

## **Revelation Introduction**

### **Introduction**

The book of Revelation is a book of prophecy. It is critical to have a firm grasp on the proper interpretation of prophecy in order to understand and apply the book. This lesson is designed to give a basic understanding of the different aspects of prophecy and how to properly interpret prophecy. This class will examine Revelation from the Premillennial, Pretrib, and futuristic view.

### **I. Millennial Views**

#### **A. Premillennialism(correct)**

This view holds that the Church Age will end with the rapture, followed by a seven year period called the Tribulation. The Tribulation will end with the Second Coming of Christ. This will be followed by the 1,000 year reign of Christ on the earth. This period will end with the Great White Throne Judgement.

This view is distinct for the following reasons:

1. It separates the Rapture and the Second Coming of Christ.
2. It keeps the distinction between Israel and the Church.
3. It does not teach a general resurrection and judgement.

#### **B. Amillennialism**

This view holds that all prophecy must be interpreted figuratively, spiritually, or symbolically. It teaches that Christ will eventually return and have one general resurrection and one general judgement.

Problems with this view:

1. It leaves out the Rapture and the Tribulation, this all becomes figurative.
2. This view teaches that the idea of the Millennium is only found in an "obscure part of a highly symbolic book."
3. Those who hold this view cannot account for specifically, accurately fulfilled prophecy.

#### **C. Postmillennialism**

The Postmillennialist says "we will win the world for Christ." They teach that the world will get better and better and when the Christians have won the world, Christ will return to rule over the Kingdom. This is a widely accepted view, especially among Charismatic today. Many TV preachers teach this view, Pat Robertson, is the most notable.

Problems with this view:

1. Scripture nowhere teaches that the world will get better, or that man will usher in the kingdom.
2. The Great Commission gives the church responsibility, but God is in

control of the results.

3. This view is inconsistent. It interprets much of prophecy symbolically, yet it takes the 1,000 years as literal.
4. This view has the Church and Israel confused, and puts the Church in the tribulation.

## **II. Rapture Views**

There are four basic rapture views, it is important to understand these in order to have the proper interpretation of the book of Revelation.

### **A. Pre Trib Rapture(correct)**

This view teaches that the church will be removed before the seven-year tribulation. The tribulation's purpose is to bring Israel to repentance, not to purify the church. At the rapture the Holy Spirit, now indwelling believers, will be removed from the earth. Scripture shows clear differences between the rapture and the Second Coming. See, Rev. 3:10, 6:15-17, 1Th. 4:17, 5:9, 2 Th. 2:3-12.

### **B. Partial Rapture**

In this view only the "overcoming" Christians will be raptured. Carnal Christians will be left on earth and go through the purifying process of the Tribulation.

Problems with this view:

1. It turns the Tribulation into a Protestant Purgatory.
2. It implies that ones works, not salvation is the qualification for the rapture.
3. It implies a partial resurrection, see 1Co. 15:51 "all."

### **C. Mid Trib/ PreWrath Rapture**

These are really two different views, but they are very close in description. They basically put the rapture in the middle of the Tribulation, just prior to the Great Tribulation. Some say that when the two Witnesses are taken to heaven, then the church will also go. Some say that signs and wonders in the heavens will signal the rapture.

Problems with this view:

1. The two Witnesses are not symbolic of the church, they are prophets who are slain in the Tribulation.
2. This view denies the imminence of Christ's return and tends toward date setting.

### **D. Post Trib Rapture**

In this view the rapture and the Second Coming are the same event.

Problems with this view:

1. Scripture shows that the rapture and the revelation in glory are two distinctly different events.
2. Scripture shows a seven-year period between the two events.
3. This view allows for a general resurrection.

### **III. Historical Views**

These historical views deal with the interpretation of the actual passages of prophecy. There are four main historic views.

#### **A. Futuristic view(correct)**

This view holds that from chapter 4 through the end of the book, Revelation deals with end time events. Revelation is not so much concerned with the historical events of John's day as it is in the Second Coming of the Lord (Rev. 1:1, 1:19, 4:1). The book does cover the past, chpt 1, the present, chpt. 2-3, but the majority of the book deals with things to come.

#### **B. Preterist(first) view**

All the events in the book took place in the first century AD. The book was written in a highly symbolic form in order to hide the true meaning from the unbelievers. Those holding this view believe the main purpose of the book was to encourage first century believers that God is ultimately in control. This position does not account for the unfilled future events.

#### **C. Historical view**

Here Revelation is simply a panoramic view of history from the 1<sup>st</sup> century until the Second Coming of Christ. This view denies the prophetic aspect of the book.

#### **D. Symbolic view**

Revelation portrays the continuing conflict between good and evil through out the ages. Since it is all symbolic, it is to give encouragement that good will defeat evil. The problem here is that the symbols are interpreted in the book as literal people, places, or things.