

REVELATION

Author: John

Date: 68 or 95 A.D.

Revelation is a book of truth, love, blessings, vision, hope and warning. The writer of this book identifies himself as John and states that he wrote this from the island of Patmos (1:9). The earliest and strongest traditions are that this author is John the Apostle. He is often referred to as the Beloved Disciple. He is the writer of the Gospel of John and the epistles of 1, 2, and 3 John, in addition to Revelation. Although there are some who would argue his authorship, the early church fathers, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen, all ascribe the book to John the Apostle. This tradition also points to the book being written under the reign of Domitian in the latter first century (about A.D. 95), but there are also those who suggest that John wrote this much earlier during the reign of Nero before the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

The word “revelation” in the original Greek is “apokalupsis” and could be translated “unveiling.” Revelation unveils truths about Jesus Christ, His message to the churches and His ultimate victory over sin and Satan. To understand Revelation, the reader must recognize that it is apocalyptic literature which can be highly symbolic. It uses this symbolic imagery to communicate hope to those in the midst of persecution. Although its visions may seem bizarre to today’s reader, the book furnishes a number of clues and explanations for its own interpretation. Much of the book can be interpreted literally, and we can know for sure that Jesus Christ is ultimately and completely victorious. He is revealed as the “KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS,” (19:16).

Key verses: “Blessed *is* he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time *is* near” (1:3). “And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away” (21:4).

Theme: The victorious Christ will return to vindicate the righteous and judge the wicked.

OUTLINE

- I. Introduction and Vision of Jesus Christ (1:1-20)
- II. The Seven Letters to the Seven Churches (2:1 - 3:22)
- III. Vision of God’s Throne in Heaven (4:1- 5:14)
- IV. The Seven Seals (6:1 - 8:1)
- V. The Seven Trumpets (8:2 - 11:19)
- VI. The Conflict with Satan (12:1 - 14:20)
- VII. The Seven Bowls (15:1 - 16:21)
- VIII. The Fall of Babylon the Great (17:1 - 19:5)
- IX. The Coming of Christ (19:6-21)
- X. The Millennial Kingdom (20:1-6)
- XI. Satan’s Doom (20:7-10)
- XII. The Great White Throne Judgment (20:10-15)
- XIII. New Heaven, New Earth, New Jerusalem (21:1 - 22:5)
- XIV. Conclusion (22:6 -21)

There are four main interpretations of the book of Revelation:

1. **Idealist** - Revelation describes in symbolic language the battle throughout the ages between good and evil.
2. **Preterist** - The events recorded in Revelation were largely fulfilled in AD 70 with the fall of the Jerusalem Temple.
3. **Historicist** - The prophesies of Revelation are fulfilled in various historic events from Patmos to the end of history.
4. **Futurist** - The prophesies of Revelation will take place in the future. They take a literal interpretation, yet they do not discount symbolic or figurative language.

There are also four main views having to do with the of the millennial kingdom (the 1,000 year reign of Revelation 20:1-9). All 4 views believe Jesus will return physically to earth.

1. **Dispensational Premillennialism** - Believes in the Rapture of believers preceding a 7 year tribulation, followed by the return of Christ and the 1,000 year reign.
2. **Historic Premillennialism** - Believes the Rapture and Second Coming occur at the same time following the tribulation and preceding the 1,000 year reign.
3. **Amillennialism** - Believes it could occur anytime and time frame is not important. Tribulation is ongoing for Christians and the millennium refers to the reign of Christ in our hearts.
4. **Postmillennialism** - Believes the return of Christ will be after the 1,000 year reign. Tribulation was during the 1st century or ongoing conflict between good and evil.

