

03. The Book of Revelation—1:6-9

(5/27/20)

Good evening and welcome to our livestream Bible study in the Book of Revelation.

The **outline** of the Book of Revelation is given to us by the Lord Jesus Himself in chapter 1:19 where He commanded John to— **“Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.”**

And so, the outline of the book is simply 3 main divisions:

I. Write the things which you have seen (the vision of Jesus in chap.1)

II. Write the things which are (the things of the Church in ch.2 & 3)

III. Write the things which will take place after this (‘meta tauta’—“after these things”)

Revelation 1:1-3 (NKJV)

¹ The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants--things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified *it* by His angel to His servant John, ² who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. ³ Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.

As I said the first two weeks of our study—I hold to the Futurist View with regard to the Book of Revelation.

The Futurist View maintains that the book is a *prophetic* revelation (1:3) that has yet to be fulfilled—although it looks as though things are getting close!

But even though Revelation looks *ahead* and reveals the future—it also looks *back* and brings together all the ‘prophetic threads’ running through primarily the Old Testament.

Revelation contains 404 verses and 278 of them allude back to the Old Testament containing 550 references—especially to the symbols used that describe future, end times events.

This, I believe, is part of the blessing God promised in verse 3 upon those who read and study this book—it will take you on a journey thru practically every book in the Old Testament and act as a key unlocking the symbolisms in those books.

But not only that, the Book of Revelation takes the prophecies in the Old Testament that deal with eschatology (the study of last things or the end times) that are scattered throughout the Old Testament—and brings them together in chronological order.

I have studied passages in the Old Testament books of the prophets, where something is prophesied to take place in the future and then a few verses later another prophecy is given of some future event—which makes it seem that the second prophecy will come *after* the first one mentioned.

And yet I know from the Book of Revelation that the second prophecy actually comes *before* the first one given.

Part of the blessing of the Book of Revelation is that it takes these end times prophecies that are sprinkled throughout the Old Testament in no particular order—and brings them together chronologically allowing us to see how they’re going to unfold and come to pass—in linear time.

In fact, something that I didn’t bring up in the Revelation study I did 13 years ago is the use of the Greek word ‘kai’ in the book.

Every book in the Bible contains some keywords that occur frequently and reveal the emphasis in the book—one of those in Revelation is the word “*and*” (kai).

One author said—

“This may seem like a strange word to include in a list of keywords in the book because it’s so common—but it occurs 1200 times in Revelation. Nearly every verse in Revelation begins with the word “kai” in the original Greek text of the New Testament. It is sometimes translated as “but”, “even”, “both”, “also”, “then”, “yet”, or “indeed”—yet it is most often translated simply as “and”. The rapid-fire repetition of this word rushes the book along at a breathtaking rate. As you go through Revelation, you read “and, and, and, and...” Using “and” in this way is a powerful literary technique—as one author said:

‘One cannot read this book and mentally standstill. The reader will sense, consciously or unconsciously, that he or she is moving through a series of events that appear like instantaneous flashes on a video screen. These glimpses of the future are intended to keep us moving toward the final consummation of human history. The closing chapters actually fast-forward us into eternity itself!’”

Not only does the use of the Greek word ‘kai’ serve to move the book along in rapid fire succession—it also serves to tell us that John is seeing these events (yes unfolding rapidly)—but also *chronologically* (“and then”, “and then”, “and then”...)

Revelation 1:4-6 (NKJV)

⁴ John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, ⁵ and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, ⁶ and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

In the Millennium, the redeemed of the Lord will reign on the earth as kings and priests—

Revelation 5:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth."

Under the Old Testament economy, it was unlawful for anyone to occupy the offices of king and priest simultaneously—a man was either one or the other (or neither)—but he couldn’t be both.

We read in 2Chronicles 26:16-23 that King Uzziah tried to combine the two offices when he went into the Temple to burn incense to God on the altar of incense—and God struck him with leprosy.

But under the New Covenant, we can be like Jesus, in the sense that He is both King and High Priest (Luke 1:31–33; Hebrews 4:14).

In the Millennial Kingdom, believers (who are living now) will be *kings* and rule over cities and regions (Luke 19:17).

But also we will be *priests* who will serve the King of kings and High Priest of our faith, Jesus Christ, by being spiritual leaders who will pray for people (intercessors) and lead them to faith in Christ (people born during the Millennial Kingdom who will be unsaved and need to make a commitment to Jesus).

It is also possible that one of our responsibilities as priests during the Millennial Kingdom will be to offer animal sacrifice in the Millennial Temple (Ezekiel chapters 40-48—Explain).

Revelation 1:7 (NKJV)

⁷ Behold, He is coming with clouds...

Daniel 7:13 (NKJV)

¹³ "I was watching in the night visions, And behold, *One* like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him.

Who or what are these clouds?—I believe it is referring to the Church, the Bride of Christ, and to God's holy *angels* who will be returning to the earth with Jesus to establish His Kingdom.

Matthew 25:31 (NKJV)

³¹ "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.

Jude 1:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints,

1 Thessalonians 3:13 (NKJV)

¹³ so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints [Christian believers in Christ].

Hebrews 12:1 (NKJV)

¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses [Church saints in heaven], let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

Revelation 19:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.

The army of God's saints and angels coming with Jesus in the sky riding white horses and wearing white robes—from a distance will look like beautiful clouds!

Revelation 1:7 (NKJV)

⁷ Behold, He is coming with clouds, **and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.**

Of course, this coming of the Lord Jesus won't be the *rapture* (1Thess. 4:13–18; 1 Cor. 15:51) where He comes in the air to snatch away or *evacuate* His Church off the earth in preparation for God's judgment to be poured out (Rev.6-19).

When He comes for His Church at the rapture, God's Word tells us He will "*come as a thief*" (Rev. 3:3; 16:15)—and only those who are born again will see Him. (1 John 3:1–3)

The event described in Revelation 1:7 is the Second Coming of Jesus and will be witnessed by the whole world, and especially by a repentant nation of Israel—

Zechariah 12:10-12 (NKJV)

¹⁰ "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for *his* only *son*, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

When we studied 2Peter, we noted how that Peter warned that there would be scoffers in the Last Days saying, "*Where is the promise of His coming...*" (2Peter 3:4)

In other words, "*You Christians have been talking about Jesus return for 2000 years—when will you admit you were wrong and He's not coming back!*"

Peter supplies the answer to Christians who let scoffers sow doubts in their hearts as to why, even though God has promised—why Jesus hasn't yet returned since it has been 2000-years now?

2 Peter 3:8-9 (NKJV)

⁸ But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

One pastor had this response to scoffers and deniers of Christ's return—

“Despite the scoffers who deny the Second Coming (2 Pet. 3:3–4), the Bible repeatedly affirms that Jesus will return. That truth appears in more than five hundred verses throughout the Bible. It has been estimated that one out of every twenty-five verses in the New Testament refers to the Second Coming. Jesus repeatedly spoke of His return (e.g., Matt. 16:27; 24–25; 26:64; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26) and warned believers to be ready for it (e.g., Matt. 24:42, 44; 25:13; Luke 12:40; 21:34–36). The return of the Lord Jesus Christ to this earth is thus a central theme in Scripture.”

However, Revelation 1:7 does say something puzzling—that when Jesus returns to the earth at His Second Coming that—“**every eye will see Him**”.

How can that be since, when He comes, it will be day on one side of the earth and night on the other?

Many people will be on the opposite side of the earth when Jesus returns—so how can everyone see Him at the same time?

Some respond by saying—“*It's going to be on T.V. like a major sporting event that everyone on the planet can tune into and watch at the same time.*”

Critics of this idea respond by saying, “*Well, how will they know when Jesus is coming back to be there with their camera's and video equipment ready to televise Jesus return?*”

Actually, that won't be a problem since we know from Revelation 11:3 and 13:5 that from the time the Antichrist sets up his image in the Holy of the Holies in the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem till Jesus returns will be 1260 days or 42 months (of 30 days each).

The Antichrist will have read those Scriptures and he and his armies will gather in the Valley of Megiddo and be waiting for Jesus on the day to do battle with Him in an effort to keep Him from setting up His Kingdom—but also will ABC, CNN, ESPN and other news outlets be there filming this event (and no doubt rooting for the Antichrist to win!).

Others believe (since not everyone on the planet owns a TV set to watch Jesus' return and John clearly said 'every eye will see Him') that when Jesus returns—God will work a miracle so that every person no matter where they are on the earth at that moment will be able to supernaturally see Him.

Still others suggest that the Second Coming will be a *gradual* event lasting an entire day or longer!

If this is true it would allow every eye on earth to see Him.

One author said—

"The second coming could last for 24 hours or even longer as His victory train marches slowly and majestically from Heaven to Earth. This could be hinted at in Matthew 24:30 which says, 'Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory'. The "sign of the Son of Man" is probably the coming of Christ as it first appears and people on earth begin to get their first glimpse of his approach and glory. While we can't be certain about the exact details of how Christ's return will happen, we can be sure it will happen, and that when it does, every eye will see Him."

Revelation 1:8 (NKJV)

⁸ "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

'*Alpha*' and '*Omega*' are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet—which some commentators interpret to mean that, as God—Jesus is able to begin anything He desires and will finish everything He starts.

Others believe that this is a reference to the fact that Jesus never starts anything He doesn't plan to finish—including and especially when it comes to each individual believer's redemption.

That would be consistent with Hebrews 12:2—“*Looking unto Jesus, the Author (originator) and Finisher of our faith...*”—which parallels what Paul said in Philippians (I believe Paul also wrote the Book of Hebrews)—

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV)

⁶ being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ...[i.e. ‘at the moment of His return’—1John 3:2]

God never starts anything He leaves unfinished—especially when it comes to the *full* redemption of His Church—

Hebrews 7:25 (NKJV)

²⁵ Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost [‘all the way to completion’] those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

Romans 8:23 (NLT2)

²³ And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us.

John 6:39 (NKJV)

³⁹ This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. [a reference to the rapture and us receiving our glorified bodies]

One author comments—

“If Jesus is both the Beginning and the End, then He also has authority over everything in-between. This means that Jesus has a plan for history, and He directs the path of human events toward His designed fulfillment. Our lives are not given over to blind fate, to random meaninglessness, or to endless cycles with no resolution. Instead, Jesus Christ who is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End directs all of human history and even our individual lives.”

Revelation 1:8 (NKJV)

⁸ "I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the Beginning and the End*," says the Lord, "**who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.**"

Jesus is the Eternal God (see Rev. 1:4) unlimited by time—but He is also the **Almighty**, able to do anything (Jeremiah 32:27 and Luke 1:37).

Nine times in the Book of Revelation God is referred to as “**Almighty**”—and only once before that in 2Corinthians 6:18.

The reason could be that—in no other book in the New Testament is God’s Almighty power on display like it is in the Book of Revelation!

The word ‘**Almighty**’ is from the Greek word *pantokrator*—which is a combination of 2 Greek words: *pantos* (“all” or “everything”); and *krator* (“to hold”).

And so putting these two words together, the word ‘**Almighty**’ means—“*the One who holds or controls everything—the Omnipotent One.*”

One author said—

“Jesus Christ is the Beginning and the End. He spans time and eternity and exhausts the vocabulary of excellence. He is the source and goal of creation, and it is He who began and will end the divine program in the world. He is and was and is to come, eternal in His being and Almighty in power.”

And so, Revelation has great emphasis on God's sovereignty—that He has His hands on everything, everyone and is in complete control of every circumstance.

Revelation 1:9 (NKJV)

⁹ I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

John isn’t talking about the ‘Great Tribulation’ here but the tribulation under Emperor Domitian. (Explain)

Our English word “**tribulation**” comes from a Latin word *tribulum*.

In Paul's day, a *tribulum* was a heavy piece of timber with spikes in it, used for threshing the grain.

The harvested sheaves of wheat or barley were laid on the threshing floor and the tribulum was dragged over them back and forth—separating the wheat or barley from the chaff.

One writer said, "*As we go through tribulations, and depend on God's grace, the trials only purify us and help to get rid of the chaff.*"

I once had a radio listener call into the live program we were conducting who was mad at me for saying that the Church won't go thru the Tribulation Period but will be evacuated off the earth at the rapture before God judges the world.

He was furious with me, that I would deny the clear teaching of Jesus Who told His disciples that we would go thru the Tribulation Period—and as proof of this he quoted Jesus' words in John 16:33: "*These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*"

I told him it is true that Jesus promised His disciples that we would have tribulation in this world—but I said there is a difference between the tribulation of the world poured out on the Church, and the tribulation (wrath) of God poured out on the world! (1Thess.5:9; 2Peter 2:4-9)

The word '**patience**' in verse 9 is the Greek word *hupomone*.

This word comes from two words *hupo* (under) and *meno* (to stay, abide, or remain)—and so, it's a word that means "*to remain under*".

It pictures someone under a heavy load of persecution or adversity and choosing to stay there ("remain under") instead of trying to escape ('bail on the circumstance').

Commentator and historian William Barclay believes that **‘patience’** is too passive a word to use in the translation of the word *hupomone*.

He said—“*Hupomonē does not simply accept and endure; there is always a forward look in it. It is said of Jesus ... that for the joy that was set before him, he endured the Cross, despising the shame (Hebrews 12:2). That is hupomone—Christian steadfastness. It is the courageous acceptance of everything that life can do to us and the transmuting of even the worst event into another step on the way upward.*”

One ancient Greek philosopher called **hupomone** “*the queen of virtues*”—another described it as “*the frame of mind which endures.*”

And so, it’s a word that means **‘endurance’** or, as it’s translated in 2Peter 1:6, **‘perseverance’**.

John says that he was on the **Island of Patmos** when he received this revelation.

Patmos is a volcanic island in the Aegean Sea, about ten miles long and six miles wide—located some forty miles offshore from Miletus (a city in Asia Minor about thirty miles south of Ephesus).

Domitian, the Roman emperor, had put John in exile on the Isle of Patmos—“**for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ**” John tells us in verse 9.

Many believe that this means John had been sent to Patmos for preaching Jesus and teaching the Word of God throughout Asia Minor.

John the Apostle was the ‘Bishop’ (overseer) of the churches in Asia Minor as well as being an elder in the church at Ephesus.

Many commentators have said (and I have believed them) that there was a Roman penal colony on Patmos where John (in his nineties) would have been forced to work in the mines making his life extremely hard—however, that might not have been true.

Mark Hitchcock in his commentary on Revelation says that although he's heard some preachers compare Patmos to Alcatraz, an Island prison where dangerous criminals were sequestered from society—He said:

“While this makes for dramatic preaching it's not accurate. There's no evidence that, in John's day, Patmos had a penal colony or was commonly used for banishment. We know from history that there was a military garrison and administrative building on the island, possibly a hippodrome (horse racing track), a temple to Artemis [the Romans called her 'Diana'], and probably a temple to Apollo. John was probably sent there because it was the closest place Domitian could use to remove his influence from Asia Minor. One writer summarizes the situation,

'Life there was not too harsh, as indicated by its decent-sized population and two gymnasia as well as a temple of Artemis. Thus, John would have lived a fairly normal life as an exile on that island. He was likely there only a short time and was allowed to go to Ephesus in a general amnesty for exiles by the emperor Nerva in AD 96 after Domitian died.'”

Even if John wasn't forced into hard labor on Patmos as a prisoner—he was still in exile, alone, away from all of his friends and family—and for a man in his nineties, that couldn't have been easy for him.

There are times in our lives when God will put us through periods of “sanctified loneliness”, times of sanctified separation and isolation for the purpose of revelation—not self-imposed loneliness or isolation but God ordained separation and loneliness.

Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Paul, and John all went through periods of loneliness and isolation where they received a greater awareness of God's presence.

One author said—*“Learn the lessons of loneliness don't run from it let Jesus meet you in it and reveal Himself to you in a deeper and more intimate way.”*

- ➔ Relate to our Coronavirus lockdown and isolation and looking for Jesus to reveal Himself to us in a deeper and more intimate way.