

## Introduction to Revelation – “Preparing for the World’s End”

(read the quotes from J. Vernon McGee)

The Book of Revelation is probably the most misunderstood and misrepresented book of the Bible. Yet before you can begin to understand the contents of this book, you must first understand the other 65 books of the Bible and what you believe about their application to your life and mine. There are four major interpretations about the book.

1. ***The preterist*** – an interpretation is that all of Revelation has been fulfilled in the past. It was written to bring comfort to the persecuted church and was written in symbols that Christians of that day would understand.
2. ***The historical*** – an interpretation that the fulfillment of the book is going on continuously in the history of the church from John's day to the present.
3. ***The historical-spiritualist*** – an interpretation that the book is a refinement of the historical theory and was advanced first by Sir William Ramsay. It says that the two beasts are imperial and provincial Rome and the point of the book is to encourage Christians. Revelation has largely been fulfilled and contains only spiritual lessons for the church today.
4. ***The futurist*** - an interpretation that believes that the book is mostly prophetic. There is good reason for this. I want you to notice that there are six (6) important features about the Book of Revelation.
  - A. It is the only prophetic book in the New Testament
  - B. The author, John, typically begins with the very beginning of life when he speaks of Jesus Christ. Now he continues to go beyond into the future further than anyone else. (Vs. 1:1-2)
  - C. There is a special blessing promised to those who read it. (Vs. 1:3)
  - D. It is NOT a sealed book. Daniel was told to seal it, but John was told not to seal it. (Dan 12:9; Rev 22:10)
  - E. It is a series of visions expressed in symbols which deal with reality. with reality as no other book does. The literal is always implied unless John makes it clear otherwise.
  - F. It consummates and concludes that which has begun somewhere else in the Scripture.

There are ten (10) great subjects that are concluded in Revelation. So when you want to understand more about each one, you must end up in Revelation. Let's look for a moment at the ten (10) subjects that are given finality and conclusion in Revelation.

1. ***The Lord Jesus Christ Himself.*** He is the real subject of the book. Look at verse 1. "The Revelation of Jesus Christ". We see the fulfillment of Christ as victor over Satan in the end.
2. ***The church.*** The church did not begin in the Old Testament but was first mentioned by Christ in Matt. 16:18

3.     *The resurrection and translation of the saints.* I Thess. 4:13-18;  
I Cor. 15:51-52
4.     *The Great Tribulation.* This was first mentioned back in Deuteronomy 4:30.
5.     *Satan and evil.* Ezek 28:14-18
6.     *The "Man of Sin"* Ezek 28:1-10
7.     *The course and end of apostate Christendom* Dan. 2:31-45; Matt. 13
8.     *The beginning, middle, and end of the "times of the Gentiles."* Dan 2:37-45;  
Luke 21:24-27
9.     *The Second Coming of Christ.* Jude 14-15 Enoch first spoke of it back in Genesis.
10.    *Israel's covenants.* God made a covenant with Abraham and promised him  
five things Gen. 12:1-3. In Revelation He fulfills them.

There is a great tie between Genesis and Revelation. Notice these things.

In Genesis the earth was created; in Revelation the earth was destroyed.  
In Genesis Satan had his first rebellion; in Revelation Satan has his last rebellion.  
In Genesis darkness was called night; in Revelation there "is no night." Rev. 21:25; 22:5  
In Genesis the waters were called the sea; in Revelation there is no more sea.  
In Genesis sin entered the world; In Revelation it was the exodus of sin.  
In Genesis the curse was given; in Revelation the curse was removed.  
In Genesis death entered the world; in Revelation there is no more death.  
In Genesis was the beginning of sorrow; in Revelation there is no more sorrow.  
In Genesis was the marriage of the first Adam; in Revelation the marriage of the last  
Adam.  
In Genesis we saw man's city built, Babylon; in Revelation we see Babylon destroyed  
and God's city built.  
In Genesis Satan's doom was told; in Revelation Satan's doom was executed.  
In Genesis it opens with a global, universal view; in Revelation God shows what He is  
going to do with His universe and with His creatures.

Now with that in mind we can begin to look at the seven churches in chapters 2 and 3, and what they may have to say to us in our day. There is nothing in the Bible that is there just for historical sake. Everything has an application to our lives today and we need to pay attention to it. Beginning in chapter 4, I believe everything is future.