

# THE REVELATION

## *Encouragement & Hope for the Journey*

### *The Blessing of Revelation*

Revelation 1: 1-3

*This is the revelation that God gave to Jesus Christ. Jesus shows those who serve God what will happen soon. God made it known by sending his angel to his servant John. John gives witness to everything he saw. The things he gives witness to are God's word and what Jesus Christ has said. Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy. Blessed are those who hear it and think everything it says is important. The time when these things will come true is near. (NIRV)*

Today we begin a study of the Revelation to John, the final book in the canon of the New Testament. There is a special blessing for all who read, hear, study, and give heed to the words of this book. As we study the Revelation we will place emphasis on its application to living the Christ-life today, and we will look ahead to what Jesus reveals to us as the promised future and triumph of His Church. It is a wonderful book filled with spiritual treasure and a study journey well worth taking.

#### **I. The Source and Means of the Revelation**

- A. We are given fascinating insight into what theologians call the *Economy of the Holy Trinity*, or, in other words, how the Persons of the Godhead function with respect to One Another and to us.
- B. It is the Father Who gives the revelation to Jesus Christ Who, in turn, mediates it to John and to us through the Holy Spirit.
- C. This is always the principle divine order: we relate to the Father through the Son by the Holy Spirit; the Father relates to us through the Son by the Holy Spirit. Our relationship is always with the triune God.

#### **II. Interpreting Revelation**

- A. The view of immediate symbolic application to the First Century (*preterist*)
- B. The view that it is a foreshadowing of the Church through the ages until the return of Jesus Christ (*historicist* or *historical*)
- C. The view that the symbols and spiritual warfare are timeless truths of Christian conflict with the enemy at whatever time or place (*idealist*)
- D. The view that Revelation refers literally to a future time at the end of the age and prophecies the final conflict of the Church and the literal triumphant return of Jesus Christ (*futurist*)
- E. The idea that two or more of these views apply simultaneously (*eclecticist* or *eclectic*)

#### **III. The Introduction to the Revelation from the Text (vv.1-3)**

- A. The things which must soon take place—how soon is soon??
- B. The promised blessing to those who read and heed
  - 1. at the beginning (1:3)
  - 2. at the end (22:7)

#### **IV. The Expositional Plan**

- A. Chapter 1: three messages, including this one, and the vision of Jesus
- B. Chapters 2-3: the letters to the seven churches of Asia
- C. Short break
- D. Chapters 4-16: the second vision; seals, trumpets, vials
- E. Chapters 17-21: the mystery of Babylon and the final triumph of Jesus Christ
- F. Chapters 21:9-22:5: the heavenly Jerusalem
- G. Chapter 22:6-21: The epilogue

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think there is a special blessing for those who read, hear, and heed the words of the Revelation?
2. Who does John say is the source of this revelation?
3. Where are the seven churches of Asia?
4. Are the seven churches named the only churches in this region?
5. Where is John when he receives the revelation?
6. Name the four views of interpreting Revelation. What is the fifth view?
7. What is your personal take away from this message? How has God spoken to you?
8. How do you think a person can heed the message of this book?

### NOTES

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John, who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.

#### Revelation 1: 1-3 NASB

I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.

#### Revelation 22: 18-19 NASB

But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

#### 2 Peter 3: 8-13 NASB

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