

405 The Revelation of Jesus Christ

I got saved reading the Book of Revelation on August 26th, 1979. At that time I took it absolutely literally and figuratively at the same time. I saw it as an unfolding of end times on how this world would end. Years later I discovered that it is MORE than that. I am not in any way saying that it cannot be taken as a prophecy of how this world will end, I am just saying that it is much, much more. It has tremendous personal application in our lives today, even if we do not live to see the actual Second Coming of Jesus to this world, and/or the rapture. It is current for my life and your life today. It was current for the lives of saints who lived 100 years ago, and if the Lord delays, it will be current for the people who (may) live 100 years from now.

It is a timeless book. I do not believe it was written in order to draw a time line showing exactly how this world will end from month to month and year to year (although I am not discounting that application). I believe it is a multi faceted jewel that can and should be viewed from many angles. I believe it is world history, church history, and your own personal history.

John had an “Eastern oriental” mindset, and so did the churches to which he wrote. They were not as much into timelines like the American/European mind, but more into timeless swirling ¹pictures that spoke ideas to them. Notice in the Amplified Bible in Revelation chapter 1:1 the words “to disclose and make known to His bond servants certain things which must shortly and speedily come to pass in their entirety.” Verse 3 says, “for the time for them to be fulfilled is near.”

One must read the book of Revelation without a mindset of time; chapters do not necessarily follow in the order of events. It is an eternal group of events. Mountains = kingdoms or obstacles, numbers = ideas, concepts. The only way John could describe what he saw in the invisible realm, was to relate it to what he knew; that is why Jesus showed it to him this way.

Let us take a look at how Revelation can apply to your everyday life

1. The first great theme of this Book is, seeing Jesus as He is right now. Notice in verse 1 it says, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ.” I believe that God gave us this view of Jesus because we cannot see Him as He really is in any other way. Many walked with Him, many saw Him die, some saw Him resurrected, but no one has really seen Him as He is right now. He is a warrior, a judge, the Lamb, Almighty God, He is on the Throne, no being can stand up to Him, He is the Victor, a “terrifying sight” to His enemies and He is active on your behalf. John needed to know all this.

I believe Jesus showed this vision to John to comfort him by bringing him faith and hope, and to make sense of crazy circumstances for him. It was also to do the same for the churches to which he wrote this letter almost 2,000 years ago, and to do the same for you and me in our lives today when we see all the crazy things going on around us. It is a handbook for obtaining victory in our lives. It is not less than end time prophecy (it could be that), but it is much MORE.

John’s condition: The world for John was going crazy. Just imagine, he had been living with Jesus for at least 3 years, he saw Him perform mighty miracles, he saw Him get crucified, He saw Him resurrected. After the resurrection John must have thought, “Now there is victory.” He saw the Holy Spirit fall on mankind and the church get started. He established churches, he saw people getting saved. All a sudden the original disciples were gone. Some were crucified, Peter upside down, some were beheaded, others done away with by other means. He also saw the world

¹ This concept is adapted from Dr. Mark Rutland’s tape series on Revelation.
ISOB Discipleship Training Manual. Stand (The Revelation) page 1 vs. 1.5

going into a wild spin. He saw the rise of barbaric forest tribes with horns on their helmets coming out of what we today know as Germany.

John himself was almost killed by being boiled in oil, but they could not kill him. Now at this time he was taken a prisoner and banished forever to the Isle of Patmos. Patmos is a rugged island in the Aegean Sea and its name means "my killing."

His daily chore included working a rock quarry and hauling rock up and down hills on his back. He must have thought, "Has the world gone crazy? Did I really know Jesus? Was He really God in the flesh like I wrote about in my Gospel book? Is the church a doomed thing? Is my life wasted?" Then all of a sudden BAM! Something appeared to him that he had never seen before.

Read Revelation 1:1-20. John got a peek into Heaven to see what Jesus is like now! Verse 1 says that this is for the unveiling of divine mysteries. To let His church know some things that had not been known before.

2. The second great theme of this book is Jesus looking for overcomers who will go through trials and end up serving Him.

"Get my church ready John, things are going to get worse. If they don't clean up their act, the horrible things that this world will throw at them will destroy them along with the unbelievers, and some won't make it to heaven!"

Then John saw Jesus walking in the midst of the seven churches, which represent every condition that could be present in a church and believers. Jesus was judging them. Not to condemn them; He wanted them to be in shape for the ensuing battle. It would be like a general reviewing his troops and saying, "Get those guns in order, shine those boots, etc."

I admit to not understanding all of the beautiful pictures and language portraits in Revelation. In an effort to summarize some practical points gleaned from Jesus' message to each of the seven churches Revelation, I offer the following practical, yet probably incomplete summary. I believe that including here are areas that each one of us may apply to our own lives. Remember Jesus was not condemning these believers and churches, He wanted them to overcome. He knew that Satan would prevent their overcoming unless they repented.

The Church of Ephesus (Revelation 2:1). They were hard working for the Gospel, undergoing trouble and were patient. They would not endure wicked people. Their heart was in the right place for God and His work. But they left their first love. Jesus said, "You deserted ME! Get back into real time, vital living contact with Me, or you will not survive and overcome what is about to happen to you." We need to be in "real time" contact with God through the Holy Spirit and the Word. The analogy is, we can write letters to one another, we can send email to one another, we can even "chat" with one another on the internet, but unless we get face to face, our relationship will be limited. We need face to face contact with God.

The Church of Smyrna (Revelation 2:8). This was, and represents the persecuted church. Jesus knew of their great distress, affliction, and poverty, but He told them to hang on and be faithful, even if to death. Jesus had nothing against this church. I submit that this includes people who are destined to be physical martyrs. Their reward is the Crown of Life. Crown stands for authority, and life represents the spiritual life given by God. Historically, the death of martyrs has brought about a great harvest of souls. The First Century Christians knew that for each martyr approximately 300 souls would be saved. In the year 2000, there was a tragic incident in an American High School in Colorado, where two demonized boys killed thirteen people. Some of the

ones who died did so as true martyrs. Since that time there have been thousands of souls come into the Kingdom of God through this event.

The Church of Pergamos (Revelation 2:12). These people lived among an evil people who had the spirit of anti-Christ, yet they did not deny Jesus. But Jesus saw that some of them had a money problem, serving two gods at the same time and they welcomed some false teaching about needing a mediator between themselves and God (Nicolaitans). Some believers and some entire denominations feel that there needs to be a human priest to mediate between God and man. “For *there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus*” (1 Timothy 2:5).

They also were prone to sexual vice. Perhaps they had a love of the “world” and its “gods.” Revelation 2:14 states that these people hold the doctrine of Balaam who taught Balak, the King of Moab to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel. Balaam was hired by Balak to curse the Israelites prior to waging war with them. Balaam, a prophet, tried to curse Israel, but he could only bless. Later, as recorded in Numbers 31, in a war with the Midianites, the Israelites, at the prompting of Balaam, mingled with the Midianite women. This sin caused Israel to fail, and a plague came upon the entire congregation of the Lord.

“And Moses said to them, “Have you kept all the women alive? Look, these *women* caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the LORD in the incident of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD” (Numbers 31:15,16).

Satan knows that sin and disobedience is the quickest way to overcome God’s people. The curse could not be effective because God had blessed them, but their own choice to sin defeated them.

Jesus said that if they did not turn from this that He would fight against them. He also promised them a major blessing of close fellowship with Him, if they overcame these problems.

The Church of Thyatira (Revelation 2:18). Jesus recognized their love and service, but He saw the spirit of Jezebel, which is being out of line when it comes to authority. This often leads to sexual immorality and being led astray in many other ways. Jesus promised authority to those who overcame. There are many manifestations of the spirit of Jezebel, some within the church and some outside the church. It is not primarily a sexual demon, although it uses sex as one of its tools to control. It counterfeits the Holy Spirit and often acts as a false prophet. Often, when found in the church, Jezebel’s goals are to destroy the congregation. Often she is successful. Pastors must remain vigilant to people who disguise themselves as super spiritual. Pastors, and all men, must remain in proper relationship with their God given spouse; otherwise they are prime targets. Young men who do not submit to the authority of Jesus, are very often trapped by a woman with a Jezebel spirit. Young women who find themselves without an authority figure are often trapped by a male with a Jezebel or an Ahab (Jezebel’s husband) spirit. This is why the church is commissioned to minister to widows and orphans. They make up a large groups of those who are not under a male authority (divorced women as well).

The Church of Sardis (Revelation 3:1). Jesus called them dead! He said that they thought that they were alive. That is a very dangerous position to be in, dead, but convinced they are alive! This could describe many main line denominations that go through the motions without real life. He stated that their garments were dirty but that there were a few who had on white, representing His righteousness. The remedy prescribed for them, and for those who are tending to be like them, is to back up and remember the lessons they have heard in the past, and to be a doer of the Word this time. In other words, be obedient to the Word of God. He said that if they repented and turned that He would not blot their names out of the Book of Life. If is a fearful thought that some people may have been scheduled for salvation but had their name blotted out!

The Church of Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7). This was the church that was doing its best to live and minister properly, but they were constantly under attack from the enemy. He found nothing against them, but warned them to hang on to the end, or they would lose. I believe that these are the people who are positioned to turn their troubles and curses into triumph and blessings! I

believe that these are the people who are in the “Cosmic Courtroom,” and if they hang on long enough, they will win. Revelation 3:10 indicates that God will keep them safe during the “trial.” These are the people who will have spiritual authority and will be able to help others overcome.

The Church of Laodicea (Revelation 3:14). This was the lukewarm church, they were neither hot nor cold. They said they were rich, but Jesus called them poor. I believe there is an indication that they were very religious and self righteous. They were blinded to their condition. Jesus warned them to be overcomers, not losers. The reason I feel that “lukewarm” indicates self righteous, is because He told them, “Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’ --and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked” (Revelation 3:17). That is spiritual pride. In verse 18 He tells them that they cannot even see their condition. I believe that all of us can take a warning from this admonition. Let us not forget how grace reached down and saved us. Let us not judge others too quickly. The only remedial way of dealing with a brother or sister who is not acting right is to bring them into the presence of God. It is not to hit them over the head with the Bible! I am not saying that there won’t be times of firm dealings with some people, but for the most part love and grace are the needed ingredients. Criticism and gossip will not help people. Criticism and gossip is what comes out of the mouth of the self righteous, and those are the people who Jesus will “spue out of His mouth.”

The wonderful promise for repentance from a self righteous attitude, is intimacy with Him. “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me” (Revelation 3:20). There is no intimacy with God for the self righteous, critical and legalist.

I have known “cold” believers who have been precious. Remember cold tastes good to Jesus. I believe that there are many believers who do not know very much about the Bible, but they have a great love for Jesus. They walk and live in love, but may not be very evangelistic.

3. The third great theme of this book is how we overcome bad things in our life via the supernatural war and struggle that is going on in the heavenlies. The war trumpet is a symbol of this conflict as is the unfolding of the SCROLL. I believe that the seals, trumpets, woes, and vial or bowls of wrath all are different ways of looking at the very bad things that are happening and will be happening in human history and perhaps in our individual histories.

Revelation Chapter 4 begins with a door that opens and allows us to see into the invisible supernatural realm. Read 4:1-4

Revelation Chapters 5-11 reveals the unrolling of this thing called the scroll - **OVERCOMING OUR CURSE!** It is sealed with 7 seals, and nobody is worthy to unroll it. Then, all of a sudden, Jesus is seen as the Lion of Judah, the root of David, and the Lamb. This gives Him the right to open it. The scroll could and probably does stand for several things including the unfolding of human history, the title deed to the earth, the unfolding of our individual lives, and the putting away of the Adamic generation, globally, and personally.

Zechariah 5:14 describes this **scroll** as the **curse**. Most of our life is involved in overcoming curses of our old “generation”. Apparently the purposes for all of human history and our history could not be accomplished until this scroll was unrolled, **and in its unrolling, there were great catastrophes and events of destruction revealed with each seal.**

In 70 AD when the Roman general Titus destroyed the Temple in Jerusalem, he also destroyed all the clay pots that recorded on scrolls the old generations of the past. This included the generations that brought down our family curses. When the enemy does his best to destroy us, the Temple of God, all he can do is wipe out our curses, if we cooperate with God. The reason that the Mormon church goes to such great lengths to perpetuate generational documentation is to perpetuate the curse.

In Chapter 11 it shows that the entire CURSE was absorbed at the CROSS and the VEIL of the TEMPLE was thrown open. Jesus did it all Praise God! He is the Worthy Lamb.

I believe that the judgments, which come on earth and individuals during their lives, are the consequences that Jesus was concerned about when He was trying to get His people to repent in the first few chapters. He knew that without being right with Him, they could not make it through the judgements and overcome. Actually, Jesus as the Lamb of God bore all these tragedies on the Cross, but so many people just do not accept it. The plagues are the wrath of God on earth, but we need to know that the entire wrath of God was put on Jesus at the Cross.

I believe that the plagues are, at least in shadow and type, related to the 10 plagues that God put on Egypt when the Israelites departed with Moses.

I believe that going through bad things with the overcoming power of Jesus is part of the unrolling of our SCROLL (overcoming curses) in our individual lives. We change, we get a bigger view of God, He becomes more real to our spirit and mind, we become more like Jesus, our pride goes away, our harshness is smoothed out and best of all we take down some demons for God's Kingdom!

Chapter 7 reveals that Jesus puts a supernatural seal around those who are His, those who have decided to go all the way and become overcomers. (Read 7:3.) These horrible judgments will have no harm over His; much like the plagues in Egypt destroyed the Egyptians, but did not hurt the Israelites in Goshen, a suburb in Egypt. Jesus never said that He would keep His people out of the tribulation, but He said that IN it, they would become overcomers. The word *seal* indicates that the character of Jesus has been imprinted onto your life, much like the mark of the Beast means Satan's character is imprinted on one's life.

The idea of a rapture out of a life of complete ease with your pockets full of money, escaping the wrath coming on this earth or even in your life, is not Scriptural. God's people have always gone through tribulation, but they have always been overcomers and have always taken the spoil of the enemy! Sure, some people are called to go through more than others do, but we should be willing to go all the way no matter what that means in our lives; we should trust Him totally!

There may be a final "great tribulation" on this earth someday. Even scientists see this now. But to the one whose child is being raped by a Communist officer in front of their eyes, that has to be a great tribulation. To the one whose family is being put in front of a firing squad asking for the denial of Christ, that is their great tribulation. How about the one who gets the doctor's report, "cancer"? Things could not get much worse for them. They need to know how to overcome even if Jesus does not step back onto this earth right this minute to help them.

4. The fourth great theme is that God really is on the Throne. He is in charge, but He wants to see you through your problems to victory in order to overcome them rather than to take you totally away from them into some comfort zone.

Jesus bore all the evil at the Cross. Nothing that comes on you now, no matter how bad it seems, can really hurt you; it can only be used for the destruction of Satan's kingdom.

Revelation Chapter 8:1-5 Shows how powerful the prayers of believers are, especially when mixed with praise. It does real damage to the enemy!

Read Chapters 9 and 10. In 9:1-4, God's overcomers, the ones that are standing fast and have cleaned up their lives, hear the supernatural command from the Throne of God that whatever happens from these 7 seals and 7 trumpets, all these catastrophes, shall not be allowed to hurt them. Wow! Think about this! This truth will overload your mind if you meditate on it for long! This is why I keep urging people to get their lives lined up with God! Revelation 10:10 shows the small scroll, which I believe, is "our share of His sufferings" that we experience when we are overcoming these curses in our lives. I could be wrong on this, and am only submitting this as a possibility.

In Chapter 11, the Cross gives Jesus all authority. Read Revelation 11:15-19. The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever" (Revelation 11:15). I believe that this event compares the Passover in Egypt with Moses to the **Cross of Jesus Christ**. Jesus finally took the **scroll or our curse on Himself!** The entire wrath of God was put on the Lamb.

At the Cross, the Temple veil was torn and the Ark was exposed for the first time (Rev.11: 19). Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. "And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and a great hailstorm" (Rev. 11:19). For the people who have accepted the fullness of the Cross, all of the horrible things that happened in their lives and on earth worked to their benefit, but to those who are not sealed, they are destroyed.

5. The fifth great theme found in Chapter 12 shows more of God's warfare in heavenlies with angels and demons coming against God's purposes. Believers need to cooperate in this warfare by knowing the value of Jesus' blood, confessing the Word of God as the offensive weapon and not loving their own lives, even to death if needed. The confessed Word of God is more powerful than most people realize! **Revelation 12:11** says, "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death." The word *lives*, refers to the soul life, not the physical life. I think it can also apply to the physical life in the case of a martyr, but for most of us it means allowing God to change us to conform to His image.

Read Chapter 13 and focus on verse 1,7,8,11,15, and 16. The sea, or the world, tries to come up with its own solution to the wrath of God. It brings forth its Hitler's, Stalin's, etc. to bring peace. Part of its solution will be to have people follow them in worship, and to take the "mark of their character" into their lives. I believe that 666 stands for the deifying of man, making mankind into a god. 6 means man, 3 means trinity of God.

In Chapters 14 -19, John saw the Lamb. After seeing all this mess, he looked up and saw Jesus. Then, there are a series of defeats put on the enemy. The enemy is not only defeated, but is totally defeated. Actually this victory took place at the Cross and the resurrection, but we must go through warfare to keep Satan from stealing this victory from us. This has application to our lives. Once we go through the worst Satan can throw at us, that is it, it is over. That particular demon or curse can no longer hurt us. "Babylon is fallen," said the angel in verse 18:2. "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!" (Rev.19:6). Verse 19:7 says that "the marriage of the Lamb has come and His wife has made herself ready, " This shows how intense Jesus is about us and His love for us. Jesus comes on His white horse just in time to bring deliverance to those who are watching for Him. This corresponds with the "day of visitation" spoken of in Daniel and in Luke 19, when Jesus comes with deliverance for those who are watching, but for those who are not, with destruction. The above is a time line that we can apply to how God works in our lives.

6 The sixth great theme is the process of hanging on until Jesus comes to you for your deliverance after all the hardships and battles. The victory was won for us before we were born, but will we hang on and believe when things look bad? **Our curse is put on Jesus, but will we experience the victory?**

In Chapter 21 Heaven is revealed; God with us. Jesus states that He is Alpha and Omega, the first and the last. Jesus was there before your troubles, He is there in them, and He has the last word about them!

7. The seventh great theme is that true ministry for the Kingdom of God is granted to those who have been overcomers in the battles of life. Somehow certain demons are being put into the Lake of Fire, along with certain “False Prophets and Beasts”, as we overcome (maybe not the final ones). Now the anointing of God takes hold of us and makes us ministers of love and reconciliation to the dead and dying sea of humanity. It’s called “the healing of the nations” or gentiles.

Chapter 22 is about ministry. We have new authority and we minister the love and victory of God to all *nations* or *gentiles*, or to put it another way, those who do not have a covenant with God. There will not be any godless people in Heaven, so this must relate to our authority to minister to the lost people now. After we have won through the power of God, we are qualified to help others; we have authority over demons that hold them captive. This idea is evidenced in Isaiah 61. The first part of the chapter deals with getting us free, and the later part deals with us being ministers to help others get free.

**Don’t be shaken when you see all Hell breaking loose around you; I am in charge.
Trust Me, I love you,**

Signed

Jesus