**Revelation Bible Study**

**Week 1**

**Deep, But Not Difficult**  
Many people think there is some mystery about to read it, but could not understand it. Or maybe they understood most of it, but not all of it. One thing is certain, however- to say that the Book of Revelation is an extraordinary book is an understatement.

Preachers and teachers have been perusing this book a long time. It has withstood more poor preaching and teaching than any other book in the Bible. There are probably more charts, sermons, books, and pamphlets written on the Book of Revelation than any other book in the Bible.

**Introduction**  
Just how deep is the Book of Revelation? There are 404 verses in Revelation. In those 404 verses, are more than…

* 300 symbols
* 278 Old Testament references,
* 222 allusions to the Old Testament
* 24 different titles for Christ

This book has more mathematics than the entire Book of Numbers.

Revelation speaks of the…

* Seven Spirits of God
* The judgment from..
  + Seven seals
  + Seven trumpets
  + Seven bowls

There are 200 million men in the armies. The reader will come across beasts, battles, and blood; dragons, dictators, and damnation. Also, one will find death riding on a horse, and hell following.

There will be the combined populations of heaven, hell, and earth... past, present, and future. One might ask, Is this literal or is this symbolic? And the answer is, "Yes."

Revelation is to be taken literally, but its methods of bringing the truth are symbolic. For example, one will read in chapter 12 that a dragon was cast out of heaven, and when  
his tail swept the stars, he took one-third of the stars out with him.

If someone does not understand this as symbolic truth, he could start believing there are real dragons. When one reads the Old Testament and some of the New Testament, he will see that the dragon is a type of Satan. This refers to the time when he was cast out of heaven and took a third of the fallen angels with him (see Isaiah 14:12-15; Revelation 12:3-4, 8-9).

When one reads Revelation, he will begin to understand there are many different roads to interpreting its meaning. In fact, there are at least four different roads people have taken over the years.

**The Four Roads**

The **first** road is taken by a group known as **preterists**. Those who take this road say Revelation only talks about what happened in the first century between the church and Rome. (Meaning one who holds that the prophecies in the Bible about the End Times have already been fulfilled).

The **second** road some people take may be called the **historic** view of Revelation. That is the view that Martin Luther and the Reformers had. They said the Book of Revelation is only a study of history from the beginning of the time after the Ascension until the end of this age.

The **third** road some people travel is the road that says the Book of Revelation is **spiritual** only. They believe that all the things one reads about are allegorical, that they reveal only spiritual truths. They think ultimately all this reveals a picture of the battle of good against evil.

The **fourth** road is taken by a group known as the **futurists.** After having had two thousand years to look at it, they have come to understand that it is more than a book about the first century. It is also more than a book of the history of the church  
from the beginning of the church until the end of the church age. It is even more than a look at those things which are spiritual. It contains some of all those things.

This book shows some of the struggles of the first century, as well as some of the  
struggles between good and evil. It offers a variety of pictures: good things, bad things, beautiful things, and ugly things. But the bottom line is that most of the Book of Revelation relates to the future.

**The Key to the Book Is the Sea**  
Instead of being overwhelmed by the symbols, pictures, allegories, and scenarios, the best way to approach Revelation is from an assumption that this book is deep, but it does not have to be difficult. There is a way to understand it.

The word sea is mentioned 22 times in this book. Revelation may be compared to an ocean. It does not matter how deep water is as long as one remembers to keep his head above the surface.

For Example: Smith Lake, near Jasper, Alabama. If you dive into Smith Lake, you will not hit bottom, why, because it is 100 feet deep. It is the same with Revelation. You do not have to go as deep as some people try to go. Some people have gone so deep they have gotten in way over their heads. So, just keep your head above the water—don’t go too deep that you lose your thought process.

There are specific verses that reveal the key to this book. An ocean is contained within four land masses.

Usually, four continents hold an ocean in a cup. Just as there are four land masses around every ocean, likewise, this ocean of Revelation has four land masses. If one can remember the four land masses-north, south, east, and west-then he will have this ocean in his mind and be able to understand basically what this book is trying to convey.

One does not need to be a genius to grasp this concept, but he does need to concentrate.

**Five Words to Consider**  
This study will begin by looking at **Revelation** 1:1-3, 19. 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, who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. **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**. Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.

In our study, the following words from this passage will be considered:

1. Revelation
2. Shortly
3. Signified
4. Blessed
5. Near

Before discussing the four land masses, the above words need to be understood.

**First**, consider the word **revelation**. The word revelation comes from the Greek word, apokalupsis, which means "to unveil." This book is not meant to be hard to understand; it is an unveiling.

One must grasp that from the start if he is to understand the book. The Book of Revelation is an unveiling of what or whom? It is the revelation of Jesus Christ. In other words, He is unveiled, and He is doing the unveiling. John is not unveiling things. Jesus is unveiled, and Jesus is unveiling.

The **second** word is **shortly**. Some people might wonder if that means the events in Revelation are about to take place immediately or in the near future. That is not what the word shortly means.

The word shortly comes from the Greek word *tachos*, which is the same word from which comes the word tach or tachometer. What does a tachometer do? It measures  
how fast the car motor is turning over.

The word shortly here does not mean "in a New York minute," or what is being  
written is going to take place right now. The word shortly means, "Once it starts taking place, it is going to happen fast." John is saying that once this unveiling starts happening, it is going to happen quickly.

The next word is **signified**. "And He sent and signified it by His angel" (v. 1). God gave this revelation to Jesus; Jesus gave it to an angel; and an angel brought it to John. And when John received it, it was signified (signified).

In other words, this was a message that had been painted and pictured in signs. The pictures are there to help the reader understand the book. The scenarios are there to help the reader tie its images to literal truth and reality.

Consider the word **blessed**. It comes from word *Makarios* and that word simply means,  
"to make one long on happiness, or to lengthen one's happiness."

Reading and studying Revelation and feeding on its truths, will make one  
long on happiness. This is the only book in the Bible where the Lord says up front that if believers study it, hear it, read it, and heed it, they will be blessed.

What does it mean to be blessed, to be long on happiness? Here is what God says, "If you spend time in this book, you will begin to see the meaning of the little hassles of your life. I have destined you to be an overcomer; I have put into your chromosomes and spiritual genes the promise and the power to be victorious."

So, in the short term, a believer does not have to be down-and-out, because he is going to win in the end. That is what it means to be blessed, to be long on happiness.  
the end. That is what it means to be blessed, to be long on

The **last** word to be defined is the word **near**. "The time isnear." What does the writer mean?

Does he mean the time is right this minute? T

here are two Greek words for near.

1. One is the word *chronos* which is used for clock time.
2. The other is the word kairos which is the word for "season."

This is not the "near" of clock time. It is not as if the coming of the Lord is in the next minute. The time is kairos -the time is coming in its own season. So, what the writer is saying is this: God has a season when this is going to take place. And it is going  
to happen quickly once it starts.

It is the unveiling of Jesus of Jesus and by Jesus.

**The Four Land Masses**

In order to grasp this concept, one should picture the land masses around the ocean.

**The northernmost land mass represents the Sovereign Person of Revelation.**

* Who is the Sovereign Person of Revelation?
* That person is Jesus Christ.
* This book is about the Sovereign Person.
* It is not just about beasts, blood, and gore.
* It is not about 60-pound hailstones.
* It is not about the pale rider riding a horse with hell following behind.
* It is about the uncovering of Jesus Christ-the Sovereign Person.

**The next land mass that holds this ocean is a Simple Purpose**.

* What is the simple purpose? It is expressed in verse 1.
* The simple purpose is to show things to His servants.
* It is a revelation of Jesus, to show things that are going to happen, and when  
  they start happening, they are going to happen quickly.

**The next continent that holds this ocean is a Sure Promise.**

* What is that sure promise?
* It is summed up in the expression: Blessed is he who reads, heeds, and feeds.

The last land mass is the crux of the matter.

**From beneath, this is what holds the ocean: the Structured Plan.**

**This completes the picture of that ocean and so the four land masses are as follows:**

* The continent on top is the Sovereign Person.
* The continent to the left is the Simple Purpose.
* The continent on the right is the Sure Promise.
* The continent from underneath that cups the ocean is a Structured Plan.