

## REVELATION

The Book of Revelation provides believers with insight into the end of His Story. Coinciding with its prophetic nature, the book includes a heavy dose of imagery. Keeping with a healthy hermeneutic, Revelation should be studied from a literal-contextual approach keeping in mind that this allows for the use of imagery and allusions. This book cannot be either properly understood or fully appreciated apart from familiarity with the Old Testament.

### I. Recognize the Jewishness of the Book

#### A. The Author - John

1. The individual inspired to give an account of the Upper Room (foundation for the Church)
2. All three NT epistles address Christian living and maturity, appreciation of salvation, and love among the brethren
3. The longest living of the original 11 Apostles - by the time of the writing of Revelation God's instruction for the Church was largely in place providing the basis for the Church Age
4. Following the letters to the individual churches in chapter 3 of Revelation there is scant reference to the Church - Why so few references?
  - a) Revelation places a heavy emphasis on "The Wrath" of God (13x)
    - (1) Rev 6:16-17 - "*And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: 17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?*"
    - (2) Rev 16:1 - "*And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.*"
  - b) The Church has been promised deliverance from "The Wrath" of God
    - (1) 1Th 1:10 - "*And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, [even] Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.*"
    - (2) 1Th 5:9 - "*For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,*"
  - c) God has historically delivered His saints from His wrath when judging the lost
    - (1) 2Pe 2:9 - "*The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:*"
      - (a) Noah - the Ark
      - (b) "Just Lot" - escape from Sodom and Gomorrah
      - (c) Hebrews - the land of Goshen
5. If the Church has been promised deliverance from wrath, who will be judged in Revelation?
  - a) Don't forget that according to the NT that Jews, Gentiles, and the Church are all distinct groups from God's perspective - 1 Cor. 10:32
  - b) OT prophets stated that the Tribulation would be a time of Judgement for Israel
    - (1) Eze 20:33-38 - "*[As] I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you: 34 And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a*

*mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out. 35 And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. 36 Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord GOD. 37 And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: 38 And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I [am] the LORD.”*

(2) Jer 30:7, 11 - *“Alas! for that day [is] great, so that none [is] like it: it [is] even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. ... 11 For I [am] with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.”*

6. Take notice of the heavy emphasis on Israel
  - a) The images of the heavenly throne are very similar to the images conveyed by the OT prophets (Isaiah, Ezekiel)
  - b) Ch. 7 - 144,000 evangelists from the 12 tribes of Israel
  - c) Ch. 11 - The Temple (building not body)
  - d) Ch. 14 - Mount Zion (Jerusalem)
  - e) Ch. 16 - The Battle of Armageddon (the Valley of Megiddo)

#### B. Daniel

1. Daniel's prophecies give insight into World History and Antichrist
2. Daniel 9 provides a timeline for the history of Israel and specifically addresses the time period of the Tribulation
  - a) Dan 9:24 - *“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.”*

## II. Remember that a Literal Interpretation of the Bible allows for normal use of figurative language.

- A. Read the scriptures normally allowing for figurative language such as metaphors, similes, and anthropomorphisms
- B. The Golden Rule of Interpretation: “When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense; therefore, take every word any its primary, ordinary, usual, literal meaning unless the facts of the immediate context, studied in the light of related passages and axiomatic and fundamental truths, indicate clearly otherwise.” - David L. Cooper

#### C. John's Difficulty

1. John was only a finite man trying to communicate to his written audience heavenly sights that he had never seen before
  - a) Like (26x) - “similar, resembling”
    - (1) Rev. 4:7 - *“And the first beast [was] like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast [was] like a flying eagle.”*
    - (2) Rev. 16:13 - *“And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs [come] out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.”*

- b) As (83x) - “in the same manner”
- (1) Rev. 4:1 - “*After this I looked, and, behold, a door [was] opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard [was] as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.*”
  - (2) Rev. 6:1 - “*And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder; one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.*”
2. When the reader seeks to interpret John’s use of metaphors and similes in a normal fashion they will be able to have a better appreciation for the Book of Revelation