

REVELATION:

THE UNVEILING OF JESUS CHRIST

Why study the book of Revelation? Revelation 1:3 gives us the answer. “Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.” The time this book is speaking of is the end of this age; the age of the church. The age of the church began with Pentecost and will end with the second coming of Jesus. To hear and meditate on this book brings blessings. This is the first of seven blessings or beatitudes recorded in Revelation.

The Bible is bookended by Genesis and Revelation. The first recounts the beginning of the world and the second recounts the end of the world as we know it. Revelation can be a terrifying book, but if you focus on its purpose, it is a book of victory and comfort.

There are times in the history of man when we think “all hell is breaking loose”. There are times in our lives when we think “life’s not fair”. How often has mankind wished for the evil of this world to be rooted out and punished and for the righteous to get their just rewards. We don’t always see that in our world today. Revelation is all about God setting everything right.

More importantly, Revelation is about the revealing or unveiling of Jesus. As early as Genesis 3, we get a glimpse of a prophecy about someone to come who will crush the head of the serpent (Satan). All through the Old Testament, we discover prophecies and veiled allusions to a Messiah who will come and set God’s people free. God’s people are the Jews. Yet there are prophecies about Gentiles being a part of God’s promises. None of this made sense until Jesus appeared as a babe in Bethlehem. Through the gospels, we see how these ancient prophecies are manifested in a Jewish carpenter who was not only the Son of Man but the Son of God. Yet there were still Old Testament prophecies that were not fulfilled at the time of Jesus’ first coming and have yet to be fulfilled. Some prophecies have dual fulfillments. Some have already been fulfilled or fulfilled in part, but there will be another fulfillment of that same prophecy in the future.

Many Old Testament prophecies spoke of God reigning on earth. That has yet to happen. Satan still has an influence on the earth. New Testament prophecies speak about all people in heaven, on earth, and under the earth bowing to Jesus and every tongue confessing that He is Lord of all. That has not happened.

So, the full unveiling of Jesus has still not occurred. The glory of his majesty, his ruling on earth as he does in heaven, is still in the future. The book of Revelation is our promise from God that He will indeed fulfill all He has said he will do. Jesus will be King of kings and Lord of lords on earth. Revelation is the unveiling of how this happens. At the end of Revelation, the fullness of the glory of Jesus is finally apparent to all on earth. The promise of God that He will dwell with his people becomes a reality.

There are two other places in the Bible we will be examining along with Revelation. One is the book of Daniel, chapter 7, the other is Matthew 24. Each of these speak of the end of this age that Revelation covers more completely.

Where the gospels are about the grace of God, Revelation is about the judgment of God. All are given an opportunity to come and freely drink of the water of life. Sadly, not all will choose to come.

There are various interpretations of the book of Revelation. Some theologians see it as already having taken place in the hearts of believers; others think it is recording actual events that will take place in the future. That will be the tact I will take. However the Holy Spirit speaks to you through these passages, the important thing to remember is that Jesus, and all who follow Him, are victorious.

—*Meg Rice*

