

## Insights into the Book of Revelation (First Teaching)

### Introduction:

1. People have asked me why I decided to teach on this subject
2. If you're coming to this series to find out what nation flies the helicopters in Revelation 9, what 666 really means, if the Antichrist is the Pope, Kissinger, or whoever, what the 88 reasons are why the rapture will happen in 2028, etc., you're going to be disappointed!
3. The word *antichrist* is only mentioned in 1 John
4. These letters speak to churches facing dire circumstances: a number of members now were denying that Jesus was fully human on earth and have left the community of saints
5. The way I am going to approach this series is to give you a framework
6. The attitude of the average Christian is that when we become a Christian this book piques our interest and so we try to get into it, but soon give up
7. Revelation is a real letter addressed to real people who lived very real lives and struggled to stay faithful to Israel's God in the dark and Pagan world and is applicable today for us
8. The Book of Revelation is about Heaven – a place promised to you and I

### The Background:

1. The book is written to churches, but the word used is “ekklesia” a common Greek term
2. The term which the Hebrew equivalent is means “gathering” or “crowd” or “assembly”
3. John was probably in his eighties since this was taking place about A.D. 95, over sixty years after the crucifixion. John was sent to Patmos, to work the mines as punishment
4. While on this island, Jesus Christ appears to him and dictates a letter for him to send
5. Revelation means unveiling, the veil of the future is lifted from the eyes of believers
6. ***Verse 1 “The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave to unto him to show His servants ...”***
7. ***Verse 3. “Blessed is he 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”***
8. How can this book be such a mystery when says what it does - ***Revelations 22:6-7 closes the book by saying that He has given all of this to show us our future and we would be blessed if we keep it.*** And also, ***Revelations 22:16 these things are to be testified in the churches.***

### The Scope of the Book:

1. The book of Genesis and Revelation are like two book ends that hold the Bible together.

### The Structure:

1. Excluding the introduction of **1:1-8** and the conclusion of **22:6-21** is a series of four visions:  
**VISION 1:** The glorified Jesus and his message to the 7 assemblies (**1:10-3:22**)  
**VISION 2:** God's judgments and redemptive activity at the end of this age (**4:1-16:21**). -  
**VISION 3:** God's judgment on “mystery Babylon” and the victorious return of Jesus to establish God's kingdom on earth (**17:1-21:8**)  
**VISION 4:** The “Bride of Jesus” and the New Jerusalem (**21:9-22:5**)

### The Purpose:

1. Its **purpose** is not to entertain us or titillate our curiosity, but to fortify Christians to be effective witnesses for Jesus in a hostile world by giving us a vision of Jesus' authority
2. Contrary to early 20<sup>th</sup> century utopian expectations, evil will intensify as this age draws to an end - human warfare, demonic activity, antichrist, but Jesus—not evil—will have the last word.

He is sovereign over evil, limiting its degree and duration, mysteriously using it to accomplish his ends, and guaranteeing its ultimate defeat.

3. The end of the age will be a time of intense judgment on those who persist in their rebellion against him - e.g. seal, trumpet & bowl judgments—but it will also be a time of intense evangelism. The Christian light teaching of today promises health, wealth and prosperity but let me ask you this – how has that worked out for you?

4. If we are honest, we need to realize that holding onto Christ is the only answer

5. What happens if you only see Jesus as Savior and Servant? It is easy to corrupt Jesus into your domesticated pet who entertains you instead of the Lion of Judah

### **The Book:**

1. The three-verse prologue - ***The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place.*** He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who testifies to everything he saw -- the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

2. ***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. (Revelation 1:1-3 NIV)***

3. The word, "revelation," is the Greek word *apocalypse* which means "an unveiling,"

4. Throughout this book we will find many mysteries made clear. The mystery of evil is unveiled. Why it persists and what is its ultimate end. Also, the mystery of godliness

5. How one can live a godly, righteous life in the midst of a broken and evil world

6. ***"He [i.e., Jesus] made it known by sending his angel to his servant John."*** In those words ***"made it known"*** there is a hidden meaning. It is actually one Greek word which in English should be translated ***signified***, or, if you want to pronounce it more accurately "sign-i-fied," i.e., made known by signs or symbols. He ***symbolized*** it to his servant John – eg strange beasts and scorpions and other weird persons and animals

7. So, God is the author – He revealed it to His Son who told John

8. I do not want to miss that. ***"Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take it to heart."*** The word *blessed* is probably based on a Hebrew word which is not the usual word for blessing: The usual term is *Barak*, which means "to bow down," but the word *Esher*, which means "to guide," is more likely in the thought of John. That is what is being promised to us.

### **The People:**

1. Firstly there is John – the apostle

2. ***Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come - 1:4b*** - That describes God the Father, the Eternal One. His name in Hebrew, *Yahweh*, is "I Am," and this statement is a parsing of that verb. ***"I am he who is, and he who was, and he who is to come,"*** - the eternally Existing One.

3. ***"... and from the seven spirits before his throne, - 1:4c*** - Seven is a key number

4. ***"The Faithful Witness"*** – also called ***"the firstborn from the dead"***

5. ***"The ruler of the kings of the earth."*** He is the great law maker, king over all other kings.

6. We are all sinfully dependent people.

7. ***he "has made us a kingdom of priests to serve the Lord our God."***

8. ***Look, he is coming with the clouds... (Revelation 1:7a)*** This is the focal point of history.

### **Finally:**

1. This chapter is to focus our attention on Jesus – He is the central figure in all of history

