judges lost sinners that rejected Him as their Savior. Revelation glorifies Christ as the almighty God, the gracious Redeemer, the victorious Warrior, the truthful Judge and the world Ruler. He is the Hope of the believer, the Song of the redeemed, the Reward of the victorious. The book of Revelation is an indispensable book in knowing Jesus Christ.

The book of Revelation answers many questions about the future. **Will church believers go through any part of the Tribulation?** It seems clear that they will not (3:10). The Tribulation relates to Israel, not to church believers (Dan 9:24; Eph 5:25-27). **When Church believers die, will they live in Heaven forever?** It says in 2:26-27; 3:21; 20:6 that church believers will rule with Christ on the earth during His Millennial Kingdom, so it is not possible for them be in Heaven during that time. Then it says that all believers will live in the New Jerusalem that comes down from Heaven where they will live for eternity (3:12; 21:2-3; 22:3-4). Some people call this Heaven and that is okay, because that is the place to worship God and the Lamb and their throne will be there (21:22; 22:3), but God calls it the New Jerusalem, which will be the center of the new heavens and the new earth (21:23-24). **What will Church saints be doing when they reign with Christ?** It says in 2:26-27 that they will rule the nations with a rod of iron, indicating that they will have great authority to implement the rule of Christ. **Will anyone be saved during the Tribulation?** Revelation 7:1-14 indicates both Jews and Gentiles will be saved during the Tribulation and will be a witness for Him. **Did God permanently reject Israel when they rejected His Son as their Messiah?** God has not replaced Israel with the Church, nor has He given the Church the promises that He made to Israel. Revelation 7:1-8; 12:6, 14; 21:12 prove that Israel will repent during the Tribulation so God can bless Israel with His promises (cf Zech 12:8-13:1). **Is the Battle of Armageddon the only one fought during the Tribulation?** There are many significant battles during the Tribulation as revealed in 6:3-4; 12:7, 17; 20:7-9 plus 16:14, 16; 19:11-21. **Why do so many people die during the Tribulation?** God does not delight in the death of the wicked, but when they refuse to repent of their rebellion against Him, they must be destroyed. He will not tolerate rebellion (9:20-21; 16:9, 11; 14:9-11). **Will the earth come to an end in the near future?** It literally says in 20:4-6 that Christ will rule over all nations on the earth in the future for 1000 years and not until His millennial rule over this earth is finished will heaven and earth come to an end (20:11). **Will Jesus Christ rule over the whole earth or only over Israel?** Jesus will have on His head many diadems (19:12) and He will be the King of kings and the Lord of lords (19:16; cf Zech 14:9). **Will unbelievers suffer in fire forever?** As awful as this judgment will be, that is what Revelation and other Scriptures reveal about the punishment of the wicked (14:11; 19:20; 20:10, 15; 21:8; cf Mk 9:43-48; Mt 25:46; 2 Th 1:9). **What is the purpose of the Tribulation?** It is to destroy Babylon and those who dwell on the earth (unsaved); and it is to save Jerusalem (Mt Zion) and true Israelites that believe the Gospel so He can rule all nations from Jerusalem (14:1-11; Ps 2:6-9; Mt 19:28). **Why is the scroll in chapter 5 so important?** It is the document that declares the true owner of the earth and who will have the right to govern it (Ps 2:6-9; Rev 2:26-27; 12:5; 19:15).

Times of Revelation. When the book of Revelation was written, Rome was in firm control of the civilized world. The city of Jerusalem and the temple of God had been destroyed by Titus in A.D. 70, and the second dispersion of Israel had begun. The persecution of the church by the Jews (Acts 7ff) had shifted

to intermittent persecution by the Roman government. Domitian, the Roman ruler from A.D. 81-96, persecuted the church when they refused to worship him as God. He declared war on Christians and John was exiled to the Isle of Patmos (A.D. 95-96). It was on that desolate island that John received this prophecy from Jesus Christ. Revelation has been an encouraging message to all believers who suffer trouble and persecution. It reveals the ultimate victory of Christ over Satan and sin. He will rule the earth in righteousness for a thousand years and then He will rule with His Father in the Eternal Kingdom where no sin will exist. The message in the book of Revelation gives believers hope and courage to face the difficulties of life until they reach the City of God where eternal love, joy and peace will reign supremely.

Title of Revelation. *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* is a title that can be an objective genitive or a subjective genitive. As an objective genitive it means it is a revelation of Jesus Christ. It is an unveiling of His glory. It is a revelation of the person and work of Jesus Christ among His churches during this present age and then in the world to come. As a subjective genitive it means it is a revelation from Jesus Christ. It is a message to His servants that revealed truths that were previously unknown to them. Both views are doctrinally sound, but the context states that Jesus is revealing a message to His servants that God gave to Him (1:1).

Author and Date of Revelation. Bible believing scholars and the early church fathers agree that the Apostle John, who wrote the Gospel of John and the epistles of John, also was the author of Revelation (1:1, 4, 9; 22:8). The traditional date for the writing is around AD 95-96. John received the vision when he was exiled to the Island of Patmos because of his testimony (1:9). The visions most likely were received at Patmos but were actually written after he returned to Ephesus.