

Lesson 1 Overview and Revelation 1

Start Living Like He's Coming Today

Day 1 **The Promise of Blessing and History**

This is actually a repeat lesson from the overview of the book of **Revelation** from part 1 of this study. It will differ slightly from part 1, but while you are doing this overview this week, I would like you to follow along with the hand out I supplied you in class today. If you were not in class for the first lesson, then please either copy the handout that I sent you via email ahead of class or go back to part 1 of this study and find your overview timeline handout. It is two pages taped together in the center, folded together like a book, so that you can open it like a book and see the progression of the timeline all at once. It is very important that you understand the structure of the book and its timeline. This will help you greatly in getting organized. This book can leave you very confused if you do not have a template to follow.

The book of Revelation means the book of the unveiling or the “Apocalypse (Greek Apocalypsis).” We’ve heard this word for the “unveiling” many times in our culture. Movies have been made about the Apocalypse and how the writers of these movies think this time, yet-to-come in the future, will unfold. There are some really wild stories out there for us to ponder and there are some very active imaginations, too. I googled “apocalypse movies,” and here are a few among many titles: [X-men Apocalypse](#), [Ninja Apocalypse](#), [Zombie Apocalypse](#), and [Apocalypse Nerds](#). Although the word “apocalypsis” or “revelation” has become synonymous in our culture with the end of the world, originally, the word “revelation” referred to the disclosure of a mystery.

You may have heard of the Apocrypha. The Apocryphal books are placed in the middle of the Catholic Bible. My Grandmother was a convert to Catholicism and I have the family Bible in my library at home. Most of the Apocryphal books are apocalyptic literature. Many of these apocalyptic writings followed a pattern:¹

- They claimed to be a revelation given through an angel to some important person in the past, like Moses
- They made a distinction between the kingdom of this world and a kingdom not of this world, a heavenly kingdom
- They were filled with scary beings and creatures and symbolic numbers, dreams, visions, revelations and vague prophecies
- They alluded to many Old Testament images and references
- Most of the Apocryphal books were written during the 400-year period of time when God was silent to the Hebrew people, during the time of the Maccabees.

¹ Henry H. Halley, *Halley's Bible Handbook, Classic Edition* (Zondervan Publishers, 2000), pp. 896-897.

So, why were these books not included in the canon of Scripture? There are many reasons, but for our purposes, there are two reasons why the book of **Revelation** is included and the Apocryphal books are not:

1. John lets us know who was writing down the words of the book of Revelation. Being able to validate who wrote the book of the Bible was extremely important to the process of canonization.
2. The book of **Revelation** was not written through the authority of an angel only. The source of the words, is the LORD Jesus Christ Himself, in Revelation. Therefore it is authoritative.

The book of Enoch is not one of the Apocryphal books, but it is apocalyptic literature. I found one book reference that said this particular book was considered Holy Writ during the first century of Christianity and to the Jewish people. ² The book of Enoch speaks to the existence of the Nephilim.

The book of **Revelation** belongs to apocalyptic literature, but it is also prophetic. The book of **Revelation** explains the conversation Jesus had with His disciples, concerning the things to come in **Matthew 24**, **Luke 21** and **Mark 13**. It also references prophecies both directly and indirectly found in the Old Testament, especially those found in Daniel, Ezekiel and Zechariah. If you have the time and you are interested, go back and read and contrast/compare the Matthew 24, Luke 21, and Mark 13 passages.

Why is the Apocalypse, known to us as the book of **Revelation** called the “unveiling?” What is the unveiling? Is it the time of the end revealed or is it the unveiling of a person (a mystery)? I believe it is the unveiling of the person of Jesus Christ because **Revelation 1:1** says this is “the Revelation of Jesus Christ.” However, the unveiling of the person of Jesus Christ is not just for Who He will be in the future, but Who He has always been, and Who He will always be, which includes Who He is right now. Everything we learn about Jesus Christ in this book is Who He is right now in the present. Just like God the Father, this member of the Holy Trinity, is immutable or in other words, He remains the same. He does not change.

Satan is referred to as ha-Satan throughout this study. Some of the Jews believe God took the devil’s name away from him when he fell from heaven. Names are important and by taking away the devil’s name, he was put to shame for his rebellion. “Satan” is a title given to the devil. Some Jews refer to him as ha-Satan and not Lucifer. Lucifer is a name given him by the Catholic Church.

There is a promise in this book, right up front in chapter 1, what is this promise? It is recorded for us in Revelation 1:3.

² John Klein, Adam Spears, Michael Christopher, *Lost in Translation*, Volume 1 (Covenant Research Institute, 2014), pp. 75-98.

What do we have to do in order to receive this blessing? There are three parts to obtaining this blessing. What are they?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Why would we want to pursue this blessing? See **Revelation 1:3**.

The Apostle John wrote this book. It was placed at the very end of the New Testament and also the very end of the entire Bible. This is the same John who is credited as writing the **Gospel of John**, and the letters of **1, 2, and 3 John**. We find out about where John is when he receives this communication from God in **Revelation 1:9**. Where is he? And why is he there?

John was exiled to the Island of Patmos (see map in the Appendix) off the coast of present day Turkey, in the Aegean Sea. Actually Patmos was not a deserted desert island, but a buzzing city, a Roman colony with homes, shops, temples, and an army outpost. John was free to move around, but as long as the Roman emperor Domitian was in power, he could not leave the island.³ There are other authors who believe that Patmos was a penal colony and there was no one there to help John write in such “eloquent Greek,” as opposed to “sloppy Greek” that was used in earlier writings of John. These others believe that it was a scribe who actually wrote down these words for the Apostle John, thus the more elegant Greek.

Most likely, the dating for the penning of the book of **Revelation** was around A.D. 95-96. Titus, the son of the Roman emperor, Vespasian, besieged Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and on the 9th of Ab (5th month of the Jewish sacred calendar), Rome destroyed the Temple in Jerusalem and not one Temple stone was left on another as Jesus had prophesied. The rest of Jerusalem was burned. The Jews either died (over 1 million in five months) or they were deported and once again dispersed among the nations. Only a few Jews escaped to Masada (the Essenes), but were later conquered by the Roman governor Flavius Silva between A.D. 72 and A.D.74. After Titus’ father died, Titus became emperor of Rome for two years and then met his death at the hand of his brother Domitian. Domitian then took the throne and demanded that every one worship him as a god. During his reign, Domitian was a ruthless tyrant ordering mass executions of those who would not worship him or imposing harsh punishments on any who would not obey him.⁴ The church had moved out of Israel and into the Gentile world before the destruction of Jerusalem and so, some of the churches founded beforehand survived. Before his exile to the Island of Patmos and into his nineties, John had been the pastor of the Ephesian Church, one of the churches in Asia Minor (Turkey). Domitian saw John as

³ Michael Youssef, *End Times and the Secret of the Mahdi*, (Worthy Publishing, 2016), p. 19.

⁴ *Ibid*, pp.18,19.

dangerous because he preached to his flock to stand firm and not to compromise. He told his flock the LORD God was the only One worthy of worship. Of course, this did not go over well with Domitian since he wanted to be worshiped as a god. And so, during the time of Domitian's rule, from A.D. 81 through A.D. 96, he aggressively persecuted the Church both physically and psychologically. After the death of Domitian in A.D. 96, John was probably allowed to go back to Ephesus.

This island of Patmos where John was exiled is in the same area where the seven churches of **Revelation 2 and 3** were located on the Turkish mainland, the island of exile being just off the coast of Turkey. I want you to understand, ahead of our studying, that this land is now 99% Muslim. History to the future, most of these seven churches of **Revelation** did not heed the Lord's warnings and He did take away their lampstands. These churches are now overrun by the Islamic world. There is a lot of history in this area of the world for which we will not have time to look at, but you must understand that these churches (with the exceptions of small congregations in Smyrna and Philadelphia) are no longer viable. Ha-Satan has a stronghold on this area of the world. We must pray diligently for them.

Most Biblical scholars believe John is the author of this book of the **Revelation**. John was one of the sons of Zebedee. Remember, James and John, the sons of Thunder, the sons of Zebedee (Boanerges-**Mark 3:17**). In the **Gospel of John**, John refers to himself as "the one whom Jesus loved." When Jesus was on the cross and saw His mother and "the one whom Jesus loved," He told John to be a son to his mother and He told Mary to be a mother to John. John was in Ephesus between 85 and 95 A.D., before being exiled to the Isle of Patmos. According to tradition, Mary, the mother of Jesus, lived with John in his home in Ephesus. The belief is that Mary was around 14 years old when she was given notice of the Christ child growing in her womb. If John was in his eighties when he first pastored the church in Ephesus, was Mary still alive well into her nineties? How long did she live? We don't know, but as long as she lived, she pondered and remembered those things hidden in her heart concerning the Christ child she bore. Just a final note here: Mary was the mother of Jesus. She should not be seen as the mother of God. She bore the Christ child in her womb. She was special. God chose her. Mary was a sinner just like you and me. She needed a Savior just like you and me.

Because John walked in faith, and was secure in Christ's love for him, he remained faithful and steadfast even in heavy persecution. Tradition says that John was boiled in oil before being sent to the Isle of Patmos. He was the last of the twelve apostles to be alive on this earth. All the rest of them had been martyred for their faith. Peter and Andrew had been crucified. Thomas had gone to India and had died at the end of a spear. James, the son of Alphaeus, had been stoned and clubbed to death in Syria. Philip was executed in Africa and Paul was beheaded in Rome.⁵ Soon after this book was written down and dispersed to the church, it was seen as part of Holy Writ.⁶

⁵ Ibid, p. 17.

⁶ Beth Moore, *Here and Now, There and Then DVD Study Guide* (Living Proof Ministries, 2009), p. 5.

The book of **Revelation** is the continuation of the climax of the Acts of the Apostles by the Holy Spirit. This period of time spans from **Acts** (30 years of the Church) to **Revelation** detailing Jesus' second coming (after 2000 plus years of Church History).

Sometimes, we get very one-sided in a study of Creation in Genesis 1-3, and we fail to see the Bible for which most of it is concerned, that being the Redemption of Man and his struggle against the evil one called Lucifer, titled "satan." God wins in the end. We see this by the time we reach **Revelation 22**. God the Father redeems Mankind through the only means possible, the blood sacrifice of His Son. This redemption of Mankind has been expensive to God; it cost Him His Son. In the end God will meter out justice to ha-Satan and his fallen angels and also to the men/women of this earth who refuse Him access to their hearts. But also, at this same time, He will welcome all those who would be redeemed because of His Son's work on the cross, for they have partaken of His salvation. In the end, those who know Him, will be His Bride, and He will be their Bridegroom (Jew and Gentile as One).

According to **Revelation**, Jesus Christ is the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. **Revelation 1:5-6** also tells us of the work that Christ has already done to redeem us. What are these three aspects of His work upon the cross?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

There are many, many prophecies in the Tanakh, the Old Testament, for which we will find fulfillment, in our study of this book. As we moved into chapters 2 and 3 in part 1, we saw that the seven churches were not only prophetic of the future Church, but also as history looking backwards. Were these seven churches actual churches with the actual problems mentioned? Were these seven churches representative of all Church history from the time of Acts to the present? And could it be that these seven churches are representative of the present Church today, collectively worldwide? The answer is "yes" to all of these.

Day 2 **The Communication and Structure for the Book of Revelation - that which John saw**

Who are the parties involved in this communication in **Revelation 1:1**? What is the order of the parties as this communication comes from God the Father to the Apostle John?

There are many people who will not study the book of **Revelation** because they feel it is too hard to discern. But, we are given the outline of this book in **Revelation 1:19**. The outline comes to us through the three things John was to write. List these three things:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Most commentaries will list the three things John was to write down and match them up with the following chapters:

1. John was to write the things that he saw – these are in chapter 1
2. John was then to write the things that were – these are in chapters 2 and 3, the seven letters to the seven churches
3. And then John was to write down the things that came “after these things.” – these are chapters 4 and 5 and on through chapter 22, the final chapter in **Revelation**. We are clearly told beginning in chapter 4:1, “After these things,”

Read **Revelation 1:12**. What word used in this verse gives us a clue as to where we are on the timeline given us in **Revelation 1:19**?

What did John see from this verse to the beginning of **Revelation 2:1**? List them below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

How did John describe the one like a son of man who was in the middle of the lampstands?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

How many “likes” do you see in the description of the one like a son of man who was in the middle of the lampstands?

“A metaphor is a word or phrase (noun) that is used to make a comparison between two people, things, animals, or places.

“A simile is a figure of speech (a noun) involving the comparison of one thing with another thing of a different kind, used to make a description more emphatic or vivid” using “**like** or **as**”⁷

There are symbols used in this description of Christ also. What symbols do you see?

1. For what does the color, white, symbolize?
2. For what does the metal bronze symbolize?
3. For what does the number seven symbolize?
4. For what does a two-edged sword symbolize?
5. For what does the sun symbolize?

Read **Revelation 2**. **Revelation** chapters 2 and 3 are the letters John is to write to the seven churches. These are “the things which are” referencing back to **Revelation 1:19**.

Day 3 Structure for the Book of Revelation – the things that are

Now read chapters 2 and 3 and write down the order of each of the churches below and to which angel of which church, John is writing. This order became significant to us when we looked at the meanings behind the seven churches.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

⁷ Internet, Simile Definition.

To whom was John writing in Chapter 1? See **Revelation 1:4**.

Keep this strongly in your mind all through the book, John was writing this down for the Church (the seven churches are representative of the whole Body of Believers here). We are going to find a lot of “sevens” in this book. Seven is the number of completeness and sometimes (but, not always) the number of perfection. These seven churches are the first mention of seven we have in the Book of Revelation. There are more verses in **Revelation 1** that speak of seven. Write down to what each seven is referring.

1. **Rev 1: 4**

2. **Rev 1:11**

3. **Rev 1:12**

4. **Rev 1:16**

5. **Rev 1:20**

I would like to introduce you here to the Complete Jewish Bible that has been redacted from the Greek back to the Hebrew and then translated for us into the English. You can find an entire copy of this work online for free. In this redaction, the Hebrew word used for “church” is *kehilot* and means “called out ones” or “congregation.” Pay attention, this is important: This same word is the word used for the congregation of Israel in the Old Testament, *kehilot*. Doesn’t that put a different spin on your understanding? The Complete Jewish Bible uses the words, “*Messianic congregations,*” for “the seven churches.” The Complete Jewish Bible (CJB) reads this way, “‘To the angel of the “*Messianic Community*” in Ephesus, write: 'Here is the message from the one who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven gold *menorahs*:'” Do you see another word in this verse that has been translated differently than what is in our standard Bibles? What is that word?

So, getting back to the five other references to sevens in **Revelation 1**, how many lamps collectively are on each of the seven menorahs?

Good guess! Yes, there are seven lamps on each of the seven menorahs or lamp stands. Seven times seven is 49. There are 49 lamps represented in the seven menorahs to the seven Messianic Communities. The “Shemash” is the center tube to the center lamp of the menorah. This tube is hollow and all the other tubes to the other six lamps are hollow, as well. Each hollow tube is connected to this center tube. So, what I want you to take from this paragraph is this: each one of the tubes and their lamps are supplied oil from the center tube, or the Shemash. This word, “shemash” in the Hebrew is the word for “sun.” The sun was made on day four of seven days of creation. The “shemash” holds the fourth place on the menorah. This “shemash” also represents the Messiah or

the “Meshiach,” the Christ. Christ said, “I AM the Light of the World “(Gospel of **John 8:12**). **I John** speaks to us that He (God) is Light and in Him is no darkness.

Day 4 **Structure of the Book of Revelation - the things that will occur after these things**

Now read **Revelation 4:1**. What words are used at the beginning of Chapter 4 which gives us a clue as to where we are on the timeline given us in **Revelation 1:19**?

Chapters 4 and 5 start out with “after these things” (all the things that went before these two chapters, namely chapters 1,2, and 3). Are you seeing the pattern of the book given us so far in **Revelation 1:19**? Chapters 4 and 5 are the **scene in heaven** prior to the unleashing of **God’s wrath on the earth** and the **inhabitants of the earth**. Please read these two chapters before you go any further. Bask yourself in the light of His Glory. Do you want to know what heaven is like? In part 2 of this study, we found out that this is what heaven is all about.

Chapter 5 reveals who alone is worthy to **open** the Book – the Scroll – and **break** its seals...the Lamb who was slain.

In chapter 6, we see the beginning of **the wrath of God** in the seven seal judgments. Please read chapters 6 and 7 and take note below of what happens to the **earth** and the **earth dwellers** with the opening of each of the six seals.

1. The Lamb broke the first seal: **Rev 6:1-2**
2. The Lamb broke the second seal: **Rev 6:3-4**
3. The Lamb broke the third seal: **Rev 6:5-6**
4. The Lamb broke the fourth seal: **Rev 6:7-8**
5. The Lamb broke the fifth seal: **Rev 6:9-11**
6. The Lamb broke the sixth seal: **Rev 6:12-7:17**
7. The Lamb broke the seventh seal: **Rev 8:1-6**

In chapter 8, we see the sounding of the next seven judgments called the trumpet judgments. Remember that these judgments of God are a continuation of **the wrath of God** and these judgments are made upon the **earth** and the **earth dwellers** and the fallen angels. Please read chapters 8 through 14 and take note below what happens to the earth and the earth dwellers and what is going on during this time with the sounding of each of the seven trumpets. Make it simple. I am not looking for serious detail here.

1. The first angel sounds the first trumpet **Rev 8:7**
2. The second angel sounds the second trumpet: **Rev 8:8-9**
3. The third angel sounds the third trumpet: **Rev 8:10-11**
4. The fourth angel sounds the fourth trumpet: **Rev 8:12**
5. The fifth angel sounds (1st woe): **Rev 9:1-12**
6. The sixth angel sounds (2nd woe): **Rev 9:13-11:14**
7. The seventh angel sounds (3rd woe): **Rev 11:15 – 14:20**

In chapter 15, we see the beginning for the final seven judgments of God's wrath upon the earth, the earth dwellers, and the fallen angels. With the pouring out of these last seven judgments (plagues), *God's wrath* is finished. These are the seven gold bowl judgments full of *the wrath of God*; this pouring out of the seven gold bowls is kind of like the finale of the 4th of July celebration fireworks – they come rapidly one right after the other. Or I like to think of these last seven judgments of *God's wrath* like popcorn popping once it gets going. POP! POP! POP! POP! POP! POP! POP!

1. First angel poured out first bowl on the earth: **Rev 16:1-2**
2. Second angel poured out second bowl on the earth: **Rev 16:3**
3. Third angel poured out third bowl on the earth: **Rev 16:4-7**
4. Fourth angel poured out forth bowl on the sun: **Rev 16:8-9**
5. Fifth angel poured out on throne of beast: **Rev 16:10-11**
6. Sixth angel poured out his bowl on the River Euphrates: **Rev 16:12-16**
7. Seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the air on the earth– **Rev 16:17 – Rev 18:24**

Day 5 Structure of Revelation - The Second Coming of Jesus Christ as Conquering King

In summary of all we learned on day 4, Jesus Christ is the only One who is worthy to open the scroll and to break its seven seals, which release the first seven judgments of God upon the earth and those remaining on the earth. There is no mention of the Church on the earth in the book of **Revelation** after the seven letters to the seven churches, until chapter 19. So, after **Revelation 3**, it can be and is assumed that the Church is no longer

on the face of the earth. Many believe that the Church is raptured (caught up unto heaven) before the onset of these judgments releasing the *wrath of God*. There are passages of Scripture that seem to reveal that the Believers will not suffer the *wrath of God*. In **I Thessalonians 5:9**, Paul says this: “For God has not destined us for *wrath*, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.” We will look at more of these references later in the study. However, since the presence of the Holy Spirit indwells the Believer in the Church Age, if the Believers are raptured out of this world, then it follows that the presence of the Holy Spirit must go out of this world with them at the same time. Without the Holy Spirit’s dampening effect on sin of which He has had on this earth while indwelling Believers, sin will take its course towards fullness and “all hell will break loose,” when the Holy Spirit is taken out of this world. Those left on this earth will soon begin to experience the consequences of *God’s wrath* upon them for their sin. This *wrath of God* on the earth dwellers begins with the breaking of the first seal by the Lord Jesus Christ. At the breaking of the seventh seal, the next seven judgments of God are released upon planet earth and its inhabitants. These are called the seven trumpet judgments. Again, with the blowing of the seventh trumpet, the last seven bowls judgments are poured out and then *God’s wrath* is finished in chapter 16.

Now in chapter 19, we see Jesus returns to earth in His Second Coming. He comes this second time as a conquering king and after the battle against ha-Satan and those of whom he has gathered, is won, Jesus will set up His Millennial Kingdom on this earth and reign for 1000 years. Christ will sit on the Throne of David his father (in the Jewish sense). This is a literal political throne. For those who do not believe that there will be a literal Millennial Kingdom, there is no way that Jesus can fulfill the prophecies that tell us that He will sit on His father David’s throne. David will be reigning as co-regent with Jesus at this time, much like the co-regents of Babylon and Medo-Persia in history. After this time, ha-Satan will be released from the abyss he has been in for the past 1000 years and he will gather yet another army against the Lord. The Battle is over rapidly and they are judged (Great White Throne) according to their deeds and they are thrown into the Lake of Fire forever. Then after the culmination of all old earthly things, coming down out of heaven to the earth, is the New Jerusalem, the city representing Heaven. The dwelling place of God will come to earth and He will dwell with Man again but it will be forever this time. The redemption of Man is Complete and we have come full circle back to the Garden of Eden, where God and Mankind can be in unhindered relationship with each other. The marriage supper of the Lamb and the Church, His bride, has come.

Please read **Revelation 19**.

Entering into **Revelation 19**, we once again have a scene in heaven. What is that scene like?

What is the marriage supper of the Lamb? And who is the Bride and who is the groom?
Revelation 19:1-10

Who comes riding on a white horse? What is His destination and what is the purpose of His ride? Who does He take with Him for the battle (1st battle)? **Revelation 19:11-21**
What happens to those gathered against the Lord in this battle? **Revelation 19:19-21**

Who is thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with brimstone at the culmination of this battle? **Revelation 19:19-21**

Please read **Revelation 20**.

Describe the judgment of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead or on their hand: **Revelation 20:4**

What is their destination?

What happens to ha-Satan in **Revelation 20:3**?

Then what happens to ha-Satan in **Revelation 20:7**?

What happens to ha-Satan and also those gathered by ha-Satan for this Last Battle at the end of the Millennium (2nd battle with Jesus in the book of **Revelation**) in **Revelation 20:7-10**?

How are the dead, the great and the small judged at the White Throne Judgment according to **Revelation 20:11**?

What is their destination?

Please read **Revelation 21**

What is the setting of **Revelation 21**?

What is coming to the new earth from the new heaven?

What does this city, the New Jerusalem, represent?

What has been completed by this time?

What is in this city?

Please read **Revelation 22**

Refer back to the **Genesis 2:8-9**, **Genesis 3:22-24**. The LORD God planted two trees in this Garden, one was the Tree of Life and the other was the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. At the end of **Genesis 3**, after Adam and Eve sin and after God drives them out of the Garden, He places cherubim at the east entrance to the Garden to guard Man from entering the Garden and having access to eating from the Tree of Life. Why? In **Revelation 22**, we finally and once again, see the Tree of Life. Describe this tree? See **Revelation 22:1-2**. Can we eat of the Tree of Life at this time? Why?

Think of all you have learned this week and get excited because we are going to have a whirlwind tour of the end times in which you and I (if you are in Christ) will be watching most of this story when it unfolds, from the portico of heaven. We need to get a grasp on how much the Bridegroom loves us and how eager He must be to hear His Father's voice telling Him to go and fetch His Bride. Get excited. The curtain is about to rise and the show is about to begin.