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# The Unveiling

Introduction to the Book of Revelation  
Part I

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Get ready to be challenged and rocked as you study the book of Revelation and discern the glory that is coming to the earth! We are not looking to be taken away, for the overcoming Bride is being revealed! Keep in mind, this is much more than a study of REVELATION, it is a study of how Jesus will be UNVEILED in His Bride in the last days. There is much yet to see from the book of revelation so open your heart and ask the Lord for eyes that see.

- The most deeply spiritual book of the New Testament is before you now.
- Revelation is a book written for you, to satisfy your craving to be one with Jesus Christ. It is something that must be **“eaten” (Rev. 10:9)** if it is to be understood. It is a meal to be savored.
- Revelation is a book of symbols that require discernment, time, and the Holy Spirit before we learn the meaning of the symbols. They will yield their meaning, but it takes time. Therefore, to UNDERSTAND the book of Revelation requires TIME. It can be compared to **“learning a foreign language.”** Be patient.
- This is more than a vision given to John; **it is meant to be “an inward discovery,”** a delightful unveiling within us. This is not a drama of Satan’s worst, but a supernatural drama of **“God’s best,”** pouring through his beautiful Son, Jesus Christ.
- When Jesus unveiled the deep spiritual truths of the heart of God he **“taught in parables”** (Matthew 13:34), using symbols to teach us. Today, he continues to teach us through the language of the heart—*pictures, parables, and allegories.*
- The language of Revelation is the **“language of pictures.”** It is more like a video or photo album than an outline of chronological events. LEARN THE LANGUAGE OF PICTURE AND YOU WILL LEARN THE LANGUAGE OF GOD! Even paleo-Hebrew was nothing but symbols and pictures. Symbols have power to take us into another realm. To reject the language of symbols and pictures is to blind your eyes to truth.
- This is the book of Revelation, *not the book of revelations* (plural). It emphasizes one revelation alone: Christ unveiled in his people. To read this book with any other focus is to miss the center of its meaning. There are other truths waiting for you to discover, but only after centering our gaze on this one, our Magnificent Obsession.

**The PURPOSE of this book is to “unveil Jesus and His Bride” to the cosmos AND to “give us HOPE!!!”**

## **AUTHOR & AUDIENCE**

**It was to the “beloved” disciple, John, that this revelation was first imparted. John was the apostle of love.** In his later years, he taught us the importance of love, “for God is love” (1 John 4:8). John writes for us an incredible book full of symbols and intriguing insights into the heart of God. Yet despite nearly two thousand years of fascination with the book of Revelation, the meaning of John’s masterpiece continues to be debated.

The audience is not just the first century church that endured Nero’s persecution, or the 2<sup>nd</sup> century church that endured Domitian’s horrible persecution. **IT IS FOR EVERY SERVANT AND LOVER OF GOD TODAY. TODAY** if you hear His voice....

**DATE**

It is generally believed that this book was written during two possible periods: between AD “**64-68**” under the reign of emperor **Nero**, and during his persecution and terror; or between AD “**92-96**” under the reign of the emperor **Domitian**, who similarly launched a campaign of persecution to destroy the church.

Traditionally, the book of Revelation has been dated near the end of the first century, around **A.D. 96**. Some writers, however, have advanced the preterist (from a Latin word meaning “that which is past”) view, contending that the Apocalypse was penned around A.D. 68 or 69, and thus the thrust of the book is supposed to relate to the impending destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70).

In fact, **the evidence for the later date is extremely strong**. The external evidence for the late dating of Revelation is of the highest quality.

**The book of Revelation is the “Sixth Gospel of Jesus Christ.”** Matthew, Mark, Luke and John wrote what they saw of Jesus Christ on the earth in the days of His flesh. Luke, in the book of Acts, wrote of the revelation of Jesus that came by the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost and throughout the in-part realm of the earnest of the Spirit during the church age. But John, in the book of Revelation, wrote what he witnessed of the full and complete revelation of Jesus Christ in sons upon mount Zion, in the manchild on the throne, and in the New Jerusalem come down from God out of heaven. John the Revelator wrote what he saw of the ascended and glorified Christ manifesting out of the heavens of God’s Spirit. This book releases the mind of Christ out of celestial realms. We must be *in the Spirit on the Lord’s day* to understand it, just as John was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day to receive it.

The Greek word for revelation is, **apokàlypsis** It is a derivative of APOKALUPTO. APOKALUPTO is a compound word composed of APO, meaning "off" or "away," and KALUPTO, meaning "to cover up." Thus APOKALUPSIS means to take the cover off, to uncover, unveil, reveal or disclose. It implies the drawing away or removal of everything that veils or hides, and therefore it is always opposed to concealment or secrecy.

We will be teaching you that it is the Revelation of Jesus Christ “**IN HIS BRIDE**,” not just a manual to survive judgments. We are those who believe that the last days are full of a glory that will only increase as we approach the end of the age. Jesus will arise in His Bride, His church, with victory and triumph. Overcoming every barrier, sin, sickness, satan, even death itself, Jesus will come to the church not just to snatch it away, but to transform us into the glory He promised us would come! LISTEN: If Jesus Christ delivers us from all evil, then it means the REVELATION of Jesus Christ liberates believers from the fear of impending catastrophe! The victory has already been won! He has conquered satan, sin, and the fear of the future!

To interpret the Book of Revelation it is important to understand certain truths:

- It is the unveiling of Christ, not merely **a manual of coming events!**
- Jesus spoke in parables and continues to teach us through the language of the heart-**pictures**.
- Without an understanding of these **pictures and symbols**, we will be like the Sadducees and Pharisees who could not “hear” the words of Jesus.
- Of the 404 verses in the Apocalypse, **278** allude to the Old Testament Scriptures. The Book of Daniel is cited more than any other.

**Wonderful Truths about the Last Days**

1. The Last Days will be a time of two extremes: Extreme **DARKNESS** and an Extreme **OUTPOURING** of glory, righteousness, and supernatural signs and wonders!
2. A greater **GLORY** is coming.

3. Every believer will have an increase of **supernatural divine communication**. (prophesy, have dreams and visions as we experience an increase of Divine Communication – Acts 2:17, Joel 2:28-29)
4. Spirit of Elijah will be poured out in the greatest **REVIVAL** ever to hit the earth.

It will be the Church's greatest hour. We will see the miracles recorded in the book Acts and the book of Exodus combined and multiplied on a global scale. For the Church, it is a time to lift up our heads, for our redemption draws near!

5. The Church will be filled with **Bridal love**. (Hosea 2:16, Song of Songs, Rev.22:17)
6. The Bride will experience supernatural **provision & guidance** like in the wilderness (i.e. bread from heaven, water from a rock, cloud)
7. The Bride will experience supernatural **protection**, pockets of mercy in the midst of judgments falling (Goshen principle – Ex.8:22-23, Mic.7:15, Isaiah 4:2-6)
8. Worldwide **prayer and worship movement** will rise to a crescendo. Houses of Prayer will be raised up to contend with every other house. Kingdom power will be released through the prayers of the saints. There will be a great joining of the Prayer Movement and the Signs and Wonders movement. Fire & Fragrance!
9. There are certain **truths and mysteries** God has reserved for the last days. 1 Peter 1:5, Daniel 12:4
10. The Great **Harvest** – 1 Billion Souls (Apostolic Missions Movement)
11. The **Salvation** of Israel – They will look upon Him whom they have pierced.
12. Jesus victory over every **foe** (anarchy, antichrist, Armageddon). The testimony of Jesus (the unveiling of His heart) is the Spirit of Prophecy. This anointing will fall upon God's people. Warfare will be intense, but so will the victory be sweet! Christ's Kingdom is established and His Throne over the nations. Jesus is returning to the earth! This is our blessed hope, our eternal joy, and our constant desire – to see the KING enthroned among His people.

**A NEW BREED is coming! SONS & DAUGHTERS OF THE LIVING GOD! Romans 8:19 and JOEL 2:1-3 --- KINGS & PRIESTS, His unveiling is OUR unveiling!**

- Don't think **either/or**. It is both glory and shaking, light and darkness, triumph and difficulty. Bible prophecy is true. But it must be understood and interpreted with humility and with illumination. This study will require patience, for we must study line upon line, and precept upon precept to glean even a measure of understanding of the Last Days. To say judgment is coming is only half the story. GLORY and DARKNESS will both increase. We focus on the GLORY!
- The words "**rapture**," "**millennium**," "**anti-christ, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming**" are not found in Revelation. The "great tribulation" is a phrase only used for the believing ones in Revelation. It is not a term used for the unbeliever.
- **Humility** must guard our hearts when we think about the "coming" of Christ. Almost everyone missed the first coming of Jesus to the earth. Is it possible that the full revelation of Christ's 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming is missed unless God opens our eyes and our hearts to perceive it!

**INTERPRETING (Models of interpreting) THE BOOK OF REVELATION**

There are levels to understanding God's Word. When the transcendent, glorious God gives us an inspired book, it compels us to dig deeper and look beyond the cursory meaning of words. Yes, there is a plain and literal surface meaning to all that God has given us, but we know there is yet more to discover. The Bible is full of symbols, poetry, metaphors, and figurative language that engages our spirits, not merely our minds.

The prophetic writings of the Bible, including the book of Revelation, require that we look at them like gazing upon the finest piece of art. They beg us to ponder, to inquire, to study further until they yield their

beauty and meaning. With eyes opened by the Holy Spirit we find a spiritual application to all that is written, for that is where we touch the reality of God through his Word.

As we grow up into more of Christ in all things, the Word of God will become richer and more delightful to our hearts. It will speak to us out of relationship, for intimacy is always where revelation begins to come into our spirit.

Before we consider the Unveiling of Jesus Christ, it is important to lay a foundation of how to interpret the end time (eschatology) and ALL of the Bible. As we consider the 'last days' the church today is basically divided into four interpretive models: Several views have dominated how Christians have interpreted and understood the symbols of this divine unveiling over the generations, known in these ways: Futurist, preterist, historical, and idealist.

***Futurist Pre-viewing of History.*** This view goes in the other direction: it interprets the events as largely happening in the future. The symbols are prophetic pointers to the end of the world, previewing what will take place leading up to the return of Christ. Rather than having relevance strictly to first-century believers, it offers believers in every age assurance of evil's destruction and ultimate rescue. **The basic premise of the futurist viewpoint is that the majority of the prophecies in Revelation still await a future, literal fulfillment.** This view of interpreting Revelation is very popular today, particularly among dispensationalists. It is the method used by the authors of the bestselling *Left Behind* series. Those who hold this view generally believe that everything after Revelation 3 will be fulfilled in the future.

Teachers and scores of others tell us that the whole book is fulfilled in the brief span of 1260 days, or three and one half years. They tell us that in the days of the Great Tribulation there issues a world-wide famine from which one billion people die, believers are martyred in incredible numbers, a nuclear war takes place, one third of the world's vegetation is destroyed, one third of the world's oceans are turned into blood, one third of the world's drinking water is so polluted that to drink it kills people, horrible locusts (maybe helicopters!) plague the world's unbelievers for a solid five months, and then 200,000,000 Chinese march on Israel, and on their way they kill nearly one billion more people.

The futurist viewpoint often divides Revelation into three sections, which are defined in Revelation 1:19. There, the apostle John is instructed to "write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later." Following this three-part outline, Revelation 1 contains John's vision of the risen Christ and represents the past ("what you have seen"). Chapters 2 and 3, which contain the letters to the seven churches, describe the present ("what is now"). Finally, chapters 4-22 describe events in the future ("what will take place later").

Dispensationalists generally believe that the rapture of the church takes place at the time of Revelation 4:1, after which comes the "what will take place later." Revelation 4:1 marks the beginning of the tribulation, a seven-year period where God finishes His discipline of Israel and begins His judgment of the unbelieving world as described in Revelation 4-19. Some futurists place the rapture of the church at Revelation 19, at the time of Jesus' second coming.

The futurist approach basically sees John's vision as a series of chronological events, although some futurists see parallel or cyclical patterns in the visions of Revelation 4-19. The futurist interpretation lends itself to a more literal view than do the other interpretive systems, which tend to allegorize the events of Revelation.

***Historical (Historicist) Identifying of History.*** This approach sees John's Revelation as identifying the major movements of church history, and then reading them back into the symbols and prophecies of the book. Some also consider how current events fulfill New Testament apocalyptic symbolism. A prime example is identifying the Beast with various dictators through history, like Napoleon or Hitler or Saddam

Hussein. The seals, trumpets, bowls, and plagues are identified as being a series of successive events, with the hope of Christ's return being very near.

Historicism, a method of interpretation in Christian eschatology which associates biblical prophecies with actual historical events and identifies symbolic beings with historical persons or societies, has been applied to the Book of Revelation by many writers. The Historicist view follows a straight line of continuous fulfillment of prophecy which starts in Daniel's time and goes through John's writing of the Book of Revelation all the way to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

One of the most influential rhetorical aspects of the Protestant historicist paradigm was the speculation that the Pope could be the Antichrist. Martin Luther wrote this view, which was not novel, into the Smalcald Articles of 1537. It was then widely popularized in the 16th century, via sermons, drama, books, and broadside publication.

***Preterist Re-viewing of History.*** This view insists that we look at most of the book (chapters 1-18) as having been already fulfilled early in the church's history. Which means much of the symbols of this unveiling relate to the events of the first century, instead of a future one. Those who hold this view believe Revelation addresses faithfulness to God in the face of pagan persecution, and offers hope for God's ultimate, eventual victory.

**Preterism** is the eschatological view that the "end times" prophecies of the Bible have already been fulfilled. So, when we read what the Bible says about the tribulation, we are reading history. Preterism is divided into two camps: full (or consistent) preterism and partial preterism. Full preterism takes an extreme view that *all* prophecy in the Bible has been fulfilled in one way or another. Partial preterists take a more moderate approach, and many partial preterists consider full preterists to be guilty of heresy.

Those who hold to partial preterism believe that the prophecies in Daniel, Matthew 24, and Revelation (with the exception of the last two or three chapters) have already been fulfilled and were fulfilled no later than the first century AD. According to partial preterism, there is no rapture, and passages describing the tribulation and the Antichrist are actually referring to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 and the Roman emperor Titus. Partial preterists do believe in the return of Christ to earth and a future resurrection and judgment, but they do not teach a millennial kingdom or that Israel as a nation has a place in God's future plan. According to partial preterists, the Bible's references to "the last days" are speaking of the last days of the Old Jewish Covenant, not the last days of the earth itself.

**In order for partial preterists to maintain their position, they insist that the book of Revelation was written early (before AD 70).** They must also use an inconsistent hermeneutic when interpreting prophetic passages. According to the preterist view of the end times, chapters 6—18 of Revelation are highly symbolic, not describing any literal events. Since the destruction of Jerusalem did not involve the wholesale destruction of sea life (Revelation 16:3) or agonizing darkness (verse 10), these judgments are interpreted by the preterist as purely allegorical. However, according to preterists, chapter 19 is to be understood literally—Jesus Christ will physically return. But chapter 20 is again interpreted allegorically by preterists, while chapters 21—22 are understood literally, at least in part, in that there will truly be a new heaven and new earth.

Those who hold to partial preterism also do not read Matthew 24 in a literal sense. Christ spoke of the destruction of the temple (Matthew 24:2). But much of what He described did *not* occur in AD 70. Christ speaks of that future time as one of "great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again. If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened" (Matthew 24:21–22). Surely, this cannot be applied to the events of AD 70. There have been worse times in the history of the world since then.

The Lord also says, "Immediately after the distress of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time

the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory" (Matthew 24:29–30). In order for the events of these two verses to have already occurred, Jesus Christ must have returned bodily in AD 70—but He did not. The partial preterist believes that these verses do not refer to a bodily return of Christ but to an appearing of His judgment. However, this is not what a normal, literal reading of the text would lead anyone to believe. It is the "Son of Man" whom people see, not just His judgment.

Partial preterists also appeal to Matthew 24:34 where Jesus speaks of "this generation." They say that Christ was referring to those living at the time He spoke the words recorded in that chapter; thus, the tribulation had to occur within about 40 years of His statement. However, we believe that Jesus was not referring to the people of His day but to the generation who would witness the events recorded in Matthew 24:15–31. That future generation will witness all of the swiftly moving events of the last days, including Christ's bodily return (verses 29–30).

**Idealist Symbolizing of History.** This model of interpretation finds significance in the symbols of deeper meaning embedded throughout Revelation for the church between Christ's first and second comings. These symbols offer every church and believer in every age timeless spiritual truths unrelated to specific historical events. It is concerned with the battle between good and evil, and between the church and world at all periods in Christian history, depicting the continuous victory of believers and Christ.

**But, is that all?** I am convinced that there remains another, deeper, more glorious viewpoint of the book of Revelation. It is based on the understanding that a greater glory is increasing with Jesus Christ as is the central and dominating figure for the times to come. We are those who believe that the last days are full of a glory that will only increase as we approach the end of the age. Perhaps you could call it:

#### **"A GLORIOUS eschatology!"**

This study of Revelation agrees with many interpreters that these models have a measure of validity; measures of truth get unlocked by each one. Yet as you read through the Bible you will find time after time that symbols, parables, and pictures are the true language of God, imparting revelation truth regardless of historical periods of circumstances. The same is true for Revelation. In it we must look for the prophetic images and ask for an understanding of the spiritual viewpoints that help believers be overcomers today.

It is important to view the book of Revelation as more than a preterist re-viewing of human history, or a futurist pre-viewing of what is to come, but as **a dynamic super-viewing of the unveiling of Christ in his people**. The Revelation of Jesus Christ is something that is unveiled *in* us, not just to us. **Christ in us** is our hope of glory. We must see the indwelling Christ within us as the hope that moves us into fullness and expectancy. Christ is the hope of God expressing himself through us to all his creation, which is groaning and waiting for the "unveiling"<sup>1</sup> of the sons of God.

Those who did not love our Lord Jesus when he walked the earth were blinded to who he was and to what he taught. **They continually misinterpreted his words. When he said, "After you've destroyed this temple, I will raise it up again in three days,"<sup>2</sup>** he caused a major controversy, all because they thought he was speaking literally. Yet we know he was speaking of the "temple" of his physical body. This controversy remained with him throughout the rest of his life and ministry. In fact, one of the issues that led to his crucifixion was his spiritualizing the meaning of the "temple."<sup>3</sup> This misunderstanding was hurled at Jesus by the jeering crowd who watched the torturous death of Christ on the cross.<sup>4</sup> **It would be a mistake to miss truth because of a refusal to interpret Scripture symbolically.**

<sup>1</sup> The same Greek word used in Romans 8:19–20 is also found in the title of the last book of Scripture, the "Unveiling of Jesus Christ."

<sup>2</sup> John 2:19.

<sup>3</sup> See Mark 14:58.

<sup>4</sup> See Matthew 27:39–40.

## Our unveiling too!

The unveiling of Jesus, the Anointed One, will also be the unveiling of his anointed ones, for we are one with him, his body on the earth. To receive a revelation of Christ, the Head of the body, is to receive the revelation of the members of his body, the radiant ones who follow him. Christ is unveiled in heaven, and he is unveiled in his body. When he is unveiled, we are unveiled, for we are one with him in his glory<sup>5</sup>, and his tree of life unveils paradise within.

## Revelation 1

v.1-2) **This is the unveiling of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to share with his loving servants what must occur swiftly. He clearly made it known (SIGNIFIED) by sending his angel to his loving servant John. I, John, bore witness to the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.**

**God gave this revelation as love gift to His Son. Jesus, the Son, was the first to receive it, for He is the PERFECT PATTERN SON. This is the revelation of Jesus Christ that God gave unto Him from the time of His birth in Bethlehem, on to the time when His mind began to understand as a young child, until He went forth in His ministry at thirty years of age, until He died, rose, and ascended up far above all heavens as King of kings and Lord of lords. This is the revelation that God gave to Him as the knowledge and understanding of the path of sonship!**

Did Jesus know His sonship, who He truly was from the time of His birth? He was just a little boy like all other little boys, and His parents were Joseph and Mary. But in the early years God came to Jesus and gave Him something special in His understanding. It was an unveiling of who He was! It seems clear that this unveiling began in His life somewhere **before or around** the age of twelve. From that time, throughout the eighteen years of silence when we have no credible record of Him, Jesus was awakened to His true heritage. **Luke 2:52 "Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man."**

"The revelation of Jesus Christ, *which God gave unto Him.*" These words should speak to every saint of God a great truth — Jesus did not come into the world knowing who He was or what His purpose was — Jesus had to be taught of the Father just as you and I have had to be taught! God *gave* unto Him an unveiling of His identity and purpose.

The revelation that was given to Jesus is the pattern for every son of God that is brought to His glory! The same ministry Jesus had for three and a half years is the ministry of every manifested son of God! As He grew during His years in Nazareth in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man, so we are growing up into Him in all things! His overcoming in the flesh is the guarantee of our overcoming in the flesh! His triumph over Satan foreshadows the triumph of His many brethren over every satanic thing! His wisdom, understanding, compassion, love, mercy, and power are even now being wrought out in the life of every person who has received the call to sonship! As He went to the cross so are we crucified with Him, so do we know Him in the fellowship of His sufferings, and so do we take up *our cross* and follow Him! As He died, so we love not our Adamic life unto the death! As He rose from the dead, so has He made us alive together with Him, so that we be risen with Christ; and so shall every son of God step out of the mortality of this physical realm to *put on* incorruption and immortality! "For we shall *not* all sleep, but we *shall* all be changed!" As He ascended up to His Father in heaven so has He raised us up and made us sit together with Him in the higher than all heavens!

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<sup>5</sup> See Ephesians 1:23 and Colossians 3:4.