

NEW TESTAMENT SURVEY

LESSON SERIES

**UNIT VI – GENERAL EPISTLES
THE BOOK OF REVELATION**

for

**CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE
CHRISTIAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

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UNIT VI - NEW TESTAMENT SURVEY GENERAL EPISTLES

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

WRITER: John the Apostle

DATE: About A.D. 95

THEORIES OF INTERPRETATION:

There have been many approaches to this book, but these can be divided into four major Systems.

1. Preterist Theory. All of Revelation has been fulfilled in the past. It had to do with local references in John's day. It had to do with the days of either Nero or Domitian. The view was held by Renan and most German scholars, also by Elliott.
2. Historical Theory. Fulfillment of Revelation is going on in history, and Revelation is the prophetic history of the church, according to this theory.
3. Historical-Spiritual Theory is a refinement of the historical theory and was advanced by Sir William Ramsay. This theory states that the two beasts are Imperial and Provincial Rome. The point of the book is to encourage Christians. According to this theory, Revelation has been largely fulfilled and there are spiritual lessons for the church today. Amillennialism, for the most part, has adopted this view. It dissipates and defeats the purpose of the book.
4. Futurist Theory holds that the Book of Revelation is primarily prophetic and yet future, especially from Revelation 4 on to the end of the book. ***This is the view of all premillennialists and is the view which we accept and present.***

STRIKING FEATURES:

1. It is the only prophetic book in the New Testament (in contrast to 17 prophetic books in the Old Testament).
2. John, the writer, reaches farther back into eternity past than any other writer in Scripture (John 1:1-3). He reaches farther on into eternity future in the Book of Revelation.
3. Special blessing is promised the readers of this book (Rev.1:3). Likewise, a warning is issued to those who tamper with its contents (Rev. 22:18, 19).
4. Revelation is not a sealed book (Rev. 22:10). Contrast Dan.12:9. It is a revelation (apocalypse), which is an unveiling.

5. It is a series of visions, expressed in symbols.
6. This book is like a great union station where the great trunk lines of prophecy come in from other portions of Scripture. Revelation does not originate but consummates. It is imperative to a right understanding of the book to be able to trace each great subject of prophecy from the first reference to the terminal. There are at least 10 great subjects of prophecy which find their consummation here:

(1) The Lord Jesus Christ (Gen. 3:15).

(2) The Church (Matt 16:18).

(3) The Resurrection and Translation of Saints (1 Thes. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51,52).

(4) The Great Tribulation (Deut. 4:30,31).

(5) Satan and Evil (Ezek. 28:11-18).

(6) The Man of Sin" (Ezek. 28:1-10).

(7) The Course and End of Apostate Christendom (Dan. 2:3-45; Matt 13).

(8) The Beginning, Course, and End of the "Times of the Gentiles" (Dan. 2:37; Luke 21:24)

(9) The Second Coming of Christ (Jude 14, 15).

(10) Israel's Covenants (Gen. 12:1-3). five things promised Israel.

KEY VERSES: Rev. 1:18, 19

I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell [hades] and of death. Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.

COMMENTS:

More books have been written on The Revelation than any other book in the Bible - but Revelation is still a mystery to most people - WHY would Jesus send His church a message that it could not understand? Yet it has NOT been understood for nearly 2000 years.

The answer is simply, that The Revelation was prepared in advance for a certain time in the experience of the church, and when that time comes, then

"Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear hear the words of this prophecy, and keepeth those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." (Rev. 1:3)
Revelation 22:7 tells us, "Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of this prophecy of this book." (Keep-lit. to hold in heart; remember)

NOTE, from these passages the first thing Revelation says about itself is that IT IS A PROPHECY. "BLESSED is he that readeth and they that hear the WORDS OF THIS PROPHECY."

Prophecy is not just history written in advance. Prophecy is the completion of a story - the Bible deals with TIME - all time - beginning with the Creation as recorded in Genesis and ending with the new heaven and the new earth which includes the holy city that comes down from God, the eternal home of the Bride of Christ.

REVELATION then is the CONTINUATION OF and the COMPLETION of the story begun in the book of Acts. It is the story of the church through the ages - IT'S EARTHLY HISTORY, taking up where the book of Acts leaves off - It's being CAUGHT UP at the resurrection (rapture there are at least three phases of resurrection of the Saints, all of which is called the first resurrection - Rev. 20:5) - IT'S RETURNING with CHRIST to reign for a 1000 years, then finally, IT'S RECEIVING the many mansions prepared for it in the Holy City.

REVELATION IS A CONTINUATION (chaps. 2 and 3) AND THE COMPLETION OF THE STORY OF THE CHURCH.

REVELATION is for the CHURCH. It was sent to show unto His servants the things which must shortly be done. It is DIRECTED to the SEVEN CHURCHES and IT has a seven times repeated command: "HE THAT HATH AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAITH UNTO the CHURCHES." (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17,; 29; 3:6, 13, 22)

It has been said in the past, and maybe you are of this persuasion, THAT REVELATION IS FOR THE CHURCH BUT ABOUT THE JEWS.

HOWEVER, to my knowledge, the JEWS are only mentioned twice in the book of The Revelation.

- The return of the Jews is not mentioned
- The Jews are not mentioned in the account of Jesus return
- Nor at the battle of Armageddon
- Or during the 1000 year reign

ON THE OTHER HAND, the CHURCHES are mentioned in the FIRST CHAPTER, IN THE SECOND AND THIRD CHAPTERS, AND IN THE LAST CHAPTER.

The saints are mentioned or referred to by some means in every chapter. "CHURCH" is an earthly name for the organization of the saints of God. It is not APPLIED to the saints after the RAPTURE. Other names are used to indicate the particular work that the saints will do. Such names as elders, living ones (beasts in KJV), horsemen, angels, Bride of Christ, kings, and priests.

A lot of the confusion in the interpretation of Revelation has been caused by first. trying to fit the Jew into the on going story, and a failure to recognize the saints in their heavenly organization and work.

NOTE AND. REMEMBER - Revelation is not only for the church, IT IS ABOUT THE CHURCH.

THE THEME

The theme of Revelation is redemption. Redemption involves the restoration of everything that was lost by sin. This includes man's SOUL, his BODY, the HUMAN RACE, and the EARTH. In chapter one, the qualifications of Christ to be the Redeemer of the world includes HIS SUFFERING AND DEATH as well as His power to judge and reign. Christ is both the LAMB of God and the LION of Judah.

The process of redemption has been committed to the church. The history of the church is the history of redemption as it applies to the souls of men.

The dispensation of grace which began with Pentecost and will end about the middle of Daniel's 70th week when the FIRST RESURRECTION is completed, is the dispensation for the saving of souls and IS NOT the DAY of redemption for the physical earth or the redemption of the human race. That is why all efforts for world peace will fail.

The church is NOT NOW working with GOD for a new world nor for a new world order. This is the day of the redemption of individual souls, not the redemption of the earth. We are still in the first stage of the whole redemption process.

Luke 21:28, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up and "lift up your heads: for your redemption draweth nigh."

This passage refers to the SECOND STAGE of the redemptive process - "REDEMPTION" here does not mean salvation. Those who are told to look up (those living when these things which Jesus spoke of begin to come to pass) and lift up their heads are already saved.

REDEMPTION, remember, is the restoration of everything that is lost - therefore it may apply to the SOUL, the BODY, or the EARTH. In this case Jesus is referring to the redemption of the BODY.

Romans 8:23 has the same use of redemption.

"And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits: of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the REDEMPTION OF OUR BODY."

The redemption of the BODY IS THE RAPTURE (I Corinthians 15:52):

"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed."

THE THIRD STAGE OR PHASE OF REDEMPTION - the redemption of the earth and the human race (those left on earth after first resurrection) will be accomplished by the seven last plagues of God's wrath being poured out upon the earth - the earth will be restored to it's original condition - all the effects of sin and evil will be destroyed (that which is not redeemable is destroyed).

Revelation 21:5 says: "And he that sat upon the throne said, behold I make all things new

He did NOT SAY, "I make all new things," but, "I make all things new."

STRUCTURE

Revelation has a structure - IT IS NOT a series of disconnected prophecies. It is divided into seven (7) sections, and four (4) time periods as we will see in the brief outline to follow.

BRIEF OUTLINE:**I. The PERSON of Jesus Christ - Christ in Glory, Chapter 1****II. The POSSESSION OF Jesus Christ -The Church in the World, Chapters 2, 3**

(Time Period: From Pentecost to the Resurrection/Rapture)

III. The PROGRAM of Jesus Christ, Chapters 4-22**1. The Scene and Action in Heaven, Chapters 4-11**

(Time Period: From the Resurrection/Rapture to Return of Christ)

2. The Scene and Action on Earth as a Result of the Action in Heaven, Chapters 12-61

(Time Period: From the Resurrection/Rapture to Return of Christ)

3. Satan's Church, Chapters 17-18

(Time Period: From the Resurrection/Rapture to Return of Christ)

4. Kingdom of Christ and the Saints, Chapters 19-20

(Time Period: From the Return of Christ to the End of the 1000 years)

5. Eternity, Chapters, 21-22

(Time Period: From the End of the 1000 years - Eternity)

END of Lesson

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