

INTRODUCTION TO THE REVELATION

I. What is the Revelation?

A. An apocalypse (“Apokalupsis Ioanou”, or Apocalypse of John)

1. Verse 1 reminds us this is a revelation from God which was given to Jesus to reveal to His bond-servants through John
2. The root word translated ‘revelation’ comes from the Greek, ‘apocalypsis’, meaning an unveiling or disclosure, a ‘laying bare’ or an ‘uncovering’; this type of literature is meant to *reveal* truth through fantastic and powerful imagery, not *hide* it
3. Apocalyptic literature was a style of Hebrew writing generally spanning the time period ~200 BC to ~200 AD
4. Although the message could be hidden from unfriendly authorities by use of unfamiliar imagery, it was generally not used to obscure the writer’s message but rather to make it more vivid and impressive through the use of dramatic figures and visions
5. Apocalyptic literature usually appeared in times of great difficulty for the Jews to generally convey a message of *hope*: God is in ultimate control of history and fully capable of bringing men and events to His desired ends
6. It should be obvious that this message was not to be hidden and avoided, but rather studied and understood – we should read this!
7. General features of apocalyptic literature:
 - a. Reflective of dark times in human history – for example, the book of I Enoch (~ 175-165 BC), written about Antiochus IV Epiphanes
 - b. Personifies good and evil (usually as animals) in

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a situation of conflict

- c. Predictions are made about the outcome of the struggle and the fate of the wicked figures
- d. The message is made known through visions
- e. A common recurring symbolism is used
- f. Apocalypses are usually untraceable as to their authorship
- g. An apocalypse is often said to have been 'sealed' (closed and its contents hidden) for future generations to discover
 - 1.) These last two features are *not* true of John's revelation, making it unusual
 - 2.) Use of the word 'revelation' or apocalypse elsewhere in the NT: Romans 16:25, Galatians 1:12, II Thes. 1:7
 - 3.) Biblical examples of apocalyptic literature:
 - a.) OT: Isaiah 24-27, Ezekiel, Daniel, Zechariah, Joel
 - b.) NT: Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21
 - c.) Apocrypha: book of Enoch, II Esdras, Assumption of Moses

B. A prophecy (see Rev. 1:3 & 22:18) - it reveals the result of the struggle between the church and Satan, in this case the empire of Rome; reflect on Matt.24:1-35 to set the stage for Roman interference (vs 36 begins a new discussion about the end of time)

II. Authorship – most likely the apostle John

A. Internal evidence:

- 1. The author refers to himself as "John" four times (see 1:1, 1:4, 1:9, 22:8), but not specifically the apostle; only someone as well known as the apostle could write such a letter and know his authority

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would not be questioned; also, John chooses to reveal his name, which is unusual for apocalyptic literature

2. Many words and phrases used in John's gospel and three epistles are often repeated in the Revelation:
 - a. "The Word" (*logos*) – only found in John's writings; John 1:1 & 14; I John 1:1; Rev. 19:13
 - b. "To overcome" (*nikao* – conquer) – John 16:33; 7 uses in I John; 17 uses in the Revelation
 - c. "True" (*alethinos*) – used 8 times in John's gospel, 4 times in I John, and 10 times in the Revelation
 - d. "Lamb" (*arnion*) - Used once in John 21:15 and 28 times in the Revelation; only found in John's writings
 - e. "Keep my word" and "keep my sayings" are phrases only found in John's writings

B. External evidence:

1. Tradition associates John with having moved to Ephesus after leaving Jerusalem, and being exiled to Patmos during the persecution under the emperor Domitian (AD 81-96)
2. Early church writers agreed that John was the author:
 - a. Justin Martyr (AD 110-165) - "John, one of the apostles of Christ," prophesied by a revelation" and refers to many figures used in this apocalypse (*Dialogue with Trypho* 81)
 - b. Irenaeus (120-202), a student of Polycarp, stated the Apocalypse was produced "toward the end of the reign of Domitian", and was the work of "John the apostle" (*Against Heresies*, 5.30.3)

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- c. Tertullian (145-220 AD)- testified John wrote the Apocalypse (*Against Marcion*, 3.25), stating “the apostle John beheld it”, referring to Revelation 21:2
- d. Clement of Alexandria (153-217 AD) – in his work, ‘*Who is the Rich Man that Shall Be Saved*’, writes of “...the apostle John” who “...returned to Ephesus from the isle of Patmos...after the tyrant’s death,” (although the tyrant is not named)
- e. Hippolytus (170-236 AD) – quoted John as the author in his *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist*
- f. Origen of Alexandria (185-254 AD) – mentions John the apostle as writing the apocalypse in his work, *De Principis*
- g. Eusebius, a fourth- century historian (AD 260-340) stated that John wrote the Apocalypse and returned home to Ephesus after the death of Domitian (*Church History*, 3.20)
- h. Victorinus – bishop of Petau (martyred in AD 300), wrote in his commentary that “John...an apostle...was condemned to the labor of the mines by Caesar Domitian. There he saw the Apocalypse...”

III. Purpose of this Apocalypse:

- A. Written to comfort and encourage people who would shortly undergo intense persecution - would provide understanding that although suffering is sometimes inevitable, God is still in control and will always save and avenge His people
- B. Written to the “seven churches of Asia”
 - 1. This letter is specifically written to 7 congregations in

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Asia, although we know several other towns and cities had congregations (Troas and Colossae and Hieropolis are mentioned in scripture, as well as others known to early history such as Tralles and Magnesia, mentioned by Ignatius); the number 7 likely also suggests the complete number/ totality of congregations; we see a full panorama of spiritual conditions in the church represented in these 7 examples

2. It was probably written as a 'circular letter', following existing letter or trade routes in Asia – it would first be taken to Ephesus (a major seaport, the main city, and gateway of travel and commerce in Asia), then to Smyrna, then Pergamum, then Thyatira, then Sardis, then Philadelphia, and finally Laodicea – the list in chs. 2 & 3 follows this exact pattern
3. At least 4 different threats to the spiritual health of these congregations (and all others, as well) can be categorized in this book:
 - a. *Pagan worship*, including *emperor worship* in particular
 - b. *Jewish persecution*
 - c. Christianity diluted by *materialism* and *lawlessness* – doctrine of the Nicolaitans, imitators of Balaam, and followers of Jezebel
 - d. *Spiritual decay* in the church – loss of love, lukewarmness, indifference, spiritual indecision
4. Although we know John was exiled to the penal colony of Patmos (see Rev. 1:9, and also Clement and Victorinus above), we do not exactly know if he wrote it there or upon returning to Ephesus; 1:11 states he was to send it to Ephesus and the other churches, suggesting he was not yet there

C. Written about events that would take place shortly after

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the writing of the letter

1. See chapters. 1:1, 1:3, 22:6, and 22:10
2. God's idea of when to reveal prophecy - see Daniel 8:26, 12:4, and 12:9 (see B1c below)

IV. Date of the writing of the Apocalypse: controversy abounds, and each suggestion has logistical problems

- A.** *Neronian* date (emperor from 54-68 AD) - some say the Apocalypse predicts the destruction of Jerusalem, based on the "measuring of the temple" (Rev. 11:1) and the statement that the Holy City would be trampled for 42 months (Rev. 11:2), predating the destruction of both in AD 70
- B.** *Vespasian* date (emperor from 69-79 AD) – some suggest that although the persecution occurred under Domitian, the letter was written during the reign of Vespasian (see Rev.17: 8-11); if the listing of the 8 kings in Rev. 17:9-11 are literal historical Roman emperors, then this possibility is very likely
- C.** *Domitian* date (emperor from 81-96 AD) - most popular opinion; suggested by early church historians; usually stated in the 90's AD
- D.** Evidence strongly suggests a late first - century date for the writing of this letter:
 1. External evidence:
 - a. Irenaeus – in his *Against Heresies* VC, XXX,iii, he clearly states the apocalypse was written near the end of Domitian's reign
 - b. Clement of Alexandria (AD 193) states about the apostle John that he returned to Ephesus 'after the tyrant's death'
 - c. Tertullian, ~AD 197, stated that John returned from banishment on Patmos and again took up residence in Ephesus

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- d. In his commentary about Revelation, ~300 AD, Victorinus wrote that the apocalypse was written during the reign of Domitian, and the one who appeared to be slain and yet lived again was Nero Redivivus, or the 'resurrected Nero', Domitian
- e. A strong cult of emperor worship was present during the writing of this letter- although emperor worship existed as early as the reign of Augustus, it wasn't until Domitian arrived that such worship was mandatory (he demanded to be referred to as "Lord and God")
- f. Widespread Christian persecution was present – it was only empire- wide for the first time under Domitian (reign from 81 – 96 AD; see 2:13 regarding Antipas, and also 6:9); the persecution under Nero (54 –68 AD) was rather brief and fairly local to the area around Rome

2. Internal evidence:

- a. Revelation 1:4 – if the focus of the coming persecution was the fall of Jerusalem, why did John single out the 'seven churches of Asia' for the warning of a trial 'which will come upon all the world'?
- b. Revelation 1:9 – John, the writer, is banished to Patmos, and tradition and all early writers agree that this occurred during the reign of Domitian; if written before AD 70, the Jews would have no authority to banish John and Nero would have no reason to do so
- c. Revelation 2:10 & 13, and 3:7 & 10 and 11-18– the churches at Smyrna, Philadelphia, and Pergamum (Pergamos) were all warned of a persecution which would come upon 'all the world', suggesting a broader persecution than the limited conflict around

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Rome in the time of Nero, and the charges against Christians were for political treason in the time of Domitian

- d. Revelation 2:6, 14-15, & 20 – the distinct sect of the Nicolaitans strongly suggests a date long after AD 68, as any direct references to them do not occur in any letters written in the 62-68 AD time period
- e. Revelation 2:4, 3:1 & 15-16 -The condition of the churches:
 - 1). When Paul wrote to Ephesus from Rome (~ AD 60-62), the church was still healthy; it is unlikely it would have deteriorated in just a few years
 - 2). The spiritual decline in Sardis and Laodicea would not likely have occurred by AD 65-68, so soon after being established
 - 3). The church at Smyrna may not even have existed before AD 60-64

V. Apocalyptic symbolism

A. Numerology:

- 1 – Unity, or God; also standing for uniqueness, or aloneness; the lone ‘white horse and rider’, Jesus
- 2 – Strength, something strengthened or redoubled, or referring to certainty; ‘two witnesses’
- 3 – the divine number; the Godhead (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit); sometimes the family (father, mother, and child); sometimes also a complete number (Jonah in the belly of the great fish 3 days, Peter denying Jesus 3 times, Jesus arising from the grave after 3 days)
- 3 ½ - a number of incompleteness (“broken seven”); aspirations unrealized; references include “a time (1), times (2), and half a time (1/2)” in Daniel 12:7 and Rev. 12:14, the “1260 days” of Rev. 12:6 and 11:3 & 7, and the

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“42 months” of Rev. 11:2; always used of hardship, trial, and testing in the Bible, especially in the Revelation

- 4** - the number of the earth or creation, or earthly/ worldly things: the 4 corners of the Earth, the 4 winds, the 4 cardinal directions/ compass points, 4 elements (earth, air, water, fire); also certain spiritual ideas (4 kingdoms in Daniel’s vision of the great statue, the 4 living creatures around God’s throne, 4 horsemen)
- 5** - incompleteness, in human terms ($\frac{1}{2}$ of 10), but can also indicate spiritual incompleteness; in the gospels, 5 wise and 5 foolish virgins, 5 loaves feeding the multitude, 5 words of understanding in I Cor.14:19; also a symbol of a short but definite period of time, as in Rev. 9:5 & 10
- 6** - the imperfect number, failure or falling short of seven, often associated with man (created on the 6th day and not the 7th); can also signify evil, or defeat; this is the “number of a man” (666 or 616, from Rev. 13:18), possibly even a specific man (such as Nero)
- 7** - the perfect or complete spiritual number (4 + 3); the most sacred Hebrew number (the incomplete 6 days of Creation finally completed as God ‘rested’ on the 7th day); often used in the gospels (‘seven spirits’, ‘seven loaves’ and ‘seven baskets’, 7 servants called out by the early church to minister at table); used extensively in the Revelation (7 Asian churches, 7 lampstands, 7 seals, 7 trumpets, 7 bowls of wrath, 7 horns, 7 crowns, 7 heads, 7 plagues, 7 stars, 7000 slain, etc.); used 54 times in the Revelation
- 8** - a new beginning; a resurrection or starting over (8 people saved in the ark; males were circumcised on the 8th day; the first day of the week or Lord’s Day, an ‘8th day’)
- 9** - spiritual completeness, divine judgement, such as 9 fruits of the Spirit and 9 Beatitudes; the sum of the numeric

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values of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet is $4995 = 5 \times 999$)

- 10** - completeness, especially physically (10 fingers and toes, numeric system based on 10) but also spiritually (10 Commandments; Jews were to tithe $1/10$ of all wealth); in the Revelation: 10 kings, 10 horns, 10 crowns, etc.
- 12** - the religious number, or organized religion (the 12 tribes of the chosen people of God; 12 stones on the high priest's breastplate, 12 cakes of showbread in the tabernacle, etc.; in the Revelation: the New Jerusalem/ Heaven with 12 gates and 12 foundation stones, the 12 apostles sitting on 12 thrones and judging the 12 tribes of Israel); often used with other complete numbers (such as 12,000 numbered from each of 12 tribes, or $12 \times 12 \times 1000 = 144,000$ as in Rev.14:1)
- 40** - a number of completeness or fullness (it rained for 40 days and 40 nights and Noah opened the window of the ark another 40 days; Joseph was embalmed for 40 days; Moses was on Mt. Sinai 40 days; the spies searched Canaan 40 days; the Israelites wandered in the wilderness 40 years; 40 stripes with a whip were the limit allowed a convicted criminal; Nineveh was allowed 40 days to come to repentance; Jesus fasted for 40 days; and Christ appeared to the apostles for a 40 day period after His resurrection (Acts 1:3))
- 70** - a sign of perfection, sacred completeness: 7×10 ; the seventy weeks of Daniel 9; seven times seventy times to forgive of Matt. 18:21-22
- 1000** – completeness, to the nth degree, or a full/ complete period of time; multiples of 10, or 10 to the 3rd power; (“... a thousand generations...” of Exodus 20:6, or “... a thousand hills” of Psalm 50:10, or “...thousands upon thousands” of Rev. 5:11), or “...a thousand years” of Rev.

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20:3,5,6)

- B. Colors** – white = purity or holiness; red = blood, life, sometimes sin; black = death, affliction, or calamity
- C. Animals** - God's people = domestic animals (sheep- Christians; the "Lamb", Jesus); evil forces = wild or grotesque beasts (the "dragon", Satan; the beasts from the sea and the land, secular/royal Roman authority and Roman religious authority for emperor worship)
- D. Previously used symbols** – over 400 allusions to the Old Testament are found in the Revelation (especially Daniel, Ezekiel, and Zechariah), and several are also seen the NT (see Matthew 25)
 - 1. OT examples:** "a son of man" (Dan. 7:13), "golden lampstands" (Zech. 4:2), the throne of God (Ex. 24:9-11, Ezek. 1:26-28), the "10 horns" (Dan. 7:7), the "4 creatures" around the throne (Ezek. 1:4-14), the "little scroll" or book (Ezek. 2:1-7), the "two witnesses" (Zech. 4:2-4), the dragon (Isa. 27:1), the "beast of the sea" (Dan. 7:2-7), the "beast from the earth" (Dan. 8:3-4), the "bowls of wrath" (Ps. 79:6), "Armageddon"/ Har-Magedon (Judges 5:19; Judges 7:1; I Sam. 31:1-6; 2 Kings 9:27; 2 Kings 23:29 & 2 Chron.35:21-22), the "river of the water of life" (Zech. 14:8), and the "tree of life" (Gen. 2:9)
 - 2. NT examples:** "the lamb" (John 1:29), the woman (Gal. 4:26), the "sharp two-edged sword" (Eph. 6:17, Heb. 4:12), Babylon the Great (I Peter 5:13), the "bride" adorned for her husband (Eph. 5:22-32), the "white throne" judgement (Matt. 25:31-46), and the "New Jerusalem" (Heb. 11:10 & 12:22)
 - 3. Recurring phrases:**
 - a. "A Son of Man coming in the clouds"** – used in **Rev. 1:7** with "He" inserted in place of son of man; often improperly associated only with the final coming of

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the Lord, this metaphor is frequently used in scripture to indicate God or Christ coming near to an important spiritual situation to closely observe and render judgement, such as against Egypt (Isa. 19:1, Ezek. 30:3 & 32:7), against His own people (Ezek. 34:12), and against Jerusalem (Matt. 24:24-30, Mark 13:24-30); He also promised to “come quickly” against Rome (Rev. 2:16, 3:11, 22:7 & 12 & 20); this phrase does certainly point to a final coming and judgment at the end of time, but also for all His enemies *before* that time – for references, see Psalm 104:3, Jer. 4:13-14, Isa. 19:1, Dan. 7:13 & 22, Matt. 24:30 (and Mark 13:26 and Luke 21:27), Matt. 25:31, Matt. 26:64, Mark 14:61-62, I Thes. 4:17, and Rev. 1:7-10

b. *“The Day of the Lord”* – a day or time of great spiritual upheaval and transformation (*not* the physical destruction of the gentiles and Israel’s glorification, as believed by the Jews); OT references: Isa. 13:6-16 & 34:14, Ezek. 32:7, Joel 2:1-2 & 10 & 30-31, Joel 3:15; NT references – Matt. 24:29, Acts 2:16-21, II Peter 3:10-14; specific events associated with “The Day of the Lord” are described in **Rev. 6:12-17**; this should not be confused with John’s reference to “The Lord’s Day” in Rev. 1:10

4. *Trying to understand & interpret the symbolism in the Revelation without reading and understanding these previous writings makes the task nearly impossible, and is the source of most of the incorrect understandings and controversies that exist in Biblical eschatology*

VI. Understanding and interpreting the Revelation

A. Considerations in studying this apocalypse:

1. Recognize that it is written in the apocalyptic style,

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revealing its message through fantastic imagery and figurative language through special signs and symbols; one must first visualize the scene or metaphor, and feel the emotions and ideas they create before digging for the deeper message

2. Given the message of the depicted scene, analyze and understand the intended lesson or point; once the major theme or message is determined, correlate the interpretation of the scenes and figures with the proper context of that theme; an understanding of previous uses of these symbolic pictures in scripture is extremely helpful in subsequent understanding of their use in the Revelation
3. Remember to focus on the historical background of the time and situation of the writing, making sure that one's interpretation properly coincides with the literary and social context of the late first century
4. Make any application first to the originally intended audience (first century Asia), and then glean any further abiding lessons for future generations
5. Remember to interpret difficult passages in the light of clear ones; reject interpretations that conflict with these more easily understood passages in the Revelation, and also avoid conflicts with scriptures elsewhere in the bible

B. Most common schools of interpretation:

1. **Idealist** (or *Spiritual*, or *Philosophy of History*) – suggests the apocalypse simply describes in symbolic terms the ongoing struggle between good (God) and evil (Satan); it rejects attempts to interpret symbols in regard to any historical places, people, or events
2. **Eclectic Idealist** – a modified idealist perspective, with Jesus' final return as the only specific prophesied historical event
3. **Historicist** or **Continuous Historical** – suggests the

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apocalypse is an ongoing prophetic roadmap of specific events concerning the church throughout all of history, from the birth of Jesus to the Final Judgement; the problem with this view is that it detracts from and confuses the significance of the message intended for the Asian churches mentioned in chapters 1-3

4. Futurist – claims that most of the apocalypse is yet unfulfilled prophecy; holds that most everything from chapter 4 to the end of the book relates to the end of time and final earthly events; most Futurists are Premillennialists (a few are Postmillennialists); this is now the most common opinion of most denominations and the Roman Catholic Church

5. Preterist – proposes a direct historical interpretation of the apocalypse; it takes the most literal, direct, and historically & Biblically accurate view of the apocalypse; although some future events are discussed (such as the final destruction of Rome and Jesus final return at the end of time), this view focuses on contemporary people and events as they relate to the First Century church; most preterists are *amillennialists* (by definition); some preterists believe most of these prophecies were fulfilled by the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation in AD 70 - Jerusalem, Judea, and the Jewish nation were utterly destroyed at this time., which would fit some descriptions of the events in the Revelation which had just occurred and will soon recur under Domitian (this should not be confused with the modern heretical “70 AD Doctrine” of “realized eschatology”, popularized by Max King and C.D. Beagle),

C. To whom is the apocalypse written?

1. Internal evidence for the time of these events:

a. Read Rev. 1:1, Rev. 1:3, Rev. 22:6, and Rev. 22:10;

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this clearly suggests the forthcoming events would be witnessed by the people of that time, not long after the writing of those words; historically, this WAS realized during the persecution instituted by Domitian and continued until the demise of Rome

b. The Greek here is critical; 2 words are used to describe the timing of the prophecy and also Jesus' coming: **tachu** (quickly or speedily), which is used in verses 1:1, 22:6, 22:7, 22:12, and 22:20, and **eggus** (near in place and time; nigh, or at hand), which is used in verses 1:3 and 22:10; many premillennialists argue that uses of **tachu** (such as "...*shortly* take place...") only refers to the *speed* at which the events of the Revelation occur (suddenly) and not the *time frame*; however, **tachu** in verses 1:1 and 22:6 can just as easily mean the events will be *coming* quickly or soon after the writing; when placed along with the verses using **eggus** (near, or soon, or at hand; 1:3 & 22:10), it becomes clear that John is saying all the events prophesied will begin shortly after the book is written

c. God weighed-in once before with warnings against revealing prophecy too far in advance (read Daniel 8:26 and 12:4 & 9, regarding the end of the Jewish nation); thus, early revelation of prophecy serves no good purpose and can only lead to confusion and harmful speculation, something premillennialists forget

2. A first century or modern audience?

a. The author specifically said it was written to the seven churches of Asia, and not to LATER Christians; although referencing these 7 churches in chapters 2-3 refers to conditions in the entire

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historical church and the book *is* intended for all audiences, the revelation was intentionally sent to the Asian Christians to address their specific situations

- b.** All other OT and NT books were written to the contemporary audience of that time, for their immediate edification (and indirectly for ours); why would we conclude the Revelation was written to the ancients about events to occur over 2000 years later, about things to which they could not relate? Why would we take an egocentric view and force the primary message of the apocalypse to refer to our modern historical situation? We must again remember God's instructions in Daniel 8:26 and 12:4 & 9 as far as dating prophecy
- c.** John's focus on the 1st century situation should not make the apocalypse any less useful today, exactly like the rest of scripture

D. Reasons for misinterpretation of the Revelation:

- 1.** *Accepting preconceived ideas* – accepting faulty interpretations as truth before reading and studying the message for oneself (usually passed on from family, preachers, authors, or trusted significant others)
- 2.** *Disorientation* - failure to understand the historical background, time frame, or purpose of the writing, causing false understandings of the imagery and message
- 3.** *Failure to study with due diligence* - giving up on trying to understand difficult passages, or falling for clever or sensationalistic explanations for difficult passages and concepts, even when inconsistent with other scriptures
- 4.** *Intentional Deception* – promoting falsehood for

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sensationalistic effects or for sordid gain

5. A *combination* of some or all of the above

VII. The importance of studying the Revelation

A. Why should we carefully study this difficult book?

1. It is a revelation given directly by Jesus Christ Himself (1:1)
2. This book sets forth a clear Christian perspective for viewing and understanding history and God's providence
3. This is a book whose message centers on Jesus, His relationship to the church and His workings in history
4. This book underscores the essential value of absolute trust in God
5. This book sends a clear message that an eternal crown of life awaits us if we endure under persecution and suffering
6. This book warns of the wrath of God reserved for those who oppose Him and abuse His children
7. A proper understanding of this book helps prevent false teachings and misunderstandings that would distort and abuse the words of Christ
8. This book warns of the *punishment* reserved for anyone who would distort or abuse the words of this prophecy (or any other part of God's word)

B. A proper understanding of this book will dispel harmful theories and teachings that distort and abuse the message of Christ

1. Seven ***beatitudes*** or ***blessings*** are promised to the faithful reader:

- a. "*Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words...*" (Rev. 1:3)
- b. "*Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord...*" (Rev. 14:13)
- c. "*Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments on...*" (Rev. 16:15)

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- d. *“Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.”* (Rev. 19:9)
 - e. *“Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection...”* (Rev. 20:6)
 - f. *“Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book.”* (Rev. 22:7)
 - g. *“Blessed are those who wash their robes...”* (Rev. 22:14)
2. Warnings of two ***curse***s are promised to those who would *change, add to, subtract from, or distort* the words of the Revelation:
- a. *“I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book.”* (Rev. 22:18)
 - b. *“...if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.”* (Rev. 22:19)
 - c. It should be noted that no exemptions from punishment are mentioned for those who change these teachings out of ignorance, even with a clear conscience