

Revelation: Pictures of Comfort and Hope
John's Vision of Jesus on the Island of Patmos
Chapter 1

A picture is worth ...

Agree or Disagree? Since Revelation is a picture book it will be easy to understand.

Purpose: _____

Author: _____

Place: _____

Date: _____

Content: _____

Read Chapter 1:

1. What does Apocalypse mean?

2. How were the pictures of Revelation passed down to us? (vs. 1)

3. Where does the Lord want this book to be read? (vs. 3)

4. With whom did John first share the pictures of Revelation? (vs. 4)

5. Who sends "grace and peace to the churches"?

Seven Spirits (Cf. Isaiah 11:2)

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 5. |
| 2. | 6. |
| 3. | 7. |
| 4. | |

Note the 7-fold description of Jesus

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 5. |
| 2. | 6. |
| 3. | 7. |
| 4. | |

*Firstborn: Pacesetter, others blessed with the inheritance the 1st born received.
We are blessed. We have salvation and regular access to God through Jesus Christ.*

6. Give three reasons why Jesus Christ should be praised by us? (vs. 5-6)

8. How do we share in Jesus' ruling activity? (vs. 9)

9. What do these verses tell us about Jesus? (vss. 7-8)

10. What does it mean that John was on Patmos because of the Word of God and the testimony about Jesus? (vs. 9)

11. What does it mean that John was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day? (vs. 10)

12. What are the 7 lampstands?

13. What comfort is there in the fact that Jesus is standing among the churches?

14. Describe what these traits tell us about Jesus:

A. Hair white like wool : _____
B. Eyes blazing fire : _____
C. Feet like bronze : _____
D. Voice like rushing Water : _____
E. Out of mouth double-edged sword: _____

15. What does it mean that Jesus holds the keys to death and Hades?

16. What is John to write down that focuses in on "what is now"?

17. What are the seven stars or angels of the seven churches? (vs. 20)

Know your Revelation Numbers:

7 =

3 =

4 =

3 ½ =

12 =

10 =

An Outline of the Book of Revelation

Introduction: John's Vision of Jesus during his exile to the Island of Patmos (1:1-20)

1. Seven Letters to Seven Churches (2:1-3:22)
2. The Vision of Seven Seals (4:1-8:6)
3. The Vision of Seven Trumpets (8:7-11:19)
4. The Seven Visions (12:1-15:8)
5. The Vision of the Seven Bowls of Seven Plagues (15:1-16:21)
6. The Vision of Christ and the Anti-Christ (17:1-19:21)
7. The Vision of the Lord's Victory over Satan (20:1-22:5)

Conclusion: (22:6-21)

GENERAL COMMENTS

While many regard the messages of this book as being hidden; the very name of the book suggests that God wants to show us valuable truths about our Lord and his salvation.

This book is filled with symbols. Symbols are often not understood by outsiders. But those on the inside have a sense of and an appreciation of its meaning. The cross is a wonderful example of a symbol. It means so much more to the Christian than the non-Christian.

So how do we become insiders who have a sense about and an appreciation of the symbols of this book?

- ♣ First we must have an understanding and an appreciation of the Christ.
- ♣ Second we must have an understanding and an appreciation for the OT. John included undocumented references to many of the OT writings including Psalms, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and a real favorite: Daniel.
- ♣ Thirdly our understanding of these writing grows as our understanding of John and his culture grows.

Interpreting Revelation

We consider all of the Bible to be God's word.

Since the Bible has one divine source it cannot contradict itself.

Therefore what is written in this book must agree with the rest of Scripture.

John never quotes directly from the Scriptures but one author called attention to the fact that John incorporated over 500 Scriptural paraphrases and allusions into his visions. (cf. Peoples Bible Series on Revelation, John Brug, page 2)

We read all of the Scriptures literally (not literalistically). We understand it in the way it was written. We accept symbols as symbols. We accept direct speech as direct speech. We accept figures of speech as figures of speech.

It is especially important to follow this principal in a study of this book – letting the book itself show us when John is speaking directly and when he is describing a vision given to him by the Spirit.

We can follow some of the same guides to understanding other symbolic portions of scripture (like parables) in our efforts to understand this book.

Think of these images as beautiful paintings with a single point of focus that conveys a single lesson. The details in the painting contribute to the beauty but should not detract from the main focus.

As we look at the visions in John's writing – look for a main point without trying to find a meaning in every little detail.

Let Scripture explain Scripture.

John will often explain many of his pictures just as Jesus explained many of his parables. (The explanation may not be immediate but may come at a later point in his book.)

Other pictures will find explanations from other portions of the Bible.

Some pictures will remain hidden to us for a time. The more knowledgeable we are about the rest of Scripture the more we will understand this book.

Understanding the Visions

The various visions should not be read like chapters in a novel. Several of the visions will picture the same time in history but from a different angle.

This book describes the times before Christ's return – the times we are living in right now.

“John's seven visions go back and forth over the ongoing struggle between Christ and Satan. God's army includes Jesus, the holy angels, saints and faithful witnesses to the gospel. The devil's forces include Satan, his evil angels, unbelievers, false prophets, and worldly government. While all of the visions describe the same battle, each pictures different combatants and arenas of conflict. Each successive vision shows the battle growing more intense. The last vision climaxes with Jesus' final defeat of Satan and his eternal victory for the saints.” (Brug, page 4)