

The Book of Revelation

The Story: part 31

May 21, 2017

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Isaiah 46:10 "I made known the end from the beginning My purpose will stand."

Good bible hermeneutics (principles of biblical interpretation) tell us to interpret scripture according to the genre written. For example: Read poetic books, like Psalms, like you'd read poetry. Read history books, like 1 and 2 Samuel, like you'd read history. Read allegorical books, like Revelation, as you'd read an allegorical book.

Allegory: meant to suggest reality bigger than what we are used to seeing and knowing.

DAY 1: Revelation 1

1. Who we find in Revelation is Jesus, but in a form we didn't see Him in, in the gospels!

Revelation 1:12 I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands,

¹³ *and among the lampstands was someone "like a son of man," dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest.*

¹⁴ *His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire.*

¹⁵ *His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters.*

¹⁶ *In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.*

¹⁷ *When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last.*

¹⁸ *I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.*

2. What does this revelation of Jesus tell us about Him? Here are some thoughts...

- a. White hair indicates great wisdom
- b. Blazing eyes indicates eyes that burn away pretense; that "see through you"
- c. Bronze feet indicate strength that will not be defeated
- d. Voice like rushing waters indicates power, cleansing, freshness
- e. Seven stars in His hand indicates His power over Rome (Rome claimed sovereign power; they were wrong)
- f. Sharp sword indicates His words that can cut away our sin
- g. His face shining like the sun indicates the beauty of the Lord.

3. Which of these images/descriptions of Jesus intrigues you the most? Why?

DAY 2: Revelation 2, 3

Note: John sees Jesus speaking to seven different churches, and by inference, to you and me! Below, is each church, the reference for each, and my summary of God's message to each church.

1. Ephesus: Revelation 2:1-7

“It is commendable that you believe in Me and serve Me, but what happened to your love for Me? What was supposed to be the most important thing in your life has faded badly.”

2. Smyrna: Revelation 2:8-11

“You are undergoing terrible, crushing persecution from all sides. No matter how long your suffering, stay faithful and true to Me. Your crown, and My kingdom are coming!”

3. Pergamum: Revelation 2:12-17

“You have been faithful to Me, but you are allowing the godlessness of the surrounding culture to become part of your church culture. It affects holiness, which is dangerous. Repentance is needed.”

4. Thyatira: Revelation 2:18-29

“In so many good and important ways, you have excelled! But, there is a teaching going around that ‘justifies’ immorality. Unless repentance occurs severe discipline is in order.”

5. Sardis: Revelation 3:1-6

“Though your church looks alive, there is a deadness that goes unnoticed. Remember the fundamental principles of the gospel you were taught. Go back to square one and put those principles into action.”

6. Philadelphia (not the U.S.!) Revelation 3:7-13

“If you measure your church as the world measures churches, you will see yourself as small and weak. Those are bad measurements. You have not only been faithful but have persevered and endured the trials of this life. Overcoming is extremely important in My kingdom. Your validation will come; and so will a crown!”

7. Laodicea: Revelation 3:14-22

“You sound like the, ‘We’ve-got-it-together’ church. You may not say those words, but that’s the ‘aura’ you portray. Instead, broken people, who have experienced the richness of repentance can enjoy My grace as their greatest treasure. Then, your aroma will be something pleasing to Me, and reflect Me to those you meet.”

a. Which message to a church strikes you the most? Why?

b. Do you sense God speaking to you through these messages to the churches?

DAY 3: Revelation 4-5

Revelation 4

1. The scene John sees now peers into the throne room of heaven!
2. As John looks at God's throne, what John sees at first is the effect of the One who sits on the throne, rather than the One who sits on the throne.
3. The second thing John notices are the creatures around the throne, and that they are all worshipping the One on the throne.

Revelation 5

4. John then begins to get a glimpse of the One on the throne, who holds a scroll in His right hand that needs to be opened, but no one is worthy to open the scroll.
5. One of the elders reminds everyone that the Lion of Judah can open the scroll, but to everyone's surprise a different picture emerges on the throne! It's **not** the roaring Lion of Judah, but ...

Revelation 5:6 Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

Revelation 5:9 And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. ¹⁰ You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

6. What things did this Lamb accomplish?
7. How did He accomplish what He accomplished?
8. And thus, those around the throne broke out into praise again...
Revelation 5:12 In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"
9. The victory of the gospel in the hearts of people was not won with force, or displays of divine power. It was not won with the roar of the Lion. Instead, it was won with sacrifice, and the "bleating" (bleeding) of the Lamb!
10. Our call is to sacrifice for His greater cause, the well-being of others.

DAY 4: Revelation 6-11

1. John now gets glimpses of the Lion roaring! It starts when the Lamb opens seven seals.

Revelation 6:1 I watched as the Lamb opened the first of the seven seals. Then I heard one of the four living creatures say in a voice like thunder, "Come!"

² I looked, and there before me was a white horse! Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown, and he rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest.

Revelation 6:15 Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and every slave and every free man hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains.

¹⁶ They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!"

¹⁷ For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"

2. Then, the Lion roars through seven trumpets of judgment.

Revelation 8:6 Then the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to sound them.

3. By the end of the seventh trumpet, the “landscape” has undergone a dramatic and visible change to John!

Revelation 11:15 The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever."

4. Those in heaven are mesmerized by the goodness, justice and power of God.

Revelation 11:17... saying: "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign.

¹⁸ The nations were angry; and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great-- and for destroying those who destroy the earth."

5. Evil will self-destruct. In one sense it's already begun. In another sense, we'll see the full destruction of evil.

6. The wrath of God is poured out on people who absolutely refuse to repent no matter how bad their misery, or how much misery they inflict on others.

7. Every person has this choice: to follow the Lamb who defeats evil, or tremble when the Lion destroys evil.

DAY 5: Revelation 12-20

1. Revelation 12 starts off with the sign of “a woman clothed in light,” Mary gives birth to God’s Son, an infant who will one day rule all the nations with a scepter of iron.

Revelation 12:1 A great and wondrous sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head....

⁵ She gave birth to a son, a male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter. And her child was snatched up to God and to his throne.

2. Satan does his best to kill the son shortly after His birth. He fails. So, Satan then goes to Plan “B.”

Revelation 12:17 Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring--those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

3. The next images are two beasts. Here’s the first:

Revelation 13:1 And the dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name.

4. This beast represents every political/governmental entity and leader that opposes God and His kingdom.

5. Here’s the image of the second beast. It represents every religious system and leader that leads people away from God and the crucified Son.

Revelation 13:11 Then I saw another beast, coming out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon.

6. Seven bowls of final wrath poured out

7. The end of judgment is near...

Revelation 19:19 Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army.

²⁰ But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

8. Evil is met with full and final justice.

DAY 6: Revelation 21-22

1. We take one final glimpse into the end of history and the “beginning” of the eternal.

Revelation 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.

⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

⁵ He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

⁶ He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life.

⁷ He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

⁸ But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars--their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

2. That which sin had devastated, God makes new! (v. 5)

3. What will life be like in the “New Jerusalem?”

a. In v. 3?

b. In v. 4?

c. In v. 6?

d. In v. 7?

4. Revelation paints the picture of the final wrap up of human history where every sin and evil is rightly and justly judged, and God’s people, through the death of the Lamb, find eternal and full life to come.

5. What struck you most from Revelation?