



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing



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Prayer

God Father; in Jesus' name I ask it, thank You, Jesus, that You are faithful and true, that You love us and have once and for all freed us from our sins by Your own blood. Jesus, I ask that You give us all peace; led us and guide us. Supply all our needs and bless us with our daily bread, bless us and keep us in Jesus' name. Amen.

Worship Music

[Don't Give Up-Josh Gorban](#)

[Bridge Over Troubled Water-Josh Gorban](#)

[It's A Wonderful World-Louis Armstrong](#)

[I Can Only Imagine-Mercy Me](#)

Scripture

Revelations Introduction (2005)

Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it because the time is near.

Revelation 1:3

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth.... And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

Revelation 21:1, 3-4

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Revelation

Grand Finale of the Bible Story

The Ultimate Triumph of Christ

The New Heaven and the New Earth

The book of Revelation is the only book of the New Testament that is prophetic in nature. The book is an explanation of Christ's discourse on things to come (Matthew 24 ; Mark 13 ; and Luke 21). It is full of expressions used by Jesus and direct and indirect references to the prophetic writings of the Old Testament. Revelation is a book that offers the reader a unique blessing.

Revelation Is a Book with Jesus Christ at the Center

The very first words of the book declare that it is "the revelation of Jesus Christ." Jesus dominates the scene from the beginning to the end of the book. Jesus, the Son of God who has provided the way for the church to be redeemed and reunited with its Creator, is further revealed in this writing. His second coming, His millennial reign on earth, and His judgment of the earth are foretold. And it describes His final victory over our enemy, Satan. will establish His everlasting kingdom, and the redeemed saints will rule with Him eternally. What a glorious, hope-giving, and comforting message this book is during a time when it often appears that God and His church are being overpowered by this world!

Revelation Is a Book of Prophecy

The book of Revelation belongs to the class of apocalyptic literature in which the divine message is conveyed by visions and dreams (for more on apocalyptic literature, see Apocalyptic Literature). The first two verses of the book state that it is a "revelation" from God, to Jesus, to the apostle John of things to come—a revealing, unveiling, explaining, making known, of things that are in the future (Revelation 1:1 , 19 ; 4:1). That is what it was written for: to unfold the future, to chart the course and destiny of the Jews, the Gentiles, and the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Revelation Is a Very Practical Book

Even though it is a book that contains sometimes strange images and many things we do not fully understand, it also has many things we *do* understand. In its imagery are some of the most salutary warnings and most precious promises of all of Scripture. Likely, John himself did not understand some of the things he saw and wrote. The imagery in John's writing undoubtedly stemmed from the challenge of describing visions of future events—events that must have both terrified him and thrilled his soul. No doubt, God had a meaning in some of the visions that were to be revealed only as the story of the passing ages unfolded. Alternating simplest truth with mystical symbolism, Revelation is a book of undiluted *optimism* for God's people, assuring us again and again that, come what may, we are under God's protection, with a life of everlasting blessedness ahead. It is also a book of the "wrath of God," in which scenes alternating between earth and heaven contrast the joys of the redeemed with the agonies of the lost. And oh how we need to be reminded of that in this careless and godless generation!

Revelation Is a Book That Asks for Reverent Humility

A thing that strikes one who browses around in the vast literature about the book of Revelation is the *utter dogmatism* with which so many put forth their opinions—not as opinions but as categorical statements about the meaning of even the most obscure passages, as if they know all about it and their say-so settles the matter. We think a spirit of reverent humility and openness of mind would be more becoming in those seeking to interpret a book like this.

Revelation Is a Book That Requires Balance

The book of Revelation should neither be neglected nor overly exalted above other Bible books. But it most certainly is entitled to, and will greatly reward, a reasonable share of a Christian's study and devotion. Other books of the Bible, such as Genesis, Daniel, Isaiah, 1 Corinthians, and 1 and 2 Thessalonians, to name a few, add significant insight into the interpretation of imagery in Revelation. Conversely, God has given the book of Revelation to provide insight into other passages throughout the Bible. We insist on understanding and explaining every detail, we may lose sight of the powerful message of the book as a whole: God is in charge of history, and Jesus has won the victory that will one day be manifested in a new heaven and a new earth, where God lives with His people.

Who Wrote Revelation?

God himself wrote Revelation, according to the book's first statement. God dictated it, through Christ, by an angel, to John, who wrote it down and sent the completed book to the seven churches (1:1 , 4). Modern critics see no inspired prophecy at all in the book, but only the "unbridled play of religious fantasy, clothing itself in unreal visual form." We abhor such a view. Believe absolutely

- That the book is exactly what it itself says it is;
- That it bears the stamp of its author;
- That some of its passages are among the most superb and most precious in all the Bible;
- That its climactic grandeur makes it a fitting close to the Bible story; and
- That its glorious visions of the completed work of Christ make it a veritable roadway of God into the human soul. *human author*, by well-established tradition from the days of the Apostolic Fathers, and in the judgment of the great body of Christian believers, was the apostle John, the "Beloved Disciple," the most intimate earthly friend of Jesus and writer of the Gospel of John (1:1 , 4 , 9 ; 22:8 ; John 21:20 , 24).

When Was It Written?

John had been banished to the island of Patmos (1:9 ; see on 1:9 Revelation 1:9–20 and map The Seven Churches). It happened, according to apostolic tradition, during the persecution of Christians under Emperor Domitian, around a.d. 95. The next year John was released and permitted to return to Ephesus. The use of the past tense ("I was on the island of Patmos") may indicate that he saw the visions on Patmos but wrote the book after his release and his return to Ephesus, around a.d. 96. Others believe that John transcribed the visions immediately while on Patmos, in response to Jesus' command to "write" (9:11 , 19).

The Historical Background of Revelation

These visions were given, and the book was written, in the lurid light of burning martyrs. The church was 66 years old. It had grown enormously. It had suffered, and was suffering, terrific persecutions. The first imperial persecution of Christians, 30 years before this book was written, was instigated by Emperor Nero in a.d. 64–67. In that persecution many Christians were crucified, or thrown to wild beasts, or wrapped in combustible garments and burned to death while Nero laughed at the pitiful shrieks of burning men and women. Paul and Peter suffered martyrdom in Nero's persecution. The second imperial persecution was under Emperor Domitian (a.d. 95). It was short but extremely severe. More than 40,000 Christians were tortured and killed. It was during this period of persecution in which John was banished to the island of Patmos. The third imperial persecution, that of Trajan, was

soon to begin (a.d. 98). John had lived through the first two and was now about to enter the third of Rome's efforts to blot out the Christian faith. Those were dark days for the church. And still darker days were coming . But persecution from without was not the only problem. The church itself, from within, was beginning to show signs of corruption and apostasy. God gave these visions, evidently, to help prepare and steady the church for the awful days ahead, and to comfort the church with the certainty that He stands at the beginning as well as at the end of history. We believe that this book is every bit as relevant for the modern-day church as it was for the churches of John's day. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God" (2:7).

Interpreting the Book of Revelation

In interpreting the book of Revelation, several things must be kept in mind:

- Revelation is full of references and allusions to the Old Testament, especially to the books of Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah. We cannot read the book apart from its Old Testament background.
- It is a book of visions. As with the parables of Jesus, we must be careful not to miss the main point of John's visions by trying to explain every last detail. We must also recognize that John is attempting to describe images from the future—images of events, places, and things that he had absolutely no frame of reference to.
- Bible prophecy, to the Western mind, has a disconcerting way of telescoping events so that one prophecy can apply to several instances that are separated in time. It is also true that many of the prophecies that have already been fulfilled—for example, prophecies concerning Christ—are clear in retrospect but were not clear ahead of time, not even to the prophets themselves (see 1 Peter 1:10). This should make us cautious.

The Main Interpretations of Revelation

There are many interpretations of the book of Revelation. The four most common are usually called the *preterist*, *historical*, *futurist*, and *idealist* interpretations. Each one has many variations, and each has its difficulties. Whatever interpretation one accepts, some details in the book require straining to fit. The idealist (or symbolic or spiritualizing) interpretation separates the book entirely from any reference to historical events—whether those of John's day, or those at the time of the end, or those at any time in between. It is seen as a pictorial representation, in highly figurative language, of the great principles of divine government and of good overcoming evil, which are applicable to all times. The preterist interpretation regards the book as referring entirely to its own day: Christianity's struggle with the Roman Empire. It assumes that everything was fulfilled during the period it was written and that the story was told with imagery and symbolism to hide its meaning from the late -1st-century pagans. The historical interpretation sees in Revelation a prediction of the whole period of church history, from John's time to the end of the world—a sort of panorama, a series of pictures, delineating the successive steps and outstanding features of the church's struggle to final victory. The futurist interpretation centers the book largely around the time of the Lord's coming and end of the world. This interpretation holds that most of the book (chaps. 4–22) reveals events that are yet to be fulfilled. The futurist view is the view most widely held in American evangelical churches and is the primary basis for the remainder of this study on Revelation.

The Book Is in Three Parts

Revelation 1 :19 God commands John to write about three distinct time periods.

Chapter 1 : "Write, therefore, what you have seen," that is, things that were in John's day (that had already taken place) , including his vision of Christ.

Chapters 2–3 : "What is now," represented by the seven letters to seven churches in Asia Minor. These letters outline the condition of the churches in John's day, but they can also be viewed as prefiguring the modern-day church as well as the individual believer throughout the church age. The first three chapters are, in a sense, introductory to the main body of the book that follows.

Chapters 4–22 : "And what will take place thereafter" covers events yet to be revealed, from the end of the church age (4:1) to the establishment of a new heaven and new earth (21:1–27).

(Halley's Bible Handbook; Henry Halley; 2000; Zondervan; Bible History & Commentaries; pages 898-903)

Psa 119:105

Thy word [is] a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.



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