

## Revelation 1 – Chapter Study

### INTRODUCTION

#### ***Richard the Lion-Hearted***

In 1189, King Richard, who had only just been seated on the throne, left England to lead the *Third Crusade*.

While he was gone, his brother Prince John, took the throne in his place and began to make it his own.

John was corrupt and the people of England generally resisted his rule.

It was during this time that folk-heroes like Robin Hood sprang up.

The Third Crusade went rather poorly, though Richard's courageous leadership earned him the title *-Lion-Heart!*

So Richard turned around and started back for England.

As he made his way northwest across Europe, the message of his return preceded him.

Prince John hatched a plot with the King of France to usurp the English throne and do away with Richard.

He built a string of castles and fortresses to keep Richard from regaining control, but they proved of little help.

As soon as Richard and his men arrived on England's shores, the castles fell one after another.

In every village and town on his way back to power, church bells pealed, and the people shouted, "The king is coming! The lion has returned."

Such is the message of the Book of Revelation.

### CHAPTER 1

**<sup>1</sup>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, <sup>2</sup>who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. <sup>3</sup>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.**

Many consider the Book of Revelation to be a closed book because of the strange symbols and elaborate visions we find here.

Not a few people have tried to read and understand this last book of the Bible the same way they approach the gospels or letters of the NT.

The problem is, if you try to read Revelation the same way you read Romans, you WILL be lost. Very simply, they are different kinds of *literature*.

Would you read Shakespeare's Macbeth the same way you'd read a Tom Clancy novel?

Of course not!

You wouldn't read the morning paper the same way you'd read a collection of Emily Dickenson. Different literary forms require different approaches – and such is the case with the Book of Revelation.

Right here in the very first words we find a clue for *how* to approach the Book of Revelation.

The clues lies in that word itself – "Revelation."

It's the Greek word 'apokalupsis' - which means, *unveiling*.

When a city commissions an artist to do a sculpture, the day finally comes when it's time for the work to be revealed.

It's carted into place and installed, but always with a thick canvas covering over it.

The artist has worked long and hard and keeps the statue hidden until just the right moment.

Then, the dignitaries assemble, the band plays, and with a flourish, the canvas is removed with a swift flourish.

That moment of unveiling and revelation is the word *apokalupsis*.

And it's the perfect word to use in describing the *contents* of the Book of Revelation. God is the great Architect and Artist who is moving all things forward to that great day when the goal and climax of all history is realized in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

The Book of Revelation is the story of that Great Day.

And because of the subject matter it deals with, a *different literary style* than the other books of the NT was used.

The style is called *apocalyptic literature* – of which there was quite a bit at the time this was written.

It was popular for someone to write a book as if it had been written many decades earlier, and giving predictions about things to come – but which in fact had *already* taken place.

The author would take the name of some famous person from the past to lend authority to their forgery.

For example, let's say I wrote a book, claiming it was written by George Washington and penned in 1785.

And in the book I “foretold” a devastating civil war that would be fought over the issue of slavery and states rights.

I also “foretold” two great wars the US would fight in Europe and the Pacific.

And then I described a bomb that had the power to wipe out an entire city.

In fact, all I am doing is describing events that have *already* taken place – but if I cast them in the words of 220 years ago, and claim Washington wrote them, I can create quite a stir.

This was a fairly popular thing to do at the time Revelation was written and is today known as *apocalyptic literature*.

Many skeptics have been *critical* of the Book of Revelation and said that it was merely one more of these popular works.

But even a *casual* study of Revelation alongside the rest of apocalyptic literature reveals the *vast difference* between what we find in them.

I won't go into the details of all that because it gets pretty technical and we don't have time tonight.

Suffice it to say that John claims to be the author, he doesn't attribute it to some earlier prophet like Isaiah or Daniel.

Also, what John writes about here finds no parallel in past events!

What he writes about is clearly prophetic; there is no scenario one can construct that takes the contents of the Book of Revelation and finds their fulfillment events prior to John's day.

### **<sup>1</sup>The Revelation of Jesus Christ,**

It's crucial over the next weeks as we encounter the various visions and symbols of this book that we keep in mind that the focal point, the theme that ties the whole book together is that this is the revelation, not of the last days, not of all-consuming judgment, not of the antichrist and his demonic system; this is the Revelation of Jesus Christ!

Everything we see in this book is merely the set-up, the backdrop, the stage upon which the revelation of Jesus Christ is carried out.

### **<sup>1</sup>The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants**

You see, Revelation ISN'T a closed book!

The Father has given the Son the *task* of imparting to His followers the details of His unveiling. In other words – while the Second coming of Jesus Christ is a mystery to the unbelieving world – it's not to be a mystery to us.

We don't know the day or the hour of His coming, but we're to be familiar with what will happen

on earth *prior* to His coming, *when* He comes and then *after* He comes.  
The book of Revelation tells us of all these things.  
Revelation isn't a sealed book – it's an unveiling; an *apocalypse*, not an *apocrypha*, which means *something hidden*.

### **<sup>1</sup>The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place.**

We need to stop right here and do a little side trip into the 4 main ways the Book of Revelation has been understood: Preterist, Historicist, Idealist, Futurist

1) *Futurist* – this is the one we will be using as we study through the book.

The futurist view sees the vast majority of the book as taking place in the Last Days, just prior to the Return of Christ – thus, the label '*futurist*.'

Futurists take the 1000 year reign of Christ described in ch. 20 as literal, and that the Second coming is *before* the thousand years – so they are premillennial.

Futurists believe that *before* Jesus comes again, there will be a 7 year period of Tribulation in which terrible calamities will befall the earth in literal fulfillment of the judgments described in the book.

Futurists also acknowledge that there have been *precursors* and *partial fulfillments* of the visions of Revelation throughout the last 2000 years but their complete fulfillment will only take place in the Tribulation, Second Coming, and the Millennium.

2) *Idealist* – the idealist is *amillennial*, meaning he/she believes there is no literal 1000 years, that that just means a very long time, and that the visions and symbols of Revelation only refer to the timeless struggle between the forces of good and evil which will go on indefinitely till the end of time.

*Idealism* is the official position of Catholicism.

The problem with the idealist position is that it makes interpreting the book a grab bag and this has been the great problem of idealist commentators; each has come up with his or her own meaning for the symbols and visions.

If these things aren't meant to be understood in a *purely spiritual sense*, then what's the code for unlocking them.

No idealist has come up with the answer to that – so their attempts to understand the book have been short lived.

3) *Historicist* – This view, which was the favored position of the Reformers, has almost completely passed from the scene.

The Historicist view held that the book of Revelation covered the *entire scope of history* from the Resurrection of Christ to His Second Coming.

As history unfolded, historicist interpreters assigned various events of history to the various visions and symbols of Revelation. But as time went on, they kept re-interpreting and re-applying.

The historicist view died the death of a thousand interpretations.

A danger the modern futurist position stands in danger of if certain of it's leaders don't exercise more restraint in saying that *this new technology* or *that new peace treaty* is the fulfillment of this and that Bible Prophecy.

For instance – the historicists assigned the title of "Antichrist" to several different people, including several popes.

Today – well known futurist teachers have followed in the same pattern, calling everyone from Henry Kissinger to Juan Carlos of Spain the Antichrist.

4) *Preterist* – The preterist position is one that had almost passed from the scene until recently when it received new impetus from several well-known *Christian Reconstructionists*.

Preterism comes from the Latin word meaning "what is past" and believes that the bulk of the Book of Revelation was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

Preterism is *postmillennial*, meaning they don't believe in a literal 1000 year reign of Christ.

To the preterist, the 1000 years of is just the Bible's way of saying a long period in which the Church will become increasingly more influential, will effectively win, not only the people of earth to faith in Christ, but will redeem the institutions of the Earth, install the Law of God in the Laws of Man, and once the world has been Christianized, then, Jesus will come again!

Again, preterists believe all but the last couple chapters of Revelation were fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of the Romans in 70 AD.

The foundational premise for preterism is found right here in v. 1 –

**The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place.**

Preterists are vociferous in their demand that this phrase be understood as a definitive time marker.

That when John writes, "*things which must shortly take place*" he means that had to take place within a short time span from the time of his writing.

Now, that is certainly *one way* to understand the text, but it isn't the *necessary* or *only way* to interpret what John is saying.

In fact, as we read on into the content of the Revelation, we come to the firm conclusion it's NOT the way he meant to be understood.

You see, the word 'shortly' in Greek is *en tachei*, which means "quickly or suddenly coming to pass," indicating rapidity of execution after the beginning takes place. The idea is not that the event may occur soon, but that when it does, it will be sudden." [1]

John Walvoord, one of the premier interpreters of the Book of Revelation notes that the similar word *tachys* is used 7 times in Revelation and is translated as quickly.

In fact, we get our word tachycardia (racing heart) and tachometer from this Greek word. The idea is something that is *rapid*.

When John writes –

**The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place.**

He is saying that the things he will go on to describe will be unfolded in *rapid succession*.

They won't be spread over hundreds of years; they aren't to be understood by the idealist or historicist interpretations.

On the contrary, they refer to real events that will take place in the future; and when they start, they will follow one on the other in rapid succession.

So, this means either the Preterist or Futurist interpretations are correct.

What clinches it for the Futurist view is the date for the Book of Revelation.

If the Preterist is right, and the book of Revelation was largely fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of the Romans, then when must John have written it – before when? [70AD]

Yet we know that John received his visions on the island of Patmos, where early church history tells us he had been banished by the Emperor Domitian. [2]

This wasn't till well *after* 70 AD!

When Domitian died in 96 AD, John was allowed to return from exile and lived the rest of his days in Ephesus.

So the preterist view of Revelation is simply refuted by the historical evidence of the timing of John's imprisonment on Patmos!

**And He sent and signified *it* by His angel to His servant John,**

When we see the word "angel" we immediately think of the classic angel – some heavenly creature.

But the word '*angel*' simply means *messenger* and we'd get a better understanding of what John is saying here if that's the word we found here.

### **And He sent and signified *it* by His MESSENGER to His servant John.**

Who has John just told us the Father gave the Revelation *to*? Jesus!

And for what purpose? To *show* it to His servants.

Here John is revealing how he, as a servant, was *shown* that revelation by Jesus.

It was *signified* or *sign-ified*.

The message was delivered via signs, things John SAW!

This brings up a good question - Why did God use so many *signs* in the Book of Revelation? <sup>[3]</sup>

After all, it seems it's all the signs and visions that have been the problem in understanding the book.

Is God playing a game of "guess the mystery?" in Revelation? Not at all.

The signs are *necessary* because John was seeking to express spiritual things in earthly terms.

Maybe we can catch something of his dilemma by remembering something that happened to the Apostle Paul.

At Lystra, Paul was stoned and left for dead, but God restored his life.

During the time he was out – he was taken up to heaven and heard & saw things that later he said it would have been illegal to try to describe! (2 Corinthians 12:4).

Well, John was given visions of things that almost defied description.

He had to take the things he saw and wrap them in terms common to the people of his day.

This is why we find the word "like" often here.

John says that what he saw or hear was "like" something.

The signs of Revelation were also necessary because there's tremendous power in symbolic language.

It's one thing to call someone or something "evil."

But it's a far more potent image to speak of a woman *drunk with the blood of the saints*. <sup>[4]</sup>

Though it is filled with signs, the Book of Revelation *is* accessible to those who have an understanding of the first 65 books of the Bible, and especially OT.

Revelation is rooted in the Old Testament.

It contains more than 500 allusions to the OT, and 278 of the 404 verses in Revelation, 70%, make some reference to it.

The John mentioned here is the Apostle John.

There's been really no credible testimony against his authorship from the earliest days of the Church.

### **<sup>2</sup>who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.**

In both the gospel and his first epistle, John makes reference to the fact that he wrote as one who had firsthand experience of Jesus; he was there and heard the Lord speak.

He'd even touched the Lord!

He says much the same thing here.

### **<sup>3</sup>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.**

While all of scripture is inspired by God and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and instruction in righteousness – this is the only book of the Bible that claims a *special blessing* on those who read and hear it.

Note that John calls this book "prophecy."

That means that he considers it to be both the *Word of God*, and that it is *predictive* in nature; it

looks to the future.

In the early church, seeing as to how the common people did not have their own books or scrolls, the pastor would read while the people listened – and that’s the model we see here.

**Blessed is he [singular] who reads and those [plural] who hear the words of this prophecy.**

But there isn’t only predictive prophecy here; there’s instructive passages as well, so John pronounces a blessing on those who *put into practice* what is found here.

When John ends v. 3 with “*the time is near*” he’s rehearsing the NT expectation that since the Death, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ, we live in the last days.

This is the last epoch of history as we know it.

The age in which we live, called the Church Age, is a huge parenthesis in the redemptive plan of God.

And it’s a parenthesis that could close at any moment.

**4 John, to the seven churches which are in Asia:**

The Book of Revelation is actually a letter that was sent to 7 different churches in Asia Minor – modern day Turkey.

There were many more than 7 churches in that region – but 7 specific churches are going to be spelled out in chs. 2 & 3 for reasons we’ll investigate later.

**Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come,**

As typical for a NT letter, John gives them the customary Christian greeting of grace and peace.

And as Paul often does, he defines it as coming from the Triune God.

First, we have the *Eternal* Father - *He who is and who was and who is to come*.

This is derived from the Name God claims in the OT – Yahweh; which is translated in our

Bibles, how? <sup>[5]</sup> “I AM”

Second, we have the Holy Spirit -

**and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,**

We need to pause right at this point to make note of something important.

One of the reasons why modern critics of the Bible want to reject the Book of Revelation is because of what they call a terrible use of Greek.

They claim that the syntax and grammar of Revelation are horrible, so it couldn’t be the work of the Apostle John, let alone inspired by God.

But this isn’t the full story.

While it’s true there are several passages which do mangle Greek grammar pretty badly, there are other passages that are incredible in their use of the language; causing some critics to say it has more than one author.

But that’s not it at all.

The passages that seem to mangle Greek grammar are passages in which John is intentionally *bending the language* to fit the thought he’s trying to communicate.

We see a perfect case of this here when he refers to the Father as He who is, who was, and who is to come.

That doesn’t really work in Greek, but it powerfully conveys the truth of God’s timelessness!

When John refers to the Holy Spirit as the seven spirits before God’s throne, he again *tweaks* the language by mixing numbers and nouns.

John has in mind Isaiah 11:2 which describes the seven-fold work of the Holy Spirit.

Over and over in Revelation we will encounter the number 7.

It speaks of completion, fulfillment.

When John speaks of the Holy Spirit as the seven-spirit, he means the fullness of the Spirit.

Then, third, grace and peace come from the Son -

### **<sup>5</sup>and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness,**

Jesus is the one man, the *only* man, who ever lived who from birth to death remained totally loyal and faithful to God.

The word '*witness*' is the Greek word *martyr*.

At the time John wrote this, under the reign of Domitian, persecution of Christians was fierce.

In fact, it was under Domitian that the first official policy of persecution was carried out by Rome.

Domitian sought to wage war on the church.

John was the last original Apostle still left alive – so Domitian had him arrested, tortured and then boiled in oil!

When they lifted him out of the vat, there was not a mark on him.

So Domitian, realizing he couldn't kill him, banished him to the island prison of Patmos.

While John didn't die, many other believers were being put to death and John sought to comfort his readers with the reminder that Jesus was the faithful martyr.

### **the firstborn from the dead,**

Romans 8:29 refers to Jesus as *the firstborn among many brethren*.

It means that He is the *Pre-eminent One* – the One who comes first, not in order of *time* but in order of authority and power.

It is true that Jesus was the first one to be *resurrected*, but among the Jews, the title "firstborn" spoke far more of *favor* than order.

In fact, the ancient Rabbis called Yahweh *Himself* "Firstborn of the World"<sup>[6]</sup>

They used firstborn as a title for the Messiah!<sup>[7]</sup>

### **and the ruler over the kings of the earth.**

Here's another expression the rabbis used to describe the Messiah; they expected Him to come and assert the Kingdom of God over the kingdoms of this World.

Before the Book of Revelation is over, John will present Jesus taking dominion over the earth.

At the present time, Jesus rules a kingdom, but it is a kingdom that is not yet of this world.

Let me take a moment to do a quick review of the Kingdom of God as it relates to the Book of Revelation.

You see, the Kingdom figures so centrally into the 4 Gospels and then into the Book of Revelation, that unless we have a basic grasp of what it means, we'll miss out on a good part of the Bible's message.

When we talk about the Kingdom of God – we're referring to where God rules.

A kingdom is a king's domain = king-dom.

The Kingdom of God is where ever God rules.

In the original creation, God ruled over all, but He entrusted the realm of this earth to man.

In the Fall, man forfeited that dominion to the devil, and that's why the Bible refers to satan as the god of this world and the prince of the power of the air.

He's not *really* a god – but he's set himself up in the place of God and tried to imitate him by asserting rule over earth and over mankind who's become his slaves.

Jesus's mission is to restore mankind's lost dominion of earth.

When he came the first time, He came to give to us the choice of forsaking the devil's kingdom and entering the Kingdom of God.

Through the cross, He also broken satan's authority to hold dominion of earth.

Remember how both Jesus and John the Baptist preached a message saying that the Kingdom of God was at hand?

It was resident in the person of Christ – He is the door and means of coming back into the place of being ruled by God.

Right now we live in an age when mankind has the *choice* of remaining in the kingdom of the devil or becoming a part of the Kingdom of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

But God is moving history forward toward a grand climax when Jesus will finally claim that which is rightly His – this earth.

Before Jesus does lay claim to earth, God will allow mankind to experience the full result and consequence of rejecting His rule.

Though man has defied God and turned against Him, in his grace and mercy, God has continued to bless the earth and the race with His goodness in the form of rain and protection.

But just prior to the end, God will allow man to experience the *full result* of rejecting Him. And this is what so much of the terrible judgments we see in Revelation are – they are the consequences of rejecting God and trusting in man.

Nature will go haywire and the evil seeds man has planted will come to full flower.

Then, as the day for Christ's return draws near and the devil realizes he's losing his grip on earth, he becomes desperate and attempts to end it all by a last great bloodbath called Armageddon. It's like the Allied Invasion of Europe – Hitler knew it was coming and did his best to prepare for it, but he couldn't stop it.

On the day Jesus returns, the Kingdom of God will be fully restored to Planet Earth.

The Book of Revelation gives us the details of this whole time of transition from the rebellious kingdom of satan to the glorious Kingdom of God.

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Next, John gives a quick word of praise and thanksgiving -

### **To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,**

It isn't the blood of bulls and goats that cleanses us, but the blood of Christ Himself – the perfect and final sacrifice.

### **<sup>6</sup>and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father,**

Jesus has turned us from sinning rebel scum into kings and priests!

Being born again, we are now the children of God – and since He is the Sovereign Ruler of all Creation, we are part of a royal family.

We are royalty!

But not only royalty – we are also privileged to enter into *holy service*.

For not only is the Father *King*, He is also *God*, and our unique relationship to Him means we have a special role before Him of performing holy service, just like a priest.

In the OT, it was forbidden for the king to also fulfill the duties of a priest.

Those kings who attempted to serve in a priestly capacity were struck down.

God wanted the roles kept separate because they would only be united in the Messiah, in Jesus.

As the people of Christ, we enter into His service and become a royal priesthood.

### **to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.**

The glory and dominion of God are what Revelation are all about.

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Vs. 7 & 8 are John's conclusion to the *preface* of the letter.

In Vs. 9-20 he's going to go on and describe the vision he had of Jesus.

But before he does, he gives a rousing invitation to his readers to come and partake of the Revelation . . .

### **<sup>7</sup>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.**

This was not a *vision* John had – it's what Jesus and the OT prophets had said about the coming of the Messiah when He comes to set up the Kingdom of God on earth.



John says “Behold” “Look, consider, pay attention!”

When Jesus comes, He comes in the clouds and every eye will see Him.

In other words, when Jesus comes again, it won't be like the first time where He snuck in under the radar.

When Jesus comes the Second Time, no one will miss Him!

He will come in the skies over earth.

In Acts 1, as Jesus ascended into heaven, He disappeared into the clouds.

Then as the apostles stood there looking up, a couple angels appeared and asked them why they were still standing there gazing into the sky.

They said that when Jesus came again, He would come in the same way He had left – in the clouds.

John identifies that even they who pierced Him will see Him.

Who pierced Jesus?

It was the Romans working in conjunction & conspiracy with the Jews.

John is saying both groups will be present when He comes again.

The Romans will be present in that according to Daniel 2 & 9, during the last days the ancient Roman Empire will resurface in some form or another as the power-base for the antichrist.

The Jews will of course continue to exist as a people because of God's providential protection.

What a shock it will be for the Jews when Jesus comes and they realize that their Messiah is none other than Christian Jesus.

In Zechariah 12:10 & 13:6 we read that one of the things they'll see that will surprise them is the marks of the crucifixion.

So they will ask – “What are the meanings of these wounds.”

And He will answer, “These are the wounds which I received in the house of my friends.”

And at that point, they will break down and weep in realization of what they have done in rejecting their own Messiah.

But it isn't only the Romans and Jews who will see Him and weep – all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him.

John's point is that when the Lord comes again, it isn't in secret, or even to just some select group.

The Return of Christ will be global.

Though He will come specifically to Jerusalem, before He touches down, His glory will fill the heavens.

And all people will mourn with the realization they have foolishly rejected Him.

As I said, what John describes here in v. 7 wasn't some special vision he'd been given.

These were all things that had already been prophesied about the Second Coming of Christ in the OT prophets and in the teaching of Jesus.

In Matthew 24:30 Jesus said,

**Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.**

Friends please take careful note of what John says here about the Second Coming of Christ.

When Jesus comes again, it will not be some long drawn out process over thousands of years.

The Second coming of Christ is not the infiltration of the spirit of Christ into the institutions of mankind.

When Christ comes again, *every eye will see Him*.

In v.8, Jesus adds His mark of approval, like a Publisher will print their name on a book showing their endorsement of its contents. . .

**8**“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.**”

Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet.

It’s equivalent to saying “I am the A and the Z and every other letter in between.”

As the Word of God, which is one of John’s favorite expressions for Him, Jesus is the full and complete revelation of God.

Every word, every letter, as an expression of language finds its ultimate consummation in Him. Jesus is the beginning and the end.

He is the origin of creation, and the reason it was all created in the first place.

Then Jesus takes a label for Himself that’s ascribed to the Father in v. 4 – He is the one who is, who was, and who is to come.

Since all three persons of the Trinity are God and so eternal, they can all equally claim this designation.

Finally, Jesus calls Himself the Almighty!

This is a wonderful word – Pantokrator.

It’s used 10 times in the NT; 9 of them in Revelation to refer to Christ.

The word literally means “to grasp all with an undeniable grip.”

It speaks of Christ’s sovereignty!

John is going to be giving us visions of some pretty nasty events ahead and it seems at times that things are spinning badly out of control.

So Jesus reminds us that things are not out of control – He is in control!

He is the Almighty, the Pantokrator, and has His hand on the wheel of history.

He is the first and the Last, the beginning and the end, the Eternal One who is not bound by time.

He knows the end from the beginning and has both the wisdom and power to accomplish all His perfect plan.

## CONCLUSION

That’s where we end tonight.

With the reminder that no matter how dark and desperate things may get in this world, no matter what Sharon or Arafat, or Hussein, or Mubarak, or the UN or Bush or Osama or anyone else does – Jesus is still in control.

A father was trying to read the paper and his little daughter kept asking him all kinds of questions.

Wanting some peace, he grabbed a magazine, cut out a map of the world that was in it, then cut it up into little pieces.

He handed them to his daughter and said, “Here honey. This is a puzzle. See if you can put it together.”

He figured she’d be busy with that for quite a while but a short time later she said, “I’m done Daddy.”

He was amazed and asked her how she’d put it together so quickly.

She said, “Well, I found a picture of Jesus on the other side, and I knew when I had him in the right place, the whole world would be right.”

The Book of Revelation is the Story of Jesus taking His rightful place in History and the affairs of Earth.

But what about in your life?

Is your world a mess?

If it is, it’s probably because Jesus isn’t in His rightful place on the throne of your heart.

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[1] Walvoord, Pg. 35 (Luke 18:8 Acts 12:7 22:18 25:4 Rom. 16:20)

- [2] Walvoord, pg. 41; Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Eusebius all indicate this.
- [3] Adapted from David Guzik's commentary
- [4] Revelation 17:6
- [5] Exodus 2:14
- [6] Rabbi Bechai cited in Lightfoot's commentary on Colossians
- [7] "God said, 'As I made Jacob a first-born (Exodus 4:22), so also will I make king Messiah a first-born' (Psalm 89:28)." (R. Nathan in *Shemoth Rabba*, cited by Lightfoot in his commentary on Colossians)