

Revelation: Introduction to Chapters 4-19

Opening Question: Discuss the importance of including the Old Testament in your understanding that the book of Revelation is “the rest of the story.”

Key Takeaways:

1. Several Old Testament passages provide important background information for understanding Revelation 4-19 including Leviticus 25-26; Jeremiah 29; Daniel 9-12.
2. John’s original audience was aware of Israel’s history and looked forward to Israel’s repentance and return to the LORD and the establishment of the Kingdom.
3. The “Kingdom” was understood to be an earthly Kingdom where Christ would rule in the midst of His enemies.
4. The original readers understood Leviticus 25 and the LORD’s command to give rest to the land every seventh year, which Israel failed to do.
5. The original readers understood the blessings and curses (recorded in Leviticus 26) promised by God to Israel for their obedience or disobedience in keeping the Mosaic covenant, including seven-fold judgement if they refused to repent.
6. John’s original audience understood the seventy year judgment set forth in Leviticus 25, pronounced in Jeremiah 29 and the increase of the judgment seven times recorded in Daniel 9.
7. John’s original audience understood Revelation 4-19 to be the “70th Week of Daniel” spelled out in detail in Daniel 9-12.

Discussion Questions:

1. Daniel 9-12 is the framework for Revelation 4-19. In order to understand this framework, begin by reading aloud together Leviticus 25:1-19 and discuss the LORD’s instructions to Israel.
2. Next, read aloud together Leviticus 26:14-46. How often is the phrase “seven times” used in these verses? Why is the punishment on Israel increased seven times more? Pay attention to these specific judgments on Israel as the biblical story unfolds.
3. Read aloud together Jeremiah 29:1-14; Daniel 9-12. How is Daniel 9 a response to Jeremiah 29? What else do you learn from Daniel 9-12 that will be coming as the story continues?

Practical Application:

1. To best orient yourself to the next section of Revelation, familiarize yourself with the “back story” by reading: Leviticus 25-26; Jeremiah 29; Daniel 9-12.
2. Daniel 9-12 provides the “what” for the “how” of Revelation 4-19. Re-read Daniel 9-12 in preparation for studying the next section of Revelation.
3. The New Testament authors often reference Christ’s coming return and reign. Jesus and Paul speak of specific events leading to Christ’s return. Read Matthew 24 and 2 Thessalonians 2. How does knowing what has already been foretold in both the Old and New Testament aid your understanding of the events shown to John by the risen Christ in Revelation?

Closing Prayer:

Father, Thank You for Your Word which consistently tells of the future hope we have when Jesus returns to reign. Thank You for Your faithfulness in fulfilling every promise You have made. Our desire is to remember Your faithfulness as we anticipate and long for Christ’s return. Amen.