

Occasionally I receive requests to preach through or do a class on Revelation. I never felt I really understood the book nor have I been completely confident about anyone else's interpretation. Maybe it has something to do with what Daniel wrote at the end of his book, since Daniel is cited so frequently in Revelation. He wrote, "*Shut up the words and seal the book until the time of the end.*" (Daniel 12:9)⁹ My conviction is that when the events begin to unfold, the meaning will be clear.

That doesn't mean we shouldn't read it frequently. **Revelation is the one book that promises to bless its readers.** (1:3) Perhaps most importantly, it gives us a greater revelation of who Jesus is and His promises to us. If I asked you what the book was about, I doubt you'd answer, "Jesus". After this sermon I hope you will see it's as much about the glorified Jesus as it is about the end times.

In our final study in Exodus, the people at last saw the glory of God when the fire came out from the presence of the Lord. (Leviticus 9:23-24)²³ When the Greeks sought Jesus, He knew it was time for Him to be glorified. (John 12:20-23)²⁴ The time of which he said had "not yet come" (John 2:4)²⁵ had now arrived. The glory the world would see was the consummation of Jesus as a sacrifice for our sins acceptable to God on the cross, just as the wilderness wanderers saw the fire consume the sacrifice on the altar. Now we will see that glory as well as we look into Jesus in the Revelation.

Open your Bibles to the book of Revelation. We are going to see the glory of Jesus. He is the theme.

Chapter one starts right off telling us that this is the revelation of Jesus. Reading from the Amplified version Revelation 1:1 (AMP) ¹ *[THIS IS] the revelation of Jesus Christ [His unveiling of the divine mysteries]. God gave it to Him to disclose and make known to His bond servants certain things which must shortly and speedily come to pass in their entirety...* Verse one tells us that Jesus is the revealer of divine mysteries.

The rest of the chapter introduces the glorified Christ. Verse four tells us He is and was and is to come. In other words, He is eternal. He was born at a point in time that we just celebrated, but in the words of the prophet Micah, *His origins are of old, from ancient times.* (Micah 5:2)

Verse five tells us that Jesus is the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, (Colossians 1:18)¹⁸ and the ruler of the kings of the earth. It's a theme that will be opened up in the rest of the book. Books often start out with an opening chapter that tells you where the book is headed. That is true with Revelation. It is about the faithful witness of Jesus. He perfectly witnessed to us the nature of God. In Jesus, we saw a faithful presentation of the heart of God. (Colossians 1:15)¹⁵ He was the first

Commented [Paul1]: Daniel 12:9 (ESV)

⁹ He said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end."

Commented [Paul2]: Revelation 1:3 (ESV)

³ Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.

Commented [Paul3]: Leviticus 9:23-24 (ESV)

²³ And Moses and Aaron went into the tent of meeting, and when they came out they blessed the people, and the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people.

²⁴ And fire came out from before the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the pieces of fat on the altar, and when all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.

Commented [Paul4]: John 12:20-23 (ESV)

²⁰ Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks.

²¹ So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."

²² Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

²³ And Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified."

Commented [Paul5]: John 2:4 (ESV)

⁴ And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come."

Commented [Paul6]: Colossians 1:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.

Commented [Paul7]: Colossians 1:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

human to be reborn from death. That's right; there are no cases of reincarnation. Every believer will be reborn once. (1Thessalonians 4:16-17) Jesus was first. The book tells us about the resurrection of the saints following Jesus' pattern. (Revelation 20:4-6) And Jesus is ruler of the kings of the earth. I know many don't like this because they don't understand it, but the Bible clearly teaches that ALL powers that are in place are allowed by God for His purposes. (Romans 13:1) He sets up kings and takes them down. (Daniel 2:21) It does not mean they are right or just, but they are appointed by God. Jesus is their ruler even if they don't obey Him.

Next we have a description of the glorified Christ in 1:12-18 (ESV) ¹² *Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. ¹⁴ The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, ¹⁵ his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. ¹⁶ In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength. ¹⁷ When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, ¹⁸ and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.*

Sounds a little bit like what John saw on the Mount of Transfiguration. (Matthew 17:2) What Moses could only see the "back" of (Exodus 33:23), John could look in the face. Why is that? It's because John has been redeemed by Jesus. There is nothing in John that needs to be judged. He has the righteousness of God because of his faith in the sacrifice of Jesus. (2Corinthians 5:21) Even though John is redeemed, he still *fell at His feet as though dead.*

Other than being magnificently glorious, what does the vision tell us? Jesus has *the keys of Death and Hades.* He conquered death for us. He has authority over death and hell. He locks and unlocks them at His will. He uses the keys later in the book. (9:1; 20:1) It's comforting to know that our Savior that gave Himself for us has the keys of death and hell! Amen?

In chapters two and three He has a message for the churches in Asia. He still has a message for the churches in the world. I believe these are recorded because all churches can find a word to them, both encouraging and convicting. I often hear people say, "I don't like the organized church." Well, I'm sorry, but Jesus organized the church with elders, some of whom were called angels. You see, the angel is the messenger.

The Jews of that period called **the speaker who was to expound the text for the day, the *angelos*.** The early church may very well have done the same. So Jesus isn't sending the letters to a supernatural being, but to the preacher of that particular

Commented [Paul8]: 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 (ESV)

¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.

Commented [Paul9]: Revelation 20:4-6 (ESV)

⁴ Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

⁵ The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection.

⁶ Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

Commented [Paul10]: Romans 13:1 (NIV)

¹ Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.

Commented [Paul11]: Daniel 2:21 (ESV)

²¹ He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding;

Commented [Paul12]: Matthew 17:2 (ESV)

² And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light.

Commented [Paul13]: Exodus 33:23 (ESV)

²³ Then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back, but my face shall not be seen.²⁷

Commented [Paul14]: 2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV)

²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Commented [Paul15]: Revelation 9:1 (ESV)

¹ And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star fallen from heaven to earth, and he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit.

Commented [Paul16]: Revelation 20:1 (ESV)

¹ Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain.

Sunday. Jesus delivers the message through the preacher. Preachers aren't always faithful to deliver what Jesus sends us, but that is how He works when we will cooperate.

Each letter begins with a description of Jesus from chapter one and ends with Jesus' promise to those who overcome. The overcomers are the ones who follow Jesus to the end. Later in the book, we'll be shown how to be an overcomer. Jesus grants to them the right to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God, the hidden manna, a new name written on a white stone, authority over the nations, the morning star, white garments, to never blot their name out of the book of life, to confess their name before His Father and His angels, to make them a pillar in the temple of God, to write on them the name of God, the city of God, and His own new name, and to sit with Him on His throne. These are Jesus' incredible promises. Chapters two and three also show Jesus to be the head of the church and finisher of the work He began in us.

In chapter four Jesus told John, *"Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."* What must take place is not only the rest of the book, but the worship of Jesus, for every knee will bow. That is what is right! It is the will of God. It MUST happen.

Then Jesus revealed Himself on the throne, one with God! The things that we see said of God in this chapter are all said of Jesus later in the book. The descriptions in the songs of praise to God in this chapter are later sung to Jesus in subsequent chapters. (5:12-13)

In chapter five, Jesus is the one who is worthy to open the seals of the book. **Jesus is the worthy One, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David!** That means He is the long awaited Messiah who will reign forever. (Isaiah 9:7) We don't need to look for another. Why is He worthy? Verses nine and ten tell us the words of the song of the living creatures and elders. *⁹ And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, ¹⁰ and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth."*

In chapter six, Jesus is the Lamb that opens seals directing the course of human events as the Sovereign Lord!

In chapter seven (verse 10), He is the One to whom salvation belongs. In verse fourteen, it is Jesus' blood that washes the robes of the saints making them white as snow, fulfilling the promise God gave through Isaiah. *Come now, let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow.* (Isaiah 1:18)

Commented [Paul17]: Revelation 5:12-13 (ESV)

¹² saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!"

¹³ And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!"

Commented [Paul18]: Isaiah 9:7 (ESV)

⁷ Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Commented [Paul19]: Revelation 7:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

Commented [Paul20]: Revelation 7:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

In chapters eight and nine, Jesus opens the seventh seal and finally brings justice to the earth. The *"how long until you judge the earth?"* asked by the martyrs is answered. (6:10; John 5:22)

In chapter ten, Jesus is the mystery of God. The mystery of God is Jesus! Every prophet pointed to Him. He is a mystery because they wrote of Jesus in contrasting terms. Who could understand a servant that is King, a man who is God; son of man who is Son of God, a child born who is eternal, a suffering Messiah who conquers all, who delivers us by dying, who is slain but alive forevermore, who is crucified and exalted, on the Throne of heaven but also in our hearts! In chapter ten, the mystery of God is accomplished.

In chapter eleven, Jesus is the spirit of prophecy in the hearts of the two sackcloth prophets. The fifteenth verse tells us of the final accomplishment of the mystery that is Jesus. *"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."* Yes, that is a refrain in Handel's Messiah that we listened to a few weeks ago at the end of the message (Christmas Spirit). What Satan offered Jesus in the wilderness temptation, Jesus will gain in the right way at the right time. (Matthew 4:8-9)

In chapter twelve verse five, Jesus is the Son of man, the Seed of the woman. (Genesis 3:15) He is the one that God promised would crush the head of the Serpent mentioned in verse fifteen. Jesus is the only ascended Master! You hear a lot about ascended masters in this town. Jesus is the real deal!

In verse eleven, Jesus' blood is the source of our victory over Satan! Listen to how we become the overcomer Jesus challenged us to be in the letters to the churches. *¹¹ And they have conquered him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.*

In chapter thirteen, Jesus has a book of life that holds the names of His chosen ones. (13:8) The chapter is all about the anti-Christ. We can even learn about Jesus in the contrast, for Jesus is everything that the anti-Christ is not. The anti-Christ is prideful, limited, hateful, deceiving, forces worship, evil, and unjust. By this we can learn that Jesus is humble, eternal, loving, truth, invites worship, good, and holy.

Chapter fourteen starts right off talking about Jesus. *¹ Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads.* Jesus stands on Mt. Zion! He is the bellwether that leads his sheep, the 144,000. In verse twelve, He is the one in whom we place our faith.

Commented [Paul21]: Revelation 6:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ They cried out with a loud voice, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

Commented [Paul22]: John 5:22 (ESV)

²² The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son,

Commented [Paul23]: Matthew 4:8-9 (ESV)

⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.

⁹ And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."

Commented [Paul24]: Revelation 12:5 (ESV)

⁵ She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne,

Commented [Paul25]: Genesis 3:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

Commented [Paul26]: Revelation 12:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with a flood.

Commented [Paul27]: Revelation 13:7-8 (ESV)

⁷ Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation,

⁸ and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

Commented [Paul28]: Revelation 14:12 (ESV)

¹² Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.

Chapter fifteen has the Jesus' song in verses three and four. Mac has sung it at the beginning of the Journey to Jerusalem production. ³ *And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations! ⁴ Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed."*

Jesus of chapter sixteen is the One who warns us to stay awake, repent, and endure to the end. ¹⁵ *("Behold, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake, keeping his garments on, that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed!")* We put on Jesus to cover the nakedness exposed in the Garden. (Romans 13:14; Genesis 3:7)

Jesus of chapter seventeen is the conqueror, Lord of lords and King of kings, leader of the called and chosen and faithful! ¹⁴ *They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful."*

In chapter eighteen, Jesus is seen in those who come out from the spirit of the world, the prophets and saints of verse four. They are the body of Christ. Again we see Jesus in the contrast with the world. The world offers only that which is temporal, all of which are listed in this chapter, while Jesus offers what is eternal. (John 4:14)

In chapter nineteen, Jesus is the Bridegroom! ⁷ *Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready.* In verse ten, Jesus' testimony is the spirit of prophecy. Believers hold to the testimony of Jesus. It is the reason they are killed. The testimony of Jesus is the Gospel. That is the spirit of prophecy, to speak forth the mind and counsel of God.

In chapter twenty, Jesus is King of saints, High priest of all priests (Hebrews 4:14), firstborn from among the dead. ⁶ *Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.* In verses eleven and twelve Jesus is the Great Judge of the White Throne of Judgment.

In chapter twenty one, Jesus is the gift of God, which is the water of life (vs 6). We also see Him is our brother (vs 7)! He is the Temple of the heavenly city that we talked about last week. He is the Lamp from which shines the glory of God throughout eternity (verses 22-23).

In the final chapter, Jesus is the one we worship forever. ³ *No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him.* He is the One whose soon coming we await (vs 7). He is the One who

Commented [Paul29]: Romans 13:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Commented [Paul30]: Genesis 3:7 (ESV)

⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

Commented [Paul31]: Revelation 18:4-5 (ESV)

⁴ Then I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues;
⁵ for her sins are heaped high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.

Commented [Paul32]: John 4:13-14 (ESV)

¹³ Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,
¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

Commented [Paul33]: Revelation 19:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God." For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

Commented [Paul34]: Hebrews 4:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

Commented [Paul35]: Revelation 20:11-12 (ESV)

¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them.
¹² And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done.

Commented [Paul36]: Revelation 21:6 (ESV)

⁶ And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.

Commented [Paul37]: Revelation 21:7 (ESV)

⁷ The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

Commented [Paul38]: Revelation 21:22-23 (ESV)

²² And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.
²³ And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.

Commented [Paul39]: Revelation 22:7 (ESV)

⁷ "And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

will settle the books. He is the first and the last. ¹² *"Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay everyone for what he has done."*¹³ *I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."*

Justice will be served. The books will balance. The One who started all things will end all things in perfection for He is perfect, holy, and just. This is the revelation of Jesus. Did you think it was all about the end of the world? Well, it is that, but it all revolves around the worthy One who has healed the breach in the Garden of Eden and prepared a bride from the redeemed race of man. The book started with Jesus in the first verse and ends with Him in the last. His blood still clothes people in white today. This is the end of the story and the beginning of eternity. *Amen, come Lord Jesus!*

Questions

- 1 What is the promise for the readers of Revelation?
- 2 Review the description of Jesus in Revelation 1:12-17.
- 3 Who wrote the letters of chapter 2 and 3, and to whom were they sent?
- 4 Review the promises from Jesus to the overcomers.
- 5 How is Jesus described in chapters 5 through 12?
- 6 What is the mystery of Jesus in chapter 10?
- 7 How does the antichrist show us the nature of Jesus?
- 8 What's the description of Jesus in chapters 14 - 17?
- 9 How can we see Jesus by contrast in 18?
- 10 What is the revelation of Jesus in chapters 19 - 22