

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

- I. The book of Revelation is one of the most fascinating books of the Bible. It is also one of the least understood books. The 1st few verses offer the primary keys to unlock its mysteries: its source, its message, its style, its writer, & its recipients. [Hymns for Worship].

READ 1:1-5

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- II. Chapters 2 & 3 are made up of letters focusing on the conditions & needs of 7 congregations in Asia Minor in the last half of the first century A.D. Within these 7 churches is represented every spiritual condition God's people can get themselves into. Most of the letters contain a combination of rebuke & commendation. One congregation had nothing good said about it; 2 had nothing negative said about them.

433

- III. In chapters 4 & 5 John's vision takes him to the throne room of God. READ 4:8-11

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READ 5:1-14

34

- III. From chapter 6 thru the first verse of chapter 8, John watches as 7 seals are opened. The church in purity goes forth to conquer the world for Jesus closely pursued by physical persecution, financial persecution & threatened extinction. But we are assured that God is still reigning & will bring the persecutors to justice. Before the last seal is opened & God's enemies are judged, the servants of God are sealed for their protection.

READ 7:9-14

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- V. The 7 seals are followed by 7 trumpets, announcing various judgments on the persecuting powers. Some of the judgments are reminiscent of the plagues that befell ancient Egypt in the time of Moses. One by one, God uses the judgments as He seeks to lead His enemies to repent. Finally, His patience is exhausted, delay or time to repent will be no more & the 7th & final trumpet will sound.

READ 10:5-7

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- VI. Chapters 11-13 mention a time in which the church was to be severely persecuted & driven into the wilderness for 42 months or 3 & 1/2 years. No rain would fall & God's witnesses would be clothed in sackcloth and ashes--but God would nourish His church and once again bring her forth victorious. This seems to correspond with the persecution suffered by Elijah in the O.T. and probably tells us more about the **nature** of the persecution than about its **duration**.

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- VII. In chapters 12-13, the leading enemies of the cause of Christ are depicted. The devil is symbolized as a great red dragon or serpent. Imperial Rome is the first beast of Rev. 13. The 2nd beast of chapter 13 represents false religion, and is afterward referred to as "the false prophet" (see 20:10). In spite of these powerful enemies, Christians could, by faithfulness, live and die in the Lord, with the assurance that their faithful works will not go unnoticed.

READ 14:12-13

395

- VIII. Chapters 15-16 picture 7 vials or bowls of God's wrath poured out upon the enemies of the church. These correspond almost exactly with the 7 trumpets, except the bowls of wrath are more severe. READ 15:1-3

254

- IX. Chapters 17-18 picture the fall of the persecuting powers by identifying their fall with that of ancient Babylon in the days of the prophet Daniel.

READ 19:1-6 2

- X. The power of the gospel, believed and obeyed, effects a spiritual resurrection from death to life and keeps the devil at bay. The same gospel will be the standard of judgment as we all stand before the great white throne of God.

READ 20:11-15 283

- XI. Chapters 21-22 use such symbols as gold and precious stones, luscious fruits and sparkling waters to suggest the value and pleasure and desirability of the final abode God has prepared for those who love Him and come to Him for forgiveness of sin.

READ 21:1-4 214

- XII. As the end of the book of Revelation approaches, John gives a solemn warning against tampering with the inspired message from God.

READ 22:18-19 416

- XIII. Also, just before the book is closed, Jesus gives one last invitation to the readers to come and embrace the blessings God has provided for all who are willing to come.

READ 22:17 287

Cedar Park, TX, June 25, 1989 (meeting)
Shiloh, Mexia, TX, January 10, 1993
Shiloh, Mexia, TX, August 27, 1995
Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, April 28, 2002