



A Course

In

**REVELATION,
STUDIES IN**

PART ONE

Prepared by the
Committee on Religious Education
of the
American Bible College

Pineland, Florida 33945

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PREFACE

As you study the Scriptures you will find that it is of the greatest importance to approach the Bible in a reverent attitude of mind, looking upon it as the inspired Word of God, and not just an ordinary piece of literature. If the Bible is studied in the same manner as one studies Shakespeare, Milton or some historical work, it may be found interesting and profitable. But by this approach, the Bible student, persistent though he may be, will never find its rich treasures. The Apostle Paul says: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (I Cor. 2:14) For the profitable study of the Word of God, the right spiritual attitude is indispensable.

The Scriptures should be studied as eagerly as a hungry person seeks for food. The formal reading of a portion of the Bible may have some worth as a religious exercise, but in order that the complete benefit may be obtained from its truths, they must be appropriated to personal needs. A milkman may deliver thousands of quarts of milk each day and yet go home thirsty. The Bible student may read large portions of the Bible with little benefit, unless he makes it his own by personal appropriation and feeds upon it.

In your studies of the Bible, will you appropriate the riches thereof to your own personal use, or will you read as you would read a book of fiction, a mystery, etc.

In order to make full use of the pearls of wisdom contained in the Bible readings, it is suggested you re-read them. Go into its wonderful fields of truth; go down into its valleys; climb its mountain peaks of vision; follow its streams of inspiration; enter its halls of learning. Many Bible truths do not appear on the surface; they must be dug up and be brought into the light by toil and effort.

There are various methods of Bible study, such as the topical method, the study of books, the study by chapters, the study of important passages, and the biographical method. In this course we approach the text in the expository-exegetical method. In this way each verse will be interpreted by explaining the major words in their context in order to gain an over-all perspective as well as a contextual understanding.

This course's syllabi are not intended as a thorough commentary, but for a general understanding of all major subjects.

Although the American Bible College believes the King James Version is the preserved Word of God, this method of study allows the writer to occasionally condense a passage in his own paraphrase. This should not be construed to imply that A. B. C. is correcting God's Word.

During this course the student is required to read through the entire Book of Revelation ten times.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The compiler of this course study uses portions of the syllabus by Dr. Phil Stringer as he taught the Book of Revelation at Landmark Baptist College in 2006. We wish to thank Dr. Stringer for his permission to use this commentary work. Dr. Stringer's study notes will be noted in brackets ([]). All other notations will be footnoted. Also, we wish to thank Dr. David Sorenson for his gracious permission to use his commentary. Likewise, B. H. Carroll's outline and notes are included. Some of this course material came from previous preaching notes and regrettably the quoted sources can not be retrieved. The outline is basically that of Dr. Merrill C. Tenney as taken from the Biblical Expositor, pp. 1247-1248.

Respectfully your servant in Christ Jesus,

Dr. Marvin W. Royse

FOREWORD

APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF THIS BOOK

It is not the intention of this compiler to present his views with other's collaboration as view proofs, but primarily to acquaint the student with the interpretations of prominent theologians with a fundamental, evangelical perspective.

Revelation is one of the most profound of all the Bible's books. A lifetime of study would be too short to master it. The prophetic thought is deep, and the student who is not willing to do prolonged and patient thinking ought not to undertake the book. Each phrase and each verse is of value, and to get at the meat of the epistle it must be carefully broken down and analyzed into its component parts. Each part must be studied for itself and then in its relation to the other parts. Analysis is not enough. We must synthesize, or see the book as a whole. Thus, we seek to both analyze and synthesize the Book of Revelation in its historical setting, carrying on these processes simultaneously, until we have a firm understanding of its message.

Suggestions for Study

As we undertake these studies in Revelation, our primary effort is to familiarize ourselves with the text itself. This we may do through careful reading and rereading. Following Dr. James M. Gray in his book, *How to Master the English Bible*, we suggest the following five rules for this reading:

- (1) Read the whole book at one time, ignoring chapter and verse divisions.
- (2) Read it continuously, right through at a single sitting, without break or interruption.
- (3) Read it repeatedly, over and over again; not twice, but ten or fifteen times.
- (4) Read it independently, without consulting other people's interpretations until you have direct contact and immediate acquaintance with the book itself.
- (5) Read it prayerfully, seeking your interpretation from the Holy Spirit who is present in the subject matter and also in the heart of the devout reader.

Reading is our First step, but mere reading is not study. Having read the epistle, we study it carefully and purposefully, closing the book from time to time to summarize our study. Careful consideration must be paid to the accurate meaning of individual words and consideration with their relationship to their context.

After a firm grasp of the text, additional books should be consulted where available, and a comparative study made of the different interpretations. Comparisons with John's other epistles will reveal his vocabulary usage.

Some Values to Be Sought

Closely connected with our purpose in reading and with the problems that we face are the values that we seek. First, we want a working knowledge of the *content* of the book of Revelation. Then, we want to know its *aim* and *purport*. Next, we want to prayerfully *apply* the meaning to our own lives. Finally, we want to lay hold of the message of the book both for its first century and its present century readers. The final test of value will be not how much of the text we have mastered, but how much Christ has mastered our lives through the *Book of Revelation*.

OUTLINE OF THE REVELATION

ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

I. INTRODUCTION — “the things which thou hast seen” (1:19a)

- A. Prologue (1:1-3)
- B. Salutation (1:4-8)
- C. The Patmos vision of the Glorified Christ – (1:9-18)
- D. John Commanded to Write (1:19-20)

II. LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES — “the things which are” (1:19b)

- 1. The Church of Ephesus (2:1-7)
- 2. The Church of Smyrna (2:8-11)
- 3. The Church of Pergamos (2:12-17)
- 4. The Church of Thyatira (2:18-29)
- 5. The Church of Sardis (3:1-6)
- 6. The Church of Philadelphia (3:7-13)
- 7. The Church of Laodicea (3:14-22)

III. THE REVELATION OF THE FUTURE — “the things which shall be hereafter” (chapters 4-22)

- A. The Vision of the Throne of God (chapter 4)
 - 1. John comes before the throne of God. (4:1-3)
 - 2. John sees twenty-four elders and four "living creatures" praising God. (4:4-11)
- B. The Seven Sealed Book (chapter 5)
 - 1. Only the "Lamb" is found worthy to take the judgment scroll from God and break the seals. (5:1-7)
 - 2. The Angels and Heavenly Creatures in heaven give Praise to Christ, the Lamb of God. (5:8-14)
- C. The Lamb Breaks the First Six Seals (chapter 6)
 - 1. First Seal is broken by one who is both a king and a conqueror riding on a white horse. (6:1-2)
 - 2. Second Seal is broken by a rider on a red horse with power to bring war. (6:3-4)
 - 3. Third Seal is broken by a rider on a black horse with power to bring famine. (6:5-6)
 - 4. Fourth Seal is broken by a rider on a pale horse with power to bring death. (6:7-8)
 - 5. Fifth Seal broken reveals the souls of the martyrs "under the altar" crying out for vengeance. (6:9-11)
 - 6. Sixth Seal displays earthquakes and natural disasters. (6:12-17)
- D. Those who will be saved during the Great Tribulation (chapter 7)

- 1. 144,000 of "all the tribes of Israel" are "sealed." (7:1-8)
- 2. A vast multitude worship God after coming out of the Great Tribulation. (7:9-17)
- E. The Opening of the Seventh Seal and the revealing of the Seven Trumpets (Chapters 8-9)
 - 1. Seventh Seal is broken and another series: the seven trumpets are sounded by an angel. (8:1-5)
 - a. The First Trumpet brings hail and fire that destroys a third of the trees and grass. (8:6-7)
 - b. The Second Trumpet brings the destruction of a third part of the oceans. (8:8-9)
 - c. The Third Trumpet brings a third of the rivers and springs are poisoned. (8:10-11)
 - d. The Fourth Trumpet brings a third of the sky is darkened. (8:12-13)
 - e. The Fifth Trumpet brings a plague of "locusts" terrorizing the Earth for five months. (9:1-12)
 - f. The Sixth Trumpet brings a 200 million army that kills a third of Earth's population. (9:13-21)
- F. The Mighty Angel and the Little Book. (10:1-11)
 - 1. The Mighty Angel (10:1-7)
 - 2. The Eating of the Little Book (10:8-11)
- G. The Two Prophesying Witnesses for 3½ years, are killed, and come back to life. (11:1-14)
- H. The Seventh Trumpet reveals the Ark off the Covenant in the Heavenly Temple. (11:15-19)
- I. The Chief Participants in the Tribulation. (chapters 12-14)
 - 1. John sees a woman clothed with the sun, the moon, and the stars. (12:1-6)
 - 2. Satan is cast down to the Earth. (12:7-12)
 - 3. The dragon persecutes the people of God. (12:13-17)
 - 4. The beast from the sea makes war with the people of God. (13:1-10)
 - 5. The beast from the land forces people to worship the beast from the sea. (13:11-18)
 - 6. John sees 144,000, "having his Father's name written on their foreheads," with the Lamb on Mount Zion. (14:1-5)
 - 7. Three angels proclaim judgment. (14:6-13)
 - 8. The angels reap the harvest. (14:14-20)
- J. The Angels Pour Out Their Seven Vial Judgments on the Earth (chapters 15-16)
 - 1. The Seven Angels are given Golden Vials containing of the Wrath of God. (15:1-8)
 - 2. The First Vial torments the followers of the

- beast. (16:1-2)
- 3. Second Vial turns the sea to blood with ensuing death. (16:3)
- 4. The Third vial changes all fresh water into blood. (16:4-7)
- 5. The Fourth Vial causes the sun to scorch the Earth with intense heat. (16:8-9)
- 6. The Fifth Vial brings total darkness and great pain in the Beast's kingdom. (16:10-11)
- 7. The Sixth Vial reveals preparations for the final battle between Good and Evil. (16:12-16)
- 8. The Seventh Vial brings a world-wide earthquake and destructive. (16:17-21)
- K. The Fall of Babylon the Great (chapters 17-18)
 - 1. The great harlot who sits on many waters: Babylon the Great. (17:1-18)
 - 2. The Destruction of Babylon. (18:1-8)
 - 3. The people of the earth mourn Babylon's destruction. (18:9-19)
 - 4. The Finality of Babylon's destruction. (18:20-24)
- L. The Marriage Supper of the Lamb. (19:1-10)
 - 1. The Heavenly Alleluiah Chorus. (19:1-6)
 - 2. The Marriage of the Lamb. (19:7-10)
- M. The Second Coming of Christ. (19:11-16)
- N. The Battle of Armageddon with the Beast and the False Prophet being cast into the Lake of Fire. (19:17-21)
- O. The Millennial Reign with Satan Imprisoned in the Bottomless Pit for a Thousand Years. (20:1-3)
- P. The resurrected martyrs live and reign with Christ for a thousand years. (20:4-6)
- Q. After the Thousand Years (20:7-22:21)
 - 1. Satan is released and makes war against the people of God, but is defeated. (20:7-9)
 - 2. Satan is cast into the Eternal Lake of Fire. (20:10)
 - 3. The Last Judgment: the wicked, along with death and Hades, are cast into the lake of fire. (20:11-15)
- R. The New Heaven and Earth (21:1-22:5)
 - 1. A new heaven and new earth replace the old. There is no more suffering or death. (21:1-2)
 - 2. God comes to dwell with humanity in the New Jerusalem. (21:3-8)
 - 3. Description of the New Jerusalem. (21:9-27)
 - 4. The river and tree of life appear for the healing of the nations. The curse is ended. (22:1-5)
- S. The Conclusion. (22:6-20)

- T. Christ's reassurance that His coming is imminent. (22:6-21) ¹

MERRILL C. TENNEY'S OUTLINE

- I. INTRODUCTION 1:1-8
 - A. The Prologue, 1:3
 - B. The Salutation—1:4-8
- II. THE FIRST VISION: CHRIST AND THE CHURCH 1:9-3:22
 - A. Portrait of the Priestly Presence 1:9-20
 - B. Letters to the Seven Churches 2:1-3:22
- III. THE SECOND VISION: CHRIST AND THE WORLD 4:1-16:21
 - A. Commission of the Lamb 4:1-5:14
 - B. Breaking of the Seven Seals 6:1-17; 8:1-5
 - C. Parenthesis 7:1-17
 - 1. The Sealing of the 144,000 7:1-8
 - 2. The Unnumbered Multitude 7:9-17
 - D. The Seven Trumpets 8:6-11:19
 - 1. Sounding of the Trumpets 8:7-9:21; 11:15-19
 - 2. Parenthesis: The Little Book 10:1-11
 - a. The Measuring of the Temple 11:1,2
 - b. The Two Witnesses 11:3-14
 - E. The Signs 12:1-14:20
 - 1. The Woman 12:1-3, 6, 14-16
 - 2. The Dragon 12:3,4,7-13,15-17
 - 3. The Man Child 12:5
 - 4. Michael, the Archangel 12:7
 - 5. The Beast from the Sea 13:1-10
 - 6. The Beast from the Earth 13:11-18
 - 7. The Lamb on Mount Zion and His Followers 14:1-5
 - 8. Parenthesis: The Angelic Announcements 14:6-20
 - F. Seven Vials (or Bowls) 15:1-16:21
 - 1. Singing Saints 15:1-4
 - 2. Judgments 15:5-16:21
- IV. THE THIRD VISION: CHRIST AND VICTORY 17:1-21:8
 - A. Fall of Babylon 17:1-18:24
 - B. The Response in Heaven 19:1-10
 - C. Victory over the Beasts 19:11-21
 - D. The Millennial Kingdom 20: 1-6

¹ Portions are adapted from *ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANICA.com*: Book of Revelation, and *REVELATION* by John F. Walvoord.

- E. Final Conflict and Judgment 20:7-15
- F. The New Heavens and the New Earth 21:1-8
- V. THE FOURTH VISION: CHRIST AND ETERNITY 21:9-22:5
 - A. The New Jerusalem 21:9-21
 - B. New Life with God and the Lamb 21:22-22:5
- VI. THE EPILOGUE: CHRIST'S CALL 22:6-21
 - A. Call to Obedience 22:6-11
 - B. Call to Labor 22:12-15
 - C. Call to Love 22:16-20
 - D. Benediction 22:21

ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

(This introduction is used by permission from Dr. Phil Stringer's *Lessons on the Book of Revelation*)

"The last book of the Bible is 'The Unveiling of Christ'. Here, as nowhere else, is our adorable Saviour and Lord manifested in all His glory, 'the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth' (John 1:14). To know Him fully it is needful that we should study this book."

William Pettingill, *The Unveiling of Jesus Christ*, p. 3

I. Promised Special Blessings

Revelation 1:3 promises special blessings to those who:

- A. read the book
- B. hear the words of the prophecy
- C. keep those things

L. W. Munhall wrote that he read the book of Revelation every six weeks just for the promised blessings.

II Revelation is an Open Book Not a Closed One

M. R. DeHaan writes:

"There is probably not a book in the entire Bible which is less read and understood than the book of the Revelation. To the average person the last book of the Bible is a deep mystery, consisting of strange fantastic predictions which cannot be understood as a result the average Bible reader knows little or nothing about either its content or its meaning. No greater delusion, however, could occur than to call the book of the Revelation a dark book and one difficult to understand." M.R. DeHaan, *Revelation*, p. 11

A. The book of Daniel was sealed for a specific time (Daniel 12:4).

B. By definition Revelation is open and not sealed (Revelation 22:10).

C. Revelation is not hard to understand, it is just hard to believe.

D. Four main approaches to the book of the Revelation

1. The preterist interpretation suggests that all of the prophecies of the book were fulfilled during the days of the Roman Empire.

2. The historical interpretation [historist] suggests that all of the prophecies of the book were fulfilled during the church age.

3. The symbolic-spiritual [symbolist] interpretation suggests that the events of the book of Revelation never actually take place but are symbolic of spiritual lessons that we need to learn.

These first three approaches are all based on the idea that the book is to be interpreted symbolically and not literally.

4. The futurist interpretation teaches that the book (from 4:1 on) is prophetic of events that remain in the future and will yet be fulfilled literally.

E. Literal fulfillment of the prophecies of Revelation is to be expected.

As Mr. DeHaan writes:

"The coming of the Holy Spirit and God's program for the church were all foretold and fulfilled in minutest detail. These same prophets, writing at the same time and under the inspiration of the same infallible Spirit, also foretold the course of this age and the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet many accept the prophecies of His first coming as literal because they are literally fulfilled, whereas they spiritualize the unfulfilled prophecies of His second coming, and argue them away. How inconsistent! The prophecies of His First and Second Advents were written at the same time by the same men, indited by the same Holy Spirit, and those which had already come to pass were literally fulfilled, then simple logic must cause us to expect the same literal fulfillment of those which are yet to be fulfilled."

Revelation, p. 13.

A belief in the literal interpretation of the Bible demands a futurist interpretation of the book of Revelation.

F. The Types of Theology Concerning Prophecy

1. Amillennialism believes that there is no 1,000 years reign of Christ upon the earth. The 1,000 years mentioned in Revelation is merely symbolic.

2. Postmillennialism believes that man will achieve a 1,000 years of peace upon the earth and that Christ will then return to the earth. Postmillennialists interpret some prophetic Scriptures literally and some symbolically.

3. Premillennialism teaches that Christ will return and then rule and reign on this earth for a thousand years. Premillennialists interpret the Bible literally and thus it is the correct interpretation.

G. Symbols in the book of Revelation

John does use symbols in the book of Revelation but he always interprets them for us. As J. Vernon McGee writes:

"To those who claim that it is all symbolic and beyond our understanding, I say that the Book of Revelation is to be taken literally. And when a symbol is used, it will be so stated. Also it will be symbolic of reality, and the reality will be more real than the symbol for the simple reason that John uses symbols to describe reality. In our study of the book, that is an all-important principle to follow. Let's allow the Revelation to say what it wants to say."

Thru the Bible, vol. 5, p. 881.

III. The Human Writer

The Scripture declares that the apostle John is the human writer 1:1, 4, 9; 22:18. [The author is the Holy Spirit, II Tim. 3:16.] The book was written while John was exiled on the isle of Patmos, 1:9.

Critics of the literal approach to the book of Revelation have tried to make the writer of the book a different John. They have even claimed that the Apostle John was never exiled upon the Isle of Patmos.

In the Second Century A.D., Justin Martyr, Irenaeus and Tertullian quote from the book and refer to it as written by John the apostle. So do Eusebius, Origen and Clement of Alexandria in the Third Century.

Origen, Irenaeus and Eusebius all refer to the Apostle John being exiled to Patmos and returning from exile and living in Ephesus.

The King James Bible translators referred to the book as, *The Revelation of Saint John the Divine*.

IV. The Date

The book is generally thought to have been written during the reign of Domitian around 91 to 96 A.D.

V. The Chronology of the Book of Revelation

Sometimes people are confused by the book of Revelation because they assume that it covers future events in direct chronological order. Actually chapters 6-11 cover the tribulation period from an earthly viewpoint; then chapters 12-14 cover the same period from heaven's viewpoint. Chapters 15 through 19 cover the last half of the tribulation, yet again. Understanding the book of Revelation will require careful study and rightly dividing the word of truth (II Timothy 2:15).

VI. The Book of Revelation Reminds Us That Satan Is Not Yet in Hell

Satan is still on this earth and is our active foe and adversary.

VII. Revelation and Genesis

Many commentators have described how the book of Revelation concludes many themes developed in the book of Genesis.

Harry Ironside puts it this way:

"The Word of God is one absolutely perfect, unbroken and unbreakable circle. A comparison of Genesis and Revelation will readily make this plain, and show how we have the types in Genesis and the completion of the truth in Revelation—in the one book the beginning, in the other the consummation.

Genesis gives us the creation of the heavens and the earth. Revelation presents a new heaven and a new earth.

Genesis shows us the earthly paradise, with the tree of life and the river of blessing, lost through sin. Revelation gives us the Paradise of God with the Tree of Life and the pure river of water of life proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb-Paradise regained through Christ's atonement.

In Genesis we see the first man and his wife set over all God's creation. In Revelation we behold the Second Man and His Bride ruling over a redeemed world.

In Genesis we are told of the first typical sacrificial lamb. In Revelation the Lamb once slain is in the midst of the throne.

In Genesis we learn of the beginning of sin, when the serpent first entered the garden of delight to beguile Adam and Eve with his sophistries. In Revelation that old Serpent called the Devil and Satan is cast into the lake of fire.

In Genesis we have the first murderer, the first polygamist, the first rebel, the first drunkard, etc. In Revelation all such, who refuse to accept God's grace in Christ Jesus, are banished from His presence forever.

In Genesis we view the rise of Babel, or Babylon. In Revelation we are called to contemplate its doom.

In Genesis we see man's city; in Revelation the city of God.

Genesis shows us how sorrow, death, pain and tears, the inevitable accompaniments of sin and rebellion, came into the world. Revelation does not close until we have seen God wiping away all tears, and welcoming His redeemed into a home where sin, death, pain and sorrow never come.

And so we might go on and on contrasting and comparing these two books. .."

VIII. A Book of Sevens

A. Dr. W. B. Riley said:

"This Book of the Apocalypse has been called the Book of the Sevens. There are seven visions, seven Spirits of God, seven candlesticks, the seven stars, seven lamps of fire, seven seals, seven horns and seven eyes of the Lamb, seven angels with seven trumpets, seven thunders, seven heads of the beast with seven crowns upon the heads, the seven plagues, seven vials, seven mountains and seven regencies."

B. The promise of Christ's return is stated seven times in the book of Revelation: 1:7; 2:25; 3:3, 11; 22:7, 12, 20.

C. Seven blessings are listed:

1. the blessed challenge—1:3
2. the blessed comfort—14:13
3. the blessed cautiousness—16:15
4. the blessed calling—19:9
5. the blessed conquest—20:6
6. the blessed cherishing—22:7
7. the blessed conformity—22:14

IX. Grammar and the Book of Revelation

Many commentators have referred to the fact that the Greek text of Revelation violates so many normal rules of Greek grammar. As a result, it is very difficult to produce an English translation that follows the rules of English grammar.

God is greater than all man-made rules (including grammar) and the information He wishes to communicate to us is above all human guidelines.

X. Prophetic Understanding

There are 404 verses in Revelation. 278 contain references to the Old Testament. The book of Revelation brings fulfillment and organization to all of the prophetic statements scattered throughout the other 65 books of Scripture.

XI. A List of Symbols

John Walvoord gives this helpful list of symbols as scattered throughout the book, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, p. 29-30:

The seven stars (1:16) represent seven angels (1:20).

The seven lampstands (1:13) represent seven churches (1:20).

The hidden manna (2:17) speaks of Christ in glory (cf. Exodus 16:33-34; Hebrews 9:4).

The morning star (2:28) refers to Christ returning before the dawn, suggesting the rapture of the church before the establishment of the Kingdom (cf. Revelation 22:16; II Peter 1:19).

The key of David (3:7) represents the power to open and close doors (Isaiah 22:22).

The seven lamps of fire represent the sevenfold Spirit of God (4:5).

The living creatures (4:7) portray the attributes of God.

The seven eyes represent the seven-fold Spirit of God (5:6)

The odors of the golden vials symbolize the prayers of the saints (5:8).

The four horses and their riders (6:1 ff.) represent successive events in the developing tribulation.

The fallen star (9:1) is the angel of the abyss, probably Satan (9:11).

Many references are made to Jerusalem: the great city (11:8), Sodom and Egypt (11:8), which stand in contrast to the new Jerusalem, the heavenly city.

The stars of heaven (12:4) refer to fallen angels (12:9).

The woman and the child (12:1-2) seem to represent Israel and Christ (12:5-6).

Satan is variously described as the beast, great dragon, the old serpent, and the devil (12:9; 20:2).

The time, times, and half a time (12:14) are the same as 1,260 days (12:6).

The beast out of the sea (13:1-10) is the future world ruler and his empire.

The beast out of the earth (13:11-17) is the false prophet (19:20).

The harlot (17:1) variously described as the great city (17:18), as is usually interpreted as apostate Christendom.

The waters (17:1) on which the woman sits represent the peoples of the world (17:15).

The ten horns (17:12) are ten kings associated with the beast (13:1; 17:3, 7,8, 11-13, 16-17).

The Lamb is Lord of lords and King of kings (17:14).

Fine linen is symbolic of the righteous deeds of the saints (19:8).

The rider of the white horse (19:11-16, 19) is clearly identified as Christ, the King of kings.

The lake of fire is described as the second death (20:14).

Christ is the Root and Offspring of David (22:16).

COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK OF REVELATION

I. THE VISION OF THE RISEN CHRIST. 1:1-20.

CHAPTER ONE

A. The Introduction – 1:1-8.

1. The Prologue. 1:1-3.

Vs. 1a. The Title of the Book – “The Revelation of Jesus Christ.”

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him.”

“Revelation” (Greek, *Apokalupsis* = to uncover, reveal); Oliver Green says “revelation” means “the veil rolled aside.” Hence the Book of Revelation is THE UNVEILING OF JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD. TO THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

This unveiling was given by the Father to the Son, to an angel, to John who gave it to us.

“shew” – This is not just an old English spelling for the word show. Shew means to have both mental and visual comprehension. This book was designed to be understood.

“servants”, *doulois* = in bondage to a master. This is the slavery word for bond slaves.

“which must shortly come to pass.” This is the terminology for taking place quickly.

“angel.” This angel is sometimes called the revealing angel. Angels are a prominent theme in the book of Revelation. W. R. Newell writes:

“Many other angels are seen besides this revealing one whom our Lord calls “mine angel”: the whole “innumerable company” in 5:11 and 7:11; four in 7:1; “another,” 7:2; the seven trumpet angels in 8:2; “another” in 8:3; “another strong angel,” 10:1; six successive special angels in chapter 14; seven angels with the seven last plagues, chapters 15, 16; another heralding Babylon's final destruction in 18:1-3; the “strong angel” who invites the birds to Armageddon, 19:17; the angel that binds Satan, 20:1-3; and the scene of 21:9.

We know that after Satan is bound and the millennial kingdom brought in the “inhabited earth” [people] will not be “subjected to angels” (Hebrews 2:5). Therefore we do not find angels ruling after the binding of Satan. Of course, it is by angelic operation that the kingdom of the 1,000 years is cleared of all those opposing it. See Matthew 13:40-43,

remembering that it is “the end of the age, not the “world,” seen there.

The Book of the Revelation, p. 5.

Vs. 1b-2. The Human Writer Identified — “all the things that he (John) saw.” (cf. vv, 4, 9)

John is the recorder (or witness) for three things:

- the Word of God — The Scriptures or Bible
- the testimony of Jesus Christ from *marturian* = a bearing witness or evidence (Liddell and Scott's *GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON*)

c. all the things that he saw

Vs. 3. The Value of this Book – “hear the words of this prophecy.”

1. Prophecy means to speak the mind of God.

2. The word is used also in 11:6; 19:10, 22:7, 10, 18, and 19. Some prophecy was *current*, while other involved *future* events; most prophecy in Revelation was futuristic in scope.

3. A special blessing for the person who studies and obeys the book of Revelation. $\text{O}\text{S}\&\text{S}\text{O}\text{K}\text{O}$ is translated “blessed” 43 times and “happy” 6 times. It carries the idea of being well pleased. [1:3 is the only scripture that promises a blessing for reading this Book.]

2. The Salutation – 1:4-8

Vs. 4. Asia” – This Roman province roughly corresponds to the area of modern Turkey.

“Him which is, and which was and which is to come” – refers to God the Father.

“seven churches” – These are enumerated and explained in chaps. 2-3

“the seven spirits” – The seven Spirits which are before his throne (see 3:1, 4:5, 5:6; Zechariah 3:8). Zech. 4:1-6) refers to special manifestations of the Holy Spirit. in which a seven-branched lampstand illustrates that God accomplishes His work through the agency of the Holy Spirit. (W.A. Criswell's, *Believer's Study Bible*)

Vss. 5-6f. Six characteristics of Christ Jesus are given.

1. He is the faithful witness – all other witnesses are imperfect – see Psalm 89:36-37. “FAITHFUL” is later found in 19:11 as a title of Jesus Christ.

2. He is the first begotten of the dead – not first born as in some translations. *prwtotokos* = (Eng. proto type) first + to bring forth. Liberals and cults teach that according to this vs. and John 1:18 Jesus was humanly begotten and not Divine. However, this verse teaches nothing about Christ's birth, but only about his unique

