

AS YOU READ THE BOOK OF REVELATION, MARVEL WITH JOHN AT THE WONDROUS PANORAMA OF GOD'S REVEALED PLAN. BE FULL OF HOPE, KNOWING THAT GOD IS IN CONTROL, CHRIST'S VICTORY IS ASSURED, AND ALL WHO TRUST HIM WILL BE SAVED. (*LIFE APPLICATION BIBLE*)

1. "The late British prime minister Winston Churchill once described the former Soviet Union as 'a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.' Many Christians view the book of Revelation in much the same way. (They are) bewildered by its mystifying symbolism and striking imagery..." (John MacArthur)
2. Opening Literary example: Revelation 12:1-6 (Read)
 - Literary form: apocalyptic ("uncovered" or "revealed" or "disclosed")
 - Also written in the form of a letter
 - Also prophetic in character
3. General Background
 - Author: John the apostle
 - Date of writing: ca. 95 A.D.;
 - Written to: "the seven churches in the province of Asia" (1:4)
 - Written from: Island of Patmos, in Aegean Sea
 - Purpose: to encourage believers to endure in the face of persecution

Major Schools of Interpretation

Interpretation	Time Frame	Description	Key Verse	Millennial Position*
Preterist	Past	Prophecies of Revelation fulfilled in the fall of the Jerusalem temple in 70 A.D., or in the fall of the Roman Empire, pre-400 A.D.	Revelation 1:1, 3 "soon take place" "time is near"	Usually amillennial or postmillennial
Historicist	All of history	Revelation is a overview of church history with its various persecutions; we are living in the millennium		Usually postmillennial
Futurist				
▪ Classical Dispensationalist	Future	Revelation predicts future events surrounding the second coming of Christ	Revelation 1:7 "coming... every eye will see him"	Premillennial
▪ Progressive Dispensationalist	Blend of past and future	Employs the "already – not yet" understanding of the Kingdom of God	Revelation 1:19 "what is now/ what will take place later"	Usually premillennial
Idealist/Spiritualist	Beyond time	Revelation symbolizes the on-going cosmic struggle between God and His enemies (good and evil.) Focus: spiritual message.	Revelation 19:16 "King of kings and Lord of lords"	Usually amillennial

4. Basic Outline of the Book
 - 1:1-20 – Introduction
 - 2:1 – 3:22 – Letters to the Seven Churches
 - 4:1 – 19:5 – The Cosmic Battle
 - depicted as three series of judgments: Seals, Trumpets, Bowls
 - "telescopic" interpretation:
 - 7th Seal = the 7 trumpets
 - 7th Trumpet = 7 bowls
 - 19:6 – 22:21 – The Victory of the Lamb

Notes on the Text

5. Revelation 1:1-5a
 - 1:1 - "revelation" ("apocalypsis")
 - 1:1 – "take place soon"
 - 1:1 – "he sent *and signified*" (*semaino*)
 - 1:4 – "who is, who was, who is to come"
6. Read 1:5b-8 – The Alpha and Omega
 - 1:6 – Glory and power to Jesus
 - Loves us..... Freed us..... Kingdom and priests
 - 1:7 – everyone will mourn
 - 1:8 – Alpha and Omega (A and Z)
7. 1:9-11 – The Command to Write
 - 1:9 – word of Lord and testimony of Jesus
 - 1:10 – "in the Spirit" – sensitive to/focused on/open to the Spirit
8. 1:12-16 – The Vision of the Son of Man
 - 1:13 – "like a son of man" (warrior image)
9. Read 1:17-20 – Worthy of Worship
 - Fell at feet – awesome, worship
 - First and last..... Living One..... Keys of death and Hades
 - Again, revelation of Jesus Christ
 - Write, twofold: now/seen (present), and will take place (future)
10. Life Application:
 - If the purpose of this book is to encourage us in the face of difficulty and persecution, how has the message of the first chapter addressed this issue?

CLOSING TIME OF PRAYER