

INTRODUCTION:

1) TODAY WE WILL BE LOOKING AT *THE BOOK OF REVELATION*

THINGS WE WILL LOOK AT IN THIS LESSON:

- 1) BACKGROUND OF REVELATION
- 2) UNDERSTANDING REVELATION
- 3) SYMBOLS, CHARACTERS, AND CONTRASTS IN REVELATION

PART 1 – BACKGROUND OF REVELATION:

Q 1) WHAT DOES “REVELATION” MEAN?

Q 2) WHO WROTE THE BOOK OF REVELATION?

Q 3) WHEN WAS THE BOOK OF REVELATION WRITTEN?

Q 4) WHAT IS THE SETTING FOR THE BOOK OF REVELATION?

Q 5) WHAT ARE THE TWO THEMES OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION?

PART 2 – UNDERSTANDING REVELATION:

Q 6) WHAT ARE THE FOUR VIEWS FOR INTERPRETING REVELATION?

OUTLINE OF REVELATION...

Revelation 1:19 “Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later.”

- I. WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN: THE VISION JOHN SAW OF CHRIST (1)
- II. WHAT IS NOW: THE SEVEN CHURCHES IN ASIA MINOR (2-3)
- III. WHAT WILL TAKE PLACE: THE FUTURE (4-22)

PICTURES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF JESUS IN REVELATION:

- The One “who is, and who was, and who is to come” (1:4, 8)
- The One who comes with the clouds, whom all the peoples of earth will see and mourn over (1:7)
- The Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End (1:8, 17; 2:8; 22:13)
- “Someone ‘like a son of man’” walking among the lampstands with white hair, eyes like fire, feet like bronze, and a voice like rushing waters; the One with a sword flashing from His mouth and a face shining like the sun (1:13–16; 2:1, 12, 18)
- The One who knows believers and their afflictions, who sees when they work hard, persevere, do not tolerate wicked men, and expose false apostles (2:2, 9)
- The first love of every believer (2:4)
- The One who calls the churches to repent (2:5, 16, 22; 3:3, 19) and urges us to hear what the Spirit says to the churches (2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:3, 6, 13, 22)
- The Encourager who tells us not to fear what we will suffer; the Covenant Maker who promises to give those who are faithful unto death a crown of life (2:10)
- The One who will not blot out the names of overcomers from the book of life but will confess their names to the Father (3:5; see also 2 Timothy 2:12)
- The One who is holy and true, who opens and shuts doors no one else can (3:7–8)
- The One who knows when a believer has only a little strength (3:8)
- The Savior who will keep patient believers from the hour of trial (3:10)
- The soon-returning King who warns believers not to lose their crowns (3:11)
- The One who will spit lukewarm believers out of His mouth (3:15–16)
- The One who rebukes and disciplines those He loves (3:19)
- The patient Knocker at the door of each lukewarm believer’s heart, wanting to restore the relationship (3:20)
- The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, and the Lamb who is worthy to take the scroll from the Father’s right hand and to open its seven seals (5:5–9; 6:1–12; 8:1)
- The Savior who sacrificed His own blood to purchase men for God, making them a kingdom and priests who will serve God as they reign on earth (5:9–10)
- The Lamb, the One whom the angels and every creature declare to be worthy of receiving power, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and praise (5:11–14)
- The One who, with the Father, will pour out wrath on the wicked of the earth (6:16–17)
- The Protector who is worshipped by the saints who come out of the Great Tribulation (7:9–17)
- The Lamb at the center of the throne (7:17)
- The Shepherd who leads believers to springs of living water (7:17)
- The King who will reign forever over the kingdom of the world (11:15)
- Israel’s Son who will rule the nations with an iron scepter (12:5; 19:15)
- The Lamb to whom the book of life belongs (13:8)
- The Son of Man seated on a cloud, wearing a gold crown, holding a sharp sickle (14:14–16)
- The One who overcomes the ten kings (17:14)

PICTURES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF JESUS IN REVELATION (CONTINUED):

- The Bridegroom who will come for His bride (19:7)
- The theme of prophecy (19:10)
- The Rider who is called Faithful and True (19:11)
- The Word of God (19:13)
- The Warrior who leads the armies of heaven (19:14)
- The One who strikes down the nations with the sword from His mouth (19:15, 19–21)
- The One who treads the winepress of the wrath of God Almighty (19:15)
- The King of Kings and Lord of Lords (19:16; also 17:14)
- The One who reigns a thousand years (20:4)
- The temple and the lamp of the Holy City, the new Jerusalem (21:22–23)
- The One who will show us His face and put His name on our foreheads (22:4)
- The Savior who is coming soon (22:7, 12, 20)
- The One who blesses those who keep the words of Revelation’s prophecy (22:7; also 1:3)

PART 3 – SYMBOLS, CHARACTERS, AND CONTRASTS IN REVELATION:

FIGURE 1)

Symbols and Their Meanings in Revelation (Adapted from Walvoord 1980, 29–30)		
Symbol	→	Meaning
Seven lampstands (1:12–13)	→	Seven churches (1:20)
Seven stars (1:16)	→	Seven messengers or pastors (1:20)
The morning star (2:28)	→	Jesus (22:16)
Key of David (3:7)	→	Power to open and close doors (3:7–8)
Seven lamps (4:5)	→	Sevenfold Spirit of God; the Holy Spirit (4:5)
The Lamb (5:6)	→	Jesus, Lord of lords and King of kings (17:14)
Seven eyes (5:6)	→	Sevenfold Spirit of God; the Holy Spirit (5:6)
Golden bowls full of incense (5:8)	→	Prayers of the saints (5:8)
Four horses and riders (6:1–8)	→	Conquest, war, famine, and death (6:1–8)
Fallen star (9:1)	→	An angel (9:1)
Woman and child (12:1–2, 5)	→	Israel and Christ (12:5)
Red dragon, old serpent (12:3; 20:2)	→	Satan, the devil (12:9; 20:2)

FIGURE 2)

Symbols and Their Meanings in Revelation (Adapted from Walvoord 1980, 29–30) (continued)		
Symbol	→	Meaning
A third of the stars of heaven (12:4)	→	Fallen angels (12:7–9)
A time, times and half a time (12:14)	→	1,260 days = 3.5 years (12:6)
The beast out of the sea, with seven heads and ten horns (13:1–10; 17:8–12)	→	The beast (Antichrist) who is the eighth king, and his kingdom (17:11)
Seven heads of the beast (13:1; 17:3, 7)	→	Seven hills and seven kings (17:9–10)
Ten horns of the beast (13:1; 17:3, 7)	→	Ten kings with the beast who is the Antichrist (17:12–13, 16–17)
The beast out of the earth (13:11–17)	→	The false prophet (19:20)
The great harlot, Babylon the Great, who sits on a beast with seven heads and ten horns (17:1–7)	→	The great city that sits on seven hills and rules over the kings of the earth (17:9, 18)
The waters on which the woman sits (17:1)	→	The peoples of the world (17:15)
Fine linen (19:8)	→	Righteous deeds of the saints (19:8)
The Rider of the white horse (19:11–16)	→	Christ, King of kings and Lord of lords (19:16)
The Root of David (22:16)	→	Jesus (22:16)

CHARACTERS IN THE STORY OR DRAMA OF REVELATION:

- Jesus Christ: The book reveals Him as: One “like a son of man” (1:13; 14:14), the “Lamb” (6:5–6), the “Lion” (5:5), a “male child” (12:5), the Rider on the white horse (19:11), and the One on the great white throne (20:11).
- God the Father: He is seated on the throne (4:1–11) and referred to throughout the narrative.
- The Holy Spirit: He is referred to as the sevenfold Spirit of God (1:4; 4:5; 5:6). John was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day (1:10). The Spirit speaks to the seven churches (2:1–3:22) and is active throughout the book.
- The apostle John: He sees the visions and narrates the events for us (1:9–19). Also, he often shares his feelings and responses to the visions.
- The seven churches: Jesus speaks to these churches in Revelation 1–3, and they remain in the background for the rest of the book. All of Revelation was written for these churches and the churches they represent.
- Satan: He is the main enemy in Revelation and is referred to as the devil, Satan, and the dragon (12:3–13:1; 20:1–10).
- The four creatures: These appear often (4:6, 8; 5:6, 8, 14; 6:1, 6; 7:11; 14:3; 15:7; 19:4) and may represent all of creation.
- The twenty-four elders: The elders may represent all whom God has redeemed (4:4, 10; 5:8; 11:16; 19:4).

CHARACTERS IN THE STORY OR DRAMA OF REVELATION (CONTINUED):

- Angels: Angels are active throughout the book. An angel brought the revelation to John (1:1). They worship God and the Lamb (4–5), declare judgment (10:1–20), and fight in heavenly warfare (12). They blow the seven trumpets (8:2) and pour out the seven bowls and seven plagues (15–16). An angel, perhaps the one of Revelation 1:1, showed John many things (22:8).
- The two witnesses: These dress in clothes of mourning and call sinners to repent. They prophesy and declare God's judgment (11).
- The Antichrist and beast: The Antichrist is the ruler of the beast, which is his kingdom. Sometimes John refers to the Antichrist as the beast because a king and his kingdom are one. The beast has seven heads and ten horns (13). Five of these heads were in the past (17:10); we believe that they represent the world kingdoms of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece. The sixth head of the beast—Rome—was present in John's day. We believe that the seventh head is a revised form of the Roman Empire. The Antichrist is the horn that arises to rule over it. The ten horns on the head of the seventh beast are ten kings who reign a short time with the Antichrist (Cole and McGhee 2000, 200–229).
- The false prophet: This person represents the Antichrist as the Holy Spirit represents Christ. Satan, the Antichrist, and the false prophet form an unholy triad (16:13).
- The harlot: John tells us that the harlot is the capital city of the Antichrist (17:18) and represents the world and its values. In John's day, this capital city was Rome. John referred to it as Babylon to protect believers. Although Caesar was considered to be the Antichrist in John's day, we believe a final Antichrist will arise and rule the world from a great city.
- The bride: The bride is the church, the body of Christ (19:7–8). The bride includes those who are caught up in the Rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18) and all those saved during the Great Tribulation (7:9–17). The bride is united with Christ when He comes to conquer evil.

FIGURE 3)

Contrasts from Revelation 1–5		
The <i>holy</i> Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the sevenfold Spirit (1:4–5)	→	The <i>evil</i> triad: the devil, the Antichrist, and the false prophet (20:10)
The description of <i>Christ</i> (1:12–16)	→	The description of the <i>Antichrist</i> (13:1–3)
The <i>rebukes</i> Christ gave five of the seven churches (2–3)	→	The <i>lack of rebuke</i> to Smyrna and Philadelphia (2–3)

FIGURE 4)

Contrasts from Revelation 1–5 (continued)		
The <i>good things</i> Christ said to six of the seven churches (2–3)	→	The <i>absence of any praise</i> to Laodicean believers (3:14–22)
<i>Promises</i> to overcomers in all seven churches (2–3)	→	<i>Warnings</i> to those who do not overcome (2–3)
Our God who is <i>holy</i> and <i>eternal</i> (4:8)	→	The beast who is <i>evil</i> and <i>temporary</i> (13:5)
The <i>Creator</i> (4:11)	→	All <i>created things</i> (4:11)
He who <i>was</i> , and <i>is</i> , and <i>is to come</i> (1:8; 4:8)	→	The beast who <i>once was</i> , <i>now is not</i> , and <i>is going to destruction</i> (17:8, 11)
The Lamb who alone is <i>worthy</i> to open the scroll (5:7–10)	→	All in heaven, on earth, and under the earth who are <i>not worthy</i> to open the scroll (5:3)

FIGURE 5)

Contrasts in Revelation Based on the Tribulation (Revelation 6–18)		
The white-horse rider with one temporary <i>stephanos</i> crown (8:2)	→	The white-horse Rider with many permanent <i>diadem</i> crowns (19:11–12)
The fifth seal: martyrs resting in heaven, praying, “ <i>Avenge us!</i> ” (6:9–11)	→	The sixth seal: sinners trembling on earth, saying, “ <i>Hide us!</i> ” (6:12–17)
The <i>silence</i> before the scroll is opened (8:1)	→	The <i>roar</i> of great multitudes in heaven shouting, “ <i>Hallelujah!</i> ” (19:1–6)
Three and a half years of <i>turmoil</i> on earth with the Antichrist (11:2–3; 12:6, 14)	→	One thousand years of <i>peace</i> on earth with Christ (20:2–6)
The <i>anger of the nations</i> (11:18)	→	The <i>wrath of God</i> (11:18)
<i>Rewarding</i> the prophets, saints, and those who respect God (11:18)	→	<i>Judging</i> the dead and destroying those who destroy the earth (11:18)
The woman <i>out of the serpent’s</i> reach (12:14)	→	The woman’s children <i>within the dragon’s</i> reach (12:17)
Those with the name or <i>mark of the beast</i> on their hands or foreheads (13:16–17)	→	Those with the <i>name of God</i> on their foreheads (14:1; 22:4)
The <i>lost</i> who never find rest, tormented in the lake of fire (14:10–11)	→	The <i>saved</i> who find eternal rest in the presence of God (14:13)
The vile dress of the harlot of the Antichrist (17:3–4)	→	The pure dress of the bride of Christ (19:7–8)
The city of <i>Babylon</i> in ruins (18:2)	→	The city of the <i>new Jerusalem</i> (21:2)
The <i>sinful</i> citizens of Babylon (18:4–5)	→	The <i>holy</i> citizens of the new Jerusalem (22:14–15)
<i>Mourning</i> of kings, merchants, and sailors over Babylon’s fall (18:9–19)	→	<i>Rejoicing</i> of saints, apostles, and prophets over Babylon’s fall (18:20)

FIGURE 6)

Contrasts in Revelation Based on Christ's Return and Reign (Revelation 19–22)		
The <i>Wedding Supper</i> of the Lamb (19:9)	→	The <i>great supper</i> of God (19:17–18)
The <i>first</i> resurrection (20:5–6)	→	The <i>second</i> resurrection (20:12–13)
Overcomers, children of God who <i>inherit the new Jerusalem</i> (21:7)	→	Cowards, unbelievers, the vile, murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic, idolaters, and liars who <i>inherit the lake of fire</i> (21:8)
Those who do shameful or deceitful deeds (21:27)	→	Those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life (21:27)
Those who are vile and <i>do wrong</i> (22:11)	→	Those who are <i>holy and do right</i> (22:11)
<i>Come</i> (22:17)	→	<i>Depart</i> (20:15)

FIGURE 7)

Chart of books in the New Testament, arranged by dates from the first book to the last				
Book	Author	Date* (AD)	Place of writing	Theme
James	James, Jesus' half-brother	45–49	Jerusalem	Faith that works in suffering, in salvation, and in holy living
Galatians	Paul	48–49	Antioch in Syria	We are saved by faith in Christ, not by obeying the law of Moses.
1 Thessalonians	Paul	51–52	Corinth	The second coming of Christ
2 Thessalonians	Paul	51–52	Corinth	The second coming of Christ
1 Corinthians	Paul	55–56	Ephesus	Church questions and answers, problems and solutions
2 Corinthians	Paul	55–56	Macedonia	The apostle Paul in contrast with false apostles
Mark	Mark	55–65	Rome	Jesus, the Servant
Romans	Paul	57	Corinth	Righteousness that comes by faith in Jesus
Philemon	Paul	60–62	Rome	Love reconciles; it brings enemies together as friends.
Colossians	Paul	60–62	Rome	Jesus is supreme and the head of the church.
Ephesians	Paul	60–62	Rome	The church is the body of Christ

FIGURE 8)

Chart of books in the New Testament, arranged by dates from the first book to the last (continued)				
Book	Author	Date* (AD)	Place of writing	Theme
Philippians	Paul	60–62	Rome	Joy in living for Christ
Luke	Luke	60–63	Rome	Jesus, the divine Savior of all
1 Peter	Peter	60–63	Rome	Suffering as Jesus did
Matthew	Matthew	60–69	Antioch in Syria	Jesus, the Messiah and King of the Jews
1 Timothy	Paul	62–66	Macedonia	Teaching and managing the church; godly living
Titus	Paul	62–66	Nicopolis	Managing and teaching the church; godly living
Acts	Luke	63	Rome	The spread of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome by the power of the Holy Spirit
2 Peter	Peter	66–68	Rome	Grow in grace; use the Scriptures against false teachers.
2 Timothy	Paul	67	Rome	Instructions to Timothy for the last days
Hebrews	Unknown	67–69	Unknown	Jesus is better.
Jude	Jude, Jesus' half-brother	70–80	Unknown	Fight for the faith; keep it pure from false teaching.
John	John	80–95	Ephesus	Believe in Jesus, the Son of God.
1 John	John	85–95	Ephesus	Children of God walk in light, know truth, and love others.
2 John	John	85–95	Ephesus	Love and truth
3 John	John	85–95	Ephesus	Be faithful to the truth and those who preach and teach it.
Revelation	John	95	Patmos	Jesus will return to conquer evil and rule over His kingdom.

HOMEWORK FOR THE WEEK:

Study the charts figure 7 and 8, to review the things we've discussed throughout this course...

