"To one who has faith, no explanation is necessary. To one without faith, no explanation is possible."
Thomas Aquinas

The New Testament is in the Old Testament concealed; the Old Testament is in the New Testament revealed.
Unknown

REVELATION
Handout One
Prayer Study #400
First Love Ministries of Perry, Georgia USA

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy and keep the things which are written in it; for the time is near.
Revelation 1:3
[This is the only book in the Bible that promises a special blessing for those who read it!]

You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.
James 5:8
[Revelation is about the Second Coming of the Lord.]

And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand."
Revelation 22:10

"Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."
Revelation 22:7
[It starts and ends with a blessing.]

SOURCES FOR THIS STUDY

Information for this course is drawn primarily from the following source materials:
Revelation by H.A. Ironside
Interpreting the Book of Revelation by Kevin Connor
Breaking the Apocalypse Code by Perry Stone
Revelation by David Shepherd
The Book of Revelation by Dr. Chuck Missler
A Light in Darkness: Seven Messages to the Seven Churches by Rick Renner
Through the Bible by J. Vernon McGee

All the Men of the Bible by Herbert Lockyer
The Revelation of John: Vol. 1 and Vol. 2 by William Barclay
The Bible Knowledge Commentary New Testament by John Walvoord & Roy B. Zuck
Sparkling Gems from the Greek by Rick Renner
Dake's Annotated Reference Bible by Finis Dake

QUOTES

Because of the numerous, contradictory, and extreme interpretations of this book and the confusion resultant from these things, many of God's people will not even read it. Even many preachers and teachers of the Gospel will not minister from this book because of other preachers and expositors who are in conflicting and contradictory mood. Behind this, one has to perceive that the real author of confusion is Satan himself, exploiting, many times, the carnal minds of believers and the traditions of men. After all, the book of Revelation pronounces his final doom and eternal judgment in the lake of fire.

Kevin Conner

*****

If you would learn to appreciate Christ more, read this book [Revelation] *frequently and prayerfully. It reveals Him as the Lamb rejected but soon to reign in glory-the Lamb on the throne!*

H.A. Ironside

*****

We cannot shut our eyes to the difficulty of Revelation. It is the most difficult book in the Bible, but its study brings infinite rewards, for it contains the blazing faith of the Christian Church in the days when life was an agony and people expected the end of the heavens and the earth as they knew them but still believed that beyond the terror was the glory and above human raging was the power of God.

William Barclay

*****

We are in possession of a message [i.e.: the whole Bible but specifically Revelation] *of extraterrestrial origin. It portrays us as objects of an unseen warfare. Our eternal destiny depends upon our relationship with the ultimate victor in this cosmic conflict. Where do you stand with respect to Him?*

Dr. Chuck Missler

*****

At this moment, more Christians are being persecuted for their faith in Jesus Christ than in the entire 2,000 years of Church history combined. Although the Western Church lives in relative comfort and peace, millions of believers around the world are suffering right now for their faith.

Persecution is not a relic of the past, nor is it simply an intellectual lesson in Church history. It is a present-day reality for millions of people who have committed their lives to Christ. Since the birth of the Church, there have always been those willing to answer God's call to go where no preacher has yet gone and to shine the light of the Gospel where it has never shone before. Yet God has always required a sacrificial price to be paid by those who carry the light into darkness.

My heart is filled with thanksgiving for those in the past, those in the present, and those in the future who will carry the light of truth into this lost and dying world. A great price has been paid by those who preceded us. That price continues to be paid today in many parts of the world, and it will continue to be paid in the future by those who are willing to go forth in God's power and grace to shine a light in the darkness, no matter the cost.

Rick Renner

*****

AUTHOR

(taken mainly from *A Light in Darkness* by Rick Renner)

The *Beloved Disciple,* John the Apostle, the last living of the original 12 disciples, the loving custodian of the Lord's mother (whom he cared for until the end of her life), and the earthly spiritual father of the young Christian Church, received the Revelation *of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him* [Jesus] *to show His* [Jesus'] *servants-things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John.* Revelation is the most prophetic book of the Bible, and because of its contents and messages to the seven churches of Asia, the book was quickly circulated and became widely know in the early church. All of the Church writers in the second to the middle of the third century attribute the writer to be the Apostle John, although Dionysius in the third century presented arguments against the authorship of the Apostle John. My own belief is that the Apostle John was the author, and historical facts seem to back this up.

John wrote this book while he was a prisoner on the isle of Patmos in the Aegean Sea. This was an open-air prison for the most dangerous Roman prisoners. Those who were common criminals were beaten on their arrival and were made to work (possibly in mine quarries). They were, however, given food to eat. The political prisoners, on the other hand, were treated with more respect and allowed to roam freely over the island. However, unlike the common criminals, political prisoners were not provided with food, water, medical services, or shelter.

When John left Jerusalem sometimes between 37-44 AD, he ministered at various places in Asia Minor probably settling, with Mary, in Ephesus around 67

AD. There was a religious law in the early Church that church buildings should be erected where New Testament figures had lived or were buried. There was the Church of St. Mary in Ephesus giving credence to the fact that Mary was in Ephesus with John when she died. Today you can visit a three-room chapel on a hillside outside and above Ephesus where this church existed. This was the first church in the whole world to be named for her. There are numerous historical records to give clear evidence that John and Mary did indeed live and minister in Ephesus. In those days a city like Ephesus would often tolerate Christians and other groups as long as they lived outside of the city.

After Paul was beheaded in Rome ins 67 AD, John's leadership role in Asia Minor became even more important, and he fulfilled this role for 27 more years. Then the unthinkable happened. When John was about 90 years old, he was arrested, shackled, and transferred to Rome to be tried before the Emperor Domitian. The Roman Emperors expected their subjects to treat them as gods, and they hated the Christians because they would not bow down to them. Domitian was one of the most wicked and merciless tyrants in human history. Wanting to be worshiped, Domitian in 93 A.D. declared himself *lord* and *god* of Rome.

Three years later, in 96 A.D., some of Domitian's closest associates, realizing he was a monster, murdered him, hacking him to death. The Roman Senate then passed a decree calling for an eradication of his memory, including demolishing temples, buildings, and statues that he had constructed in his own honor.

A few years before Domitian's murder, however, he summoned John to Rome. Domitian ordered John to burn pagan incense to save his own life, but he refused. Domitian was furious and ordered John to be thrown into a vat of boiling oil. John miraculously was not burned and climbed out of the vat unharmed. This made Domitian that much madder, and he ordered him to be exiled to Patmos forever. There is enough historical record to cause scholars to see this event in John's life as factual and not a legend.

John as an old man was taken to Patmos and left, along with the other political prisoners, with no help or direction and little available fresh water or source of food on the island. Most likely he located an abandoned cave, where he lived for two or three years until Domitian was murdered, and he was pardoned by the new emperor. John returned to Ephesus.

There is some evidence, although not Biblical, that John did not live alone at Patmos but had a disciple named Prochorus, who was one of the seven original deacons of Acts 6:5. Other New Testament leaders, such as Paul who had Luke with him when he was imprisoned in Rome (2nd Timothy 4:11), often were accompanied, even to prison, by helpers or assistants. There is a good bit of

historical evidence that indeed Prochorus probably did voluntarily go into exile with John to Patmos and then back to Ephesus.

TIME WRITTEN

Kevin Conner gives two approximate dates that scholars give for the writing of Revelation:

1. Early Date - AD 54-68: This date is during the reign of Nero. The scholars that hold this position believe the book was written before the destruction of the temple in AD 70, and thus the book is really about the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple and the dispersion of the Jewish people from Palestine.
2. Later Date - AD 81-96: This date is about the close of the reign of Domitian, a position which Rick Renner has, as noted above, and a position that has more historical evidence as being the right time period.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The original Greek word given for the book of Revelation was *Apocalypse*. The word means to unveil or uncover something that is hidden. The 404 verses of Revelation contain over 800 allusions or references to the Old Testament.
There are four major events of Revelation:

1. The catastrophic end crisis of this present age
2. The spectacular representation of King Jesus in His global empire
3. The interment of Satan in the abyss or bottomless pit
4. The millennial reign of Christ

To understand Revelation, it is helpful to have at least a fair knowledge of the entire Bible since all of scripture is centered on Christ, the Jehovah of the Old Testament. Remember that Revelation is about both the Second Coming of Jesus and the rule and reign of Christ on the earth:

A. OLD TESTAMENT

Old Testament prophesies the coming of Christ with 1,845 references to Christ's rule on the earth, and 17 Old Testament books giving prominence to this rule.

B. NEW TESTAMENT

In the New Testament, in the 216 chapters, there are over 318 references to the Second Coming.

a. Gospels: Christ in history dies a sacrificial death for all who will accept His blood sacrifice for their sins.

b. Acts: Christ in His Church is alive and seen by His followers following his crucifixion.
c. Epistles: Christ shows us how to live and the plan of salvation.
    1. Justification (just as if we had never sinned) Salvation: We have been saved positionally from the penalty of sin (Ephesians 2:8-9). PAST
    2. Sanctification (separated unto God) Salvation: We are being saved from the power of sin operationally by the Holy Spirit moment by moment (Romans 6). PRESENT
    3. Redemption Salvation: We shall be saved from the presence of sin (Romans 8:23). FUTURE
d. Apocalypse: Christ will come in Glory and rule and reign.

Revelation is singular, not plural, and it was the last book of the Bible to be written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The Book of Revelation is a revelation of the end-time events from the establishment of the New Testament church to the coming of Christ and the eternal states. At that time of the writing of Revelation all known nations and languages were under Rome's control. When John writes to the seven churches of Asia, the Temple had been destroyed, Israel and the Jews were non-existent as a nation, great persecution was taking place against the Church, but Christianity was spreading like wildfire and was numerically strong.

The only religions in the world which were then and now of Divine origin were Judaism and New Testament Christianity. (ALL other religions past and present are of Satanic origin.) The basic Roman problem against Christianity in John's day was the refusal of Christians to worship the emperor so the Romans persecuted and killed Christians. This all takes place around 60 years from the birth of the Church.

The book of Revelation addresses four groups of people:

1. Individuals (i.e. the pastors of the churches) - Revelation 2 and 3
2. Israel and the Jewish people - Revelation 7 and 12
3. The Gentile nations who have rejected Christ and are under judgment - Revelation 8 & 15
4. The Church as typed by the 7 churches - Revelation 2 and 3

Three books which are especially significant in understanding Revelation are Genesis, Joshua, and Daniel. We will look specifically at the relationship between Genesis, the start of the human race, and Revelation, the climax, as given by Dr. Chuck Missler:

Genesis 1:1-The earth was created.
Revelation 21:1-The earth passes away.

Genesis 1:16-The sun governs the day.
Revelation 21:23-There is no need for the sun.

Genesis 1:5-The darkness is called night.
Revelation 22:5-There is no night there.

Genesis 1:10-He called the waters seas.
Revelation 21:1-There are no seas there.

Genesis 2:10-14-There is a river for earth's blessing.
Revelation 22:1-2-There is a river for the New Earth.

Genesis 37-Earth's government comes through Israel.
Revelation 16:8-Earth's judgment comes through Israel.

Genesis 1:26-Man is made in God's image.
Revelation 13-Man is headed by Satan's image.

Genesis 3:6-Entrance of sin
Revelation 21:27-End of sin

Genesis 3:14-17-The curse pronounced.
Revelation 22:3-There are no more curses.

Genesis 3:19-Death enters.
Revelation 21:4-No more death

Genesis 3:24-Man is driven out of Eden.
Revelation 22-Man is restored.

Genesis 3:24-The Tree of Life is guarded.
Revelation 22:14-Man is given the right to the Tree of Life.

Genesis 3:17-Sorrow and suffering enter.
Revelation 22:4-There is no more sorrow.

Genesis 10:8-10-Nimrod founds Babylon.
Revelation 17 & 18-Babylon falls.

Genesis 6-9-God sends a flood to destroy an evil generation.
Revelation 12-Satan's flood tries to destroy an elect generation.

Genesis 9:13-A rainbow was given to represent God's promise.
Revelation 4:3, 10:1-A rainbow was given for remembrance.

Genesis 24-A bride for Abraham's son
Revelation 21-A bride for Abraham's seed

Genesis 2:18-23-The marriage of the 1st Adam
Revelation 19-The marriage of the Last Adam

Genesis 3:24-Man's dominion ceased, and Satan's began.
Revelation 22-Satan's dominion ends, and man's dominion is restored.

TERMS DEFINED

Eschatology: Study of last things

Types: model of something for some purpose (ex. Abraham and Isaac are types of God the Father sacrificing His son Jesus)

Symbol: something which is itself but stands for or represents something else (ex. The American flag is itself a flag, but it represents the United States).

Allegory: characters or events are not literal and represent or symbolize ideas and concepts

Hermaneutics: the science of interpretation or of finding the meaning of an author's words and phrases and explaining that to others.

Exegesis: hermaneutics specifically as it applies to Scripture

Revelation: truth imparted which could not be discovered by natural reasoning

Inspiration: the process by which revelation is recorded-All scripture is revelation recorded under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Application: taking truth revealed to one person or group and making it relate to another

Illumination: the perception of truth brough about by the influence of the Holy Spirit or the Lord opening the eyes of one's understanding to receive that which is revealed in Scripture (Ephesians 1:17-18).

Kevin Conner explains these concepts:

REVELATION - Truth given
INSPIRATION - Truth recorded
INTERPRETATION - Truth expounded
APPLICATION - Truth applied
ILLUMINATION - Truth understood

SOME OF THE MAJOR SCHOOLS OF INTERPRETATION

(There are other schools of interpretation, and some scholars call the schools by different names, but we look at just four.)

PRETERIST: The Preterist position says that all the events of Revelation were fulfilled in the 1st Century and the book itself was written before 70 AD before the temple was destroyed by the Romans.

HISTORICAL: Those taking the Historical position believe that all the events of Revelation were and are being progressively fulfilled from the 1st Century to the return of Christ.

ALLEGORICAL: An allegory is a literary device whereby one uses characters or events to represent ideas and concepts, not factual and real people and real happenings. Allegorists believe that Revelation is mainly about the struggle between good and evil as represented by Jerusalem and Babylon, and thus, not about people and events that have or will exist.

FUTURISTIC: Revelation is a prophetic book. Chapters 1 through 3 have already taken place, but Chapters 4 through 22 are what will take place in the future, climaxing with the Second Coming of Christ and the setting up of His kingdom on earth. This seems the most logical approach to Revelation to me, and it is the position of Perry Stone and others who have made an indepth study of the book.

For the Preterist Revelation is a book of time past. For the Historicist things are continuously being fulfilled from John's day to the Second Coming, so the Historicist sees the book as being on a continuum in time. The Allegorical proponents sees the work as merely symbolic where good will finally win out in the end. The Futurist sees the major fulfillment of Revelation to be in future time.

HEPTADIC STRUCTURE OF REVELATION

"Hepta" means seven (a variation of *septa* in Latin). Revelation is built structurally on the number of seven:

Seven churches, seven seals, seven trumpets, seven bowls of God's wrath, seven years of judgments (11, 12, 13), seven "I Am"s of Christ (1, 21, 22), seven doxologies in heaven (4,5,7,11,14,15, 19), seven new things (20,21), seven features (1), seven letter divisions (2,3), seven personages (12,13: Woman, Man-Child, Dragon, Beast, False Prophet, Michael, Lamb), and seven beatitudes. This is not an exhaustive list.

Seven Beatitudes

1. Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear and keep those things, which are written - Revelation 1:3.
2. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord - Revelation 14:13.
3. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments-Revelation 16:15.
4. Blessed are they who are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb - Revelation 19:9.
5. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection-Revelation 20:6.
6. Blessed is he that keepeth the words of prophecy of this book - Revelation 22:7.
7. Blessed are they that wash their robes [some translations render this as *those who do His commandments* - Revelation 22:14.

Seven Worship Choruses

1. Holy, Holy, Holy - Revelation 4:8
2. Worthy Art Thou - Revelation 4:11, 5:8-10
3. Unto Him Who Sits on the Throne - Revelation 5:11-13
4. Salvation belongs to our God, Blessing and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God - Revelation 7:9-12
5. The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever - Revelation 11:15-18
6. Great and Marvelous are Your works - Revelation 15:2-4
7. The four hallelujahs - Romans 19:1-8

MISCELLANEOUS

Things out of Place in Revelation - Dr. Chuck Missler

1. Israel is not fully in her land yet.
2. The Church is on earth instead of in heaven.
3. The Lamb is on His Father's throne instead of His own.
4. Satan is free to roam about instead of being bound.

Three Women of Revelation - Dr. Chuck Missler

1. Wife of Yahweh, the Woman of Revelation 12 = Israel
2. Virgin Bride = the Church
3. Harlot or Woman who rides the Beast = Babylon

Build up of Praise (Doxologies) - Dr. Chuck Missler

1. Glory and Dominion - Revelation 1:6
2. Glory, Honor, Power - Revelation 4:11
3. Blessing, Honor, Glory, Power - Revelation 5:13
4. Blessing, Glory, Wisdom, Thanksgiving, Honor, Power, Might - Revelation 7:12

Holy, Holy, Holy
Reginald Heber
1926

1. Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty,
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

2. Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore thee,
casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,
which wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.

3. Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee,
though the eye of sinful man thy glory may not see,
only thou art holy; there is none beside thee,
perfect in power, in love and purity.

4. Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All thy works shall praise thy name, in earth and sky and sea.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty,
God in three persons, blessed Trinity.