

# THE BOOK OF REVELATION – Intro / Chapter 1

God's Message To A Sleeping Church

*Keeping It Real*



**BIBLE STUDY**

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**The Book of Revelation is the last book of the Bible;** it is also the most difficult book of the Bible ... *difficult* because of its symbolisms and because of its subject matter.

**The subject matter is “Prophecy.”** Its symbolisms are all through the book ... What do you take literally? ... What do you take figuratively? And how do they mesh?

PROPHECY deals with predictions about the future and the end-time; special messages from God, often uttered through human spokesmen, which indicate the divine will for mankind on earth and in heaven.

The focus of all prophetic truth is Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:2; Luke 24:25-27), who was destined to be the greatest prophet (Deuteronomy 18:15-18). He declared God's truth in this age (John 3:31-33) and the age to come (Isaiah 2:2-4). **As the embodiment of truth (John 1:1) ... Christ fully radiated the brilliance of God which the earlier prophets reflected only partially.**

The Book of Revelation is the last book of the Bible, and the only book of APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE in the New Testament. The Apocalypse, the title of this book ... ***apokalupsis*** in the original Greek, means “*unveiling*” or “*disclosure*” of hidden things known only to God. ***It is therefore a book designed to uncover or unveil, not conceal.***

- Other examples of apocalyptic literature can be found in the Old Testament in Daniel (chaps. 7-12), Isaiah (24-27), Ezekiel (chaps. 37-41), and Zechariah (chaps. 9-12).

Like its counterparts, the Book of Revelation depicts the end of the present age and the coming of God's future kingdom through symbols, images, and numbers. These symbols include such references as: an angel whose legs are pillars of fire, men who ride on horses while smiting the earth with plagues of destruction, and a fiery red dragon with seven heads and ten horns who crouches before a heavenly woman about to deliver a child.

Although the keys to some symbols have been lost, the overall message of this book is clear: God is all-powerful. No countermoves of the devil, no matter how strong, can frustrate the righteous purposes of God.

## STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK. The Book of Revelation contains seven (7) visions.

***The first vision chapters (1-3)*** ... is of Christ Almighty exhorting His earthly church to remain loyal against all hostile attacks.

***The second vision chapters (4-7)*** ... is of Christ the Lamb standing with a sealed scroll before God in heaven. As the Lamb opens each of the seven seals, which symbolize knowledge of the destinies of individuals and nations, a series of disasters befalls the earth.

***The third vision chapters (8-11)*** ... A series of seven angels blowing seven trumpets. At the sound of these trumpets more disasters occur.

***The fourth vision chapters (12-14)*** ... consists of the persecution of the people of God symbolized by a heavenly woman and by two witnesses (Moses and Elijah) - by Satan and the beast.

***The fifth vision chapters (15-16)*** ... is another series of seven: seven bowls pouring out God's wrath.

***The sixth vision chapters (17:1-19:10)*** ... The judgment of Babylon. In Revelation, "Babylon" symbolizes an apostate, anti-God world system characterized by religious confusion, materialism, and political power that rebels against God's law and His Word.

More than a literal city, Babylon represents a universal, organized system of ungodliness that enslaved humanity, with "Babylon the Great" being a symbolic mother of false religious systems and abominations ... that embodies all godless political, religious, and social systems throughout history.

***The seventh vision chapters (19:11-22)*** ... The final victory, the final judgment, and the final state of blessedness with the fullness of glory in the new heaven and new earth.

## LET US NOW READ THE BOOK ...

***"<sup>1</sup> The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John, <sup>2</sup> who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. <sup>3</sup> Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near."*** – Revelation 1:1-3 (NASU)