

(Throughout this study I will rely first and foremost on the entire Bible, the Book of Revelation specifically and also Clarence Larkin's study of the Book of Revelation. I will quote from all.) You can read or print Larkin's book for free at:
http://gracebbc.dyndns.org:81/FTP_Root/Larkin/The-Book-of-Revelation-by-Clarence-Larkin.pdf

Today we begin understanding what the Lord Jesus Christ intended us to learn from His final Revelation of Himself to us through John. The Revelation is the last book of the Bible, the last Word of God to man until He returns for us and in it we see the final culmination of God's plans and purposes for all His creation... the Universe, the Earth, Angels and Humans.

The Bible begins with Creation and Man, sinless, in communion with God, made to live forever, in a perfect place without death or decay. The rest of the Bible is His revelation to us of how we sinned, forfeiting that perfect place, causing our separation from God, bringing ourselves and all the Earth and Creation into subjection to sin, Satan, death and decay and also how God planned to deal with all of that and to redeem us to Himself... a specific people, chosen and set apart for Himself as His most prized and precious creation.

In the Revelation we see the final fulfillment of all prophecy and the culmination of His plan.

The one main purpose of God is the Glory of God. His plan is how He intends to do that.

For God to fully glorify Himself, He must be glorified in all aspects of His Person and Character... His love, mercy and grace... His holiness and righteousness... His power and sovereignty... but also His justice, His anger and wrath... every part of Himself must be fully displayed... how it all works together as God Almighty, the Righteous, Holy and Perfect One. All of Himself must be displayed and glorified before His created audience... all angels and all humans... elect and non-elect of both groups. But He also will have chosen to glorify Himself by glorifying us, His chosen and elect humans... and especially **us, the true Church**, which He is creating as His special love gift to His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ... we are His promised bride.

I say 'US'... but only God knows each heart here. By 'us' I mean God's Children... only those who have truly placed their faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work on the Cross as He paid the full penalty for all the sin of all He had chosen and would come to Him.

Part of how He will glorify Himself is in how He will bless and glorify us through all eternity... He has adopted us as His true children... He has made us to be kings and priests unto Himself... He will shower us with the eternal rewards we'll have earned through faithful service... and when He finally casts all those who have rejected Him into the lake of fire for eternal punishment, we will be awestruck with His grace, love and mercy toward us in choosing us for Himself... in calling us and saving us... in keeping us and preserving us... in preparing us to rule and reign forever as kings and priests while every one of us, at that moment, realizes... that we deserve to be cast into the lake of fire also.

The moment we fully recognize that, we will fall on our faces, weeping before Him in love, joy, thankfulness... we will be filled with eternal gratitude and we will praise and glorify Him forever and ever... never ceasing.

Then... He will finally, be fully glorified in all of Who He is, in front of all His Creation. In fact, I wonder if perhaps there will be some way that we are always reminded of all that He has done for us as we read at the end of Revelation... *'Blessed are those who do His commandments that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. ¹⁵ But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.'* 22:15

From the moment of the fall... of man's sin and separation from God in Genesis chapter 3, all of the Old Testament through the Gospels has been how God would personally; completely deal with all the sin of His chosen ones. The New Testament... Acts through Revelation chapter 3, then further reveals Himself to the true Church and finally... in Revelation, after Chapter 3, He tells us how He will finish His work with Israel and with all the humans who have rejected Him throughout all time... and how He will finally and fully glorify not only Himself, but also us as we rule and reign with the Lord Jesus Christ for 1000 years and then forever.

Throughout the Bible we see glimpses of God's wrath and justice revealed but finally, in Revelation beginning in Chapter 4, we see His wrath and justice finally poured out in full retribution, which had been held back and stored up these many thousands of years.

God chose to reveal Himself to us through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The first time He came, He revealed Himself and first offered the Kingdom to Israel, which they rejected. Then He offered Himself as God's Passover Lamb and dealt completely with the sin of His chosen ones. He poured out His mercy and grace, His love and faithfulness.

The next time He comes to Earth He will reveal Himself as the conquering King of Kings and Lord of Lords and He will deal with the sin of the unbelieving World by destroying His enemies and setting up His Kingdom on Earth where He will rule and reign for 1000 years.

But the seven years between Jesus Christ removing His Bride the Church in the Rapture and when He physically returns to Earth in power and majesty as conquering King of Kings, is the time when He finishes His dealings with unbelieving Israel... when He finishes His chastisement of Israel as a nation and finally removes their blindness and draws them to Himself and saves them... and when God pours out His wrath on all who have rejected His Son and His offer of Salvation.

Then, at the end of Revelation, God reveals what He will do for us after Jesus Christ's thousand year reign... how He will finally deal completely with all sin, how He will create a new Heaven and Earth wherein are only righteousness and holiness and how we will be blessed and glorified by God through all eternity and we bless and glorify Him.

Let's begin to look at Revelation Chapter 1:

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.***

This is not the Revelation of John; it is the Revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ which He gave to John to show to us... the things which must soon happen. This is God, unveiling to us what has till now been hidden... now it is being revealed.

The Author of this book is Jesus Christ Himself; He even autographs it for us at the end. He says, -"I JESUS have sent Mine Angel to testify unto you these things in the Churches." Rev. 22:16.

Revelation is not history; it is prophecy and prophecy of prophecy being fulfilled... it not only tells us what is coming, it even tells us of the fulfillment of every prophecy in the OT which was not fulfilled by the first coming of Jesus Christ. It is the completion of all prophecy and all prophecy points to the Lord Jesus Christ. He says, Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this **prophecy...** and Revelation is the final prophecy given by Jesus Christ. There is nothing more He has chosen to add until He returns. In it, He has completed all He has chosen to reveal to man until He returns. All that is left is for us to watch what He has said... unfold before us. In fact He promises to curse anyone who adds to or detracts from this, His final Word to man.

Any so called new revelation today is false prophecy from false prophets of which are myriad.

He promises a special blessing to all who read and all who hear Revelation. He doesn't say those who understand it or those who teach it... all of us will be blessed by reading and studying it together.

After chapter 3, Revelation is actually a continuation of the book of Daniel. No one can fully grasp Revelation without having a handle on Daniel... so we will, of necessity, dip into Daniel occasionally over the next few months to see how they both go hand in hand.

Revelation contains many symbols, but nothing beyond our comprehension. Why does He use so many symbols... why didn't He just tell it straight and simple?

The answer to that question is the same answer He gave to His disciples when they asked why He only taught the people in parables...

'They said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" Jesus answered them, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. For whoever has, to him more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.' But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it"' Matt 13:10-17.

Revelation is a revealing to us, God's Children. Duet 29:29 says, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are REVEALED belong unto us and our children forever." This is God revealing to us... pay attention. He will give us understanding.

To the World at large, Revelation was never meant to be simple and understandable... it was meant to be hidden. But to you, His children, it is meant to be clear and revealed by the Holy Spirit. The World at large is under great deception in the kingdom of darkness, in captivity to the god of this World, Satan. But you are children of light, you are not in darkness that the signs of the times or the nearness of the Rapture or the meaning of Revelation should be hidden from you. Wake up... open your eyes, open your ears... the Holy Spirit is speaking to us.

After the third chapter, it is written primarily to Israel... it is God's completion of His work on, in and through Israel. Revelation is the final 70th week of that magnificent Prophecy in Daniel chapter 9, the 70 weeks of Daniel.

Daniel was told to 'seal up' the words of his prophecy until the **time of the end**... not the end of time, the time of the end... of the *times of the Gentiles*... we are in the last days of the *times of the Gentiles*... revelation is the unsealing of that book... John is told to not seal up the sayings of this book because the time is at hand.

Hear me! The time is at hand. This might be the last study of the end times any of us will undertake... the time is at hand. We are in the last days of the last days of the *times of the Gentiles*.

Russia, Iran, Turkey and other Muslim nations are now camped... not across the mountain, not across the river, but just across the fence from Israel. Russia and the US have allowed Iran and Hezbollah to stage right at Israel's doorstep. The war of Ezekiel 38 and 39 is at hand; the Rapture is at hand; the Tribulation is at hand... Wake up! I have never felt so strongly that we are in the last days, weeks, months or year of our first time on Earth. Soon we will be removed at the Rapture; we will leave here, go to Heaven for the seven years of the Tribulation, during which time we will be wed to the Lord Jesus Christ as His bride... we will receive some of our eternal rewards as wedding presents and then we will return with Jesus Christ at His second coming... for our second time on Earth to rule and reign with Him for 1000 years.

The things we will study in Revelation and Daniel are not some far off future... they could begin today or tomorrow.

All prophecy has to do with the Church, Israel and the Nations. Here we have the Church in the beginning 3 chapters, then Israel in the middle and finally the saved gentile nations at the end.

We find this also in the construction of the New Jerusalem at the end of Revelation... the Church is in the foundation with the 12 apostles, Israel is in the 12 gates with the names of the 12 tribes, and the saved nations are in the streets.

Revelation is mostly Jewish. It is God finishing His dealing with Israel in the 70th week of Daniel... the Church is removed at the beginning of Chapter 4 and not seen again until we return with Christ at Armageddon.

Verse 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.'

It is addressed to seven Churches of that time... obviously not all the Churches... only seven. That is because not only was this addressed to seven specific Churches, but they were Churches which were to be prophetically representative of seven successive periods of Church history from the time of John, about AD 95 until the Church is removed, about AD 2017 or 2018... or so.

Here Jesus presents Himself as Prophet, Priest and King. He is the "Faithful Witness," our Prophet. As the "First Begotten From the Dead," He sprinkled His own blood onto the Mercy Seat in the Heavenly Tabernacle as our High Priest. As the "Prince Of The Kings Of The Earth," when He takes the Throne, He will be The King. As Prophet Jesus is God's Word, as Priest He is God's Lamb, and as King He is God's Lion.

vs 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. "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."

Here Jesus is referring to His second coming, His physical return to Earth at Armageddon, after the seven years of the Tribulation.

vs 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. ¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, ¹¹ saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "**What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia:** to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

The glorified Lord Jesus Christ Himself appears to John.

¹² Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and in the midst of the seven lampstands *One* like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. ¹⁴ His head and hair *were* white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; ¹⁵ His feet *were* like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; ¹⁶ He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance *was* like the sun shining in its strength. ¹⁷ And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸ I *am* He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death. Write **the things which you have seen**, and **the things which are**, and **the things which will take place after this**.

Then Jesus explains these first symbols to us... ²⁰ The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.

Here is the key to accurately understanding the Book of Revelation.

Paul tells Timothy of the importance of rightly dividing the Word of Truth. Here we must rightly divide the Book of Revelation. Jesus tells us that there are 3 main divisions of the Book of

Revelation... 1. The first division: ***the things which John is seeing*** at the beginning... the Lord Jesus Christ glorified, speaking the Word of God, the Sword of the Spirit, standing among seven lampstands which are these seven Churches in Asia Minor with seven stars in His right hand which are the seven angels watching over those seven Churches. 2. The second division of Revelation: **the things which are**... that will be the seven letters to the seven Churches representing the seven successive periods on Church History... that is... c AD 95 until the removal of the Church at the Rapture. 3. The third division of Revelation: **the things which will take place after this**... after what?... after the time of the Church, which will then be the major portion of the Book... the seven year Tribulation, the return of Jesus Christ to Earth at Armageddon, the 1000 year reign of Christ on Earth with us ruling and reigning with Him, and finally the final judgment and a God's creation of New Heavens and a New Earth where we will live, rule and reign with Him forever.

The Lord Jesus Christ means for us to understand these important divisions of the Book of Revelation. If we don't, we won't understand the book at all... 1. **the things which you have seen**, Jesus Christ... and 2. **the things which are**, the time of the Church... and 3. **the things which will take place after this**... the Tribulation, Armageddon, the 2nd Coming and Eternity.