

THE GATE CHURCH HIGH DESERT
RANDY HOWARD

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS AT 6:30PM
JAN - APR, 2021

BACK TO THE FUTURE

A STUDY OF REVELATIONS AND THE VICTORY OF CHRIST

A PROPER APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING - THE BOOK OF REVELATION

CHAPTER ONE

Developing the Right Hermeneutic (*Interpretation of Scripture*)

Literal, Figurative, Symbolic and Figurative Language
Systems of Eschatology and the Approach to End Times
Preterism, Futurism, Historicism and Idealism
Amillennialism, Pre-Millennialism and Post Millennialism

CHAPTER TWO

Deciphering the Old Testament Prophecies (*Daniel, Zechariah*)

Zechariah's Description of the Temple
Daniel's Vision of the Four Kingdoms
Daniel's Timeline of the Seventy Weeks

CHAPTER THREE

Discovering the First Century Relevance of Jesus' Prophecy (*Matthew 23-25*)

The Temple Experience and a Walk in the Garden
The Disciples Questions and a Curiosity for the Unknown
The Future Unveiled and the Prophecies Unfold

CHAPTER FOUR

Detailing the Observations as Seen in the Visions of John (*Revelation*)

The Purpose of the Book (Christ and His Church Victorious)

The Person of the Book (*Christ*)

Jesus Christ the Lamb of God | Jesus Christ the Lord of All

The Prophecy of the Book (Warnings, Judgments and Outcomes)

Dating the Revelation: Crucial to Understanding the Book

Warnings to the Churches of Asia Minor

Judgments on the Jews, the Romans Empire and the Nations of Earth

Second Coming, the Kingdom of God and New Creation

REVIEW - THE WRITING OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

From both external and internal evidence of the Book of Revelation, an early date is the only option that will harmonize well with the content of the book. Although the later date of 96 AD is widely accepted in many Christian circles and groups today (even though this theory basically only rests on one statement in one external source), the evidence in the book of Revelation itself points rather clearly to an earlier date of 65-66 AD for the time of writing, the time when John was banned to the Isle of Patmos during the persecution by Caesar Nero.

OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Chapters 1-3:

Both futurists and historicists agree on Revelation 1-3. In chapter one, Jesus reveals Himself to John and tells him to write down what is about to be revealed.

In chapters 2-3, we have seven letters written to seven churches which existed in the first and second centuries. We can apply many of the truths written to them to our churches and lives today but we must realize that this letter was written to seven literal and very real churches that existed at that time in the first century. Let's understand ...

❖ The Geographical Importance of the Seven Churches

- Asia Minor was a significant destination for two reasons:
 - First, after the fall of Jerusalem the province of Asia would become the most influential center of Christianity in the Roman Empire.

“The province of Asia emerged as the area where Christianity was strongest, with Ephesus as its radial point.”

- Second, Asia was the center of the cult of Caesar-worship.

“Inscription after inscription testifies to the loyalty of the cities towards the Empire. At Ephesus, at Smyrna, at Pergamum, and indeed throughout the province the Church was confronted by an imperialism which was popular and patriotic, and bore the character of a religion. Nowhere was the Caesar-cult more popular than in Asia.”

- The Main Issue between Rome and the Church

This was the main issue between Rome and the Christians: Who is Lord?

- ✓ Rome strictly controlled all rights of corporation, assembly, religious meetings, clubs, and street gatherings, and it brooked no possible rivalry to its centrality.
- ✓ The witness of the apostles and the early Church was nothing less than a declaration of war against the pretensions of the Roman State.

✓ Who represented true and ultimate order, God or Rome, eternity or time? The Roman answer was Rome and time, and hence Christianity constituted a treasonable faith and a menace to political order.

- Reminding the Church of Christ's Authority

- It was necessary for the churches of Asia to recognize this fully, with all its implications. Faith in Jesus Christ requires absolute submission to His Lordship, at every point, with no compromise.
- St. John wrote to remind them of their true King, of their position with Him as kings and priests, and of the necessity to persevere in terms of His sovereign Word.

Chapter 4, Verse 1:

The futurist and historicist begin to disagree at this point in chapter 4, verse 1. Most futurist see this as the place where the church was raptured off of the earth and into heaven so she will not be here during the judgments described in chapter 4-18.

In contrast, the historicist view understands that Revelation 4:1 happened 2,000 years ago. It is not the Church that gets taken to heaven, but John got to see everything that would take place from his lifetime forward. THIS BECOMES THE MAJOR DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE TWO VIEWS!

Chapters 4-5:

In chapter 4, John is overwhelmed by the sight of God's throne room.

In chapter 5, God the Father is holding a book of judgments which is sealed with seven seals. Most of the chapter is describing a cry to find one who is worthy to break the seals of God's book. Of course, the answer is the Lamb who was slain, Jesus Christ.

Chapter 6:

Jesus begins to break the seals of the book of God's judgments.

These judgments are not to be thought of like sentences which a judge may pass on a criminal. Rather they are decrees which a King makes to carry out his will. Each time a seal is broken, the will of the king goes forth.

With the breaking of the first four seals, mighty horses go forth. This imagery is like unto the wars of the Bible days when a king would go to battle and first his soldiers would form the battlefront. It was a display of the king's power. It was meant to prepare for war and intimidate the enemy. In Revelation 6, the horses take their positions in heaven waiting for the order to proceed.

The actual war does not begin until Revelation 8.

Chapters 7-11:

These five chapters speak of the judgments of the Jews. Both futurists and historicists believe these chapters refer to Israel because there are so many references to the Jews and Israel in these chapters. For example, in chapter 7, 144,000 Jews are marked so that they will not be harmed in the coming judgments. In chapter 11, we see the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple.

We agree about the references being for Jews and Israel but we disagree as to when these chapters get fulfilled. Futurists see the judgments happening during a future seven-year long tribulation. Historicists see that the judgments were fulfilled in 70AD when Jerusalem was destroyed.

Chapter 12-14: Judgment of the Roman Empire

Revelation 14:1-5: "What is Babylon?"

Revelation 14:6-7: The Gospel Goes Forth

Revelation 14:8: The Spirit of Babylon

Revelation 14:8: The Fall of Babylon

Babylon Falls and Jesus Harvests

Revelation 14:17: Who Is the Harlot

Revelation 14:17-20: Roman Empire Destroyed

Revelation 17-18: Future Kingdom Expansion

Revelation 17 and 18 tell of the final subduing of God's enemies.

Revelation 19: The Kingdom of God is Victorious

At what point will Jesus return? No one knows the day nor the hour, but we know that the Father told His Son to sit down on His throne until every enemy has been made a footstool for His feet. In Acts 3:21, we are also told about Jesus:

whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.

Revelation 19: Jesus Is Revealed as King

In Revelation 19 we see Jesus appearing in glory. Let the celebration begin! John wrote:

Then I heard something like a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. (Rev. 19:6)

After this the marriage feast is announced:

“Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.” (Rev. 19:7)

Then the Groom comes into the picture:

And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True. . . . His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.

Jesus Returns to Earth as Victor and King

This is the procession of victory. It is a parade of glory. The war is over. Jesus is declared as King:

From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.” (Rev. 19:15-16)

Revelation 20: The Millennial Reign of Jesus

We are told in Revelation 20 that Christians are raised from the dead in what is called “the first resurrection.” Those Christians rule and reign with Jesus for 1,000 years. This is called the millennial reign of Jesus. How do we understand this millennial reign? And when does it take place?

Revelation 20:11-15: White Throne Judgment

After the millennial reign, Jesus will take His seat on the great white throne of judgment. Then all of the dead, the great and the small, will stand before Him. Books will be opened, including the book of life. The people then will be judged according to the things written in the books. "And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20:15) The final judgment will not be arbitrary or unjust, but everything from the books will be weighed and all made clear. The image is sobering.

Revelation 21 and 22: The New Heaven and Earth

Revelation 21: New Jerusalem

Revelation 21-22: Our External Dwelling