

94 “THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST”

Introduction: To most people, the book of Revelation is a blur of frightening and incomprehensible images predicting a terrifying future before the kingdom of God arrives. However, the very first sentence of the book explains that it is the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to John to reveal what must **soon** take place. Internal evidence reveals the book was written before AD 70, because the text indicates no knowledge of the utter devastation of Jerusalem that occurred during the war, AD 67-70. It was written to first century believers regarding **their** immediate future. Those who maintain the events in this book are future to us, show themselves to be incapable of getting past traditional assumptions to understand the obvious timing of the book. We will seek to show that the Book of Revelation is indeed the revelation of Jesus Christ’s divine nature and that He is co-equal with the Father.

A. PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

1. Revelation was not written to us, but for us. It was written to first century believers, whose cities formed a mail route, in the order the cities are mentioned in the text.

“What you see, write in a book and send to the seven assemblies: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.” Rev 1:11

2. The events of Revelation were “at hand”, “soon”, would happen “quickly”, with “no delay” to the recipients in the first century. Those who believe these events of Revelation are in our future, exhibit a fundamental disbelief in the book itself, as well as an inability to discern simple language.

Rev. 1:1 “This is the Revelation of Jesus Christ...the things which must happen soon.”

Rev. 1:3 “...the time is at hand.”

Rev. 3:11 “Behold, I come quickly.”

Rev. 10:6 “...there will no longer be delay.”

Rev. 22:6 “The Lord God sent his angel to show...the things which must happen soon.”

Rev. 22:7 “Behold, I come quickly.”

Rev. 22:10 “... the time is at hand.”

Rev. 22:12 Jesus said, “Behold, I come quickly.”

Rev. 22:20 Jesus said, “Yes, I come quickly.”

We must disregard interpretations that do not comprehend the generation to which this book was addressed.

3. The Kingdom of God is not material and visible, but spiritual. Just as God’s spiritual temple is far greater than a physical temple, so the spiritual Kingdom of God is far greater than any earthly kingdom.

“Jesus answered, ‘My Kingdom is not of this world.’” Jn 18:36

“Being asked...when God’s Kingdom would come, He [Jesus] answered them, ‘God’s Kingdom doesn’t come with observation; neither will they say, ‘Look, here!’ or, ‘Look, there!’ for behold, God’s Kingdom is within you.’” Lk 17:20-21

Just as we are part of an invisible spiritual temple, so we are part of an invisible spiritual Kingdom of God.

4. Those who believe that the kingdom of God wasn’t present in the first century, are believing error.

A. Jesus said, “... the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering into God’s Kingdom before you.” Mt 21:31

B. “Jesus went about in all Galilee... preaching the Good News of the Kingdom.” Mt 4:23

C. Jesus proclaimed, “The time is fulfilled, and God’s Kingdom is at hand! Repent, and believe...” Mk 1:15

5. As believers, we are citizens of the spiritual Kingdom of God now. If this doesn’t seem believable, we need to ask for God’s wisdom to transform our minds to Biblical teachings. (Praying frequently for wisdom is an excellent practice. Ja 1:5)

A. “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.” Mt 5:3

B. “Don’t be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...” Rom 12:2

C. “They [Jesus’ disciples] are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” Jn 17:16

D. “For our citizenship is in heaven...” Phil 3:20.

6. God’s invisible presence with His redeemed people IS the Kingdom of God. Those who believe in a “future-only kingdom” apparently believe God is not presently with us.

“I heard a loud voice out of heaven saying, ‘Behold, God’s dwelling is with people; and he will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.’” Rev 21:3

This verse is the fulfilling statement of Revelation—the establishment of the Kingdom of God in the first century.

B. THE BOOK OF REVELATION TEACHES THE ONENESS OF THE FATHER AND SON.**1. FIRST AND LAST: The Father and the Son are the first and the last.**

A. Father: "This is what Yahweh, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, Yahweh of Armies, says: "I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God." Isa 44:6.

B. Son: "When I [John] saw him [Jesus], I fell at his feet like a dead man. He laid his right hand on me, saying, "Don't be afraid. I am the first and the last." Rev 1:17

2. MIGHTY LEADER IN BATTLE: The Father and the Son war against evil.

A. Father: "For that day is of the Lord, Yahweh of Armies, a day of vengeance, that He may avenge Himself of his adversaries." Jer 46:10

B. Son: "Behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True. In righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are a flame of fire, and on his head are many crowns." Rev 19:11-12

3. KING OF KINGS, LORD OF LORDS: The Father and the Son are King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

A. Father: "But Yahweh is the true God. He is the living God, and an everlasting King. At his wrath, the earth trembles. The nations aren't able to withstand his indignation." Jer 10:10

B. Son: "He has on his garment and on his thigh a name written, 'King of Kings and Lord of Lords.'" Rev 19:16

4. ALPHA AND OMEGA: The Father and the Son are the Alpha and the Omega.

A. Father: "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come." Rev 1:8

B. Son: "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End." Rev 21:6.

5. NO TEMPLE, SUN OR MOON: The Father and the Son are all in all.

A. "I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple." Rev 21:22

B. "The city has no need for the sun or moon to shine, for the very glory of God illuminated it and its lamp is the Lamb." Rev 21:23

6. SEVEN EYES: Father and Son have seven eyes, indicating omniscience & divine activity through-out the world.

A. Father: "These seven are the eyes of Yahweh, They are going to and fro in all the land." Zech 4:10

B. Son: "I saw... a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth." Rev 5:6

7. THE SAME PRAISES GIVEN TO THE FATHER AND SON BY THE ANGELS.

A. Father: All the angels were standing around the throne... and worshiped God, saying, "Amen! Blessing, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honor, power, and might, be to our God forever and ever! Amen." Rev 7:11-12

B. Son: "I looked, and I heard something like a voice of many angels around the throne...saying with a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb who has been killed to receive the power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing!'" Rev 5:11-12

8. THE THRONE OF THE FATHER AND SON IS ONE AND THE SAME.

A. "The seventh angel sounded, and great voices in heaven followed, saying, 'The kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. He will reign forever and ever!'" Rev 11:15

B. "He showed me a river of water of life... proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Rev 22:1

C. "There will be no curse any more. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will serve him." Rev 22:3

9. THE WONDROUS LAMB (see addendum)

Jesus is referenced as 'the lamb' in 26 verses of this book, far more times than "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ". The hearer/reader is called to contemplate the greatest of all ironies— the sacrificial lamb controlling the unfolding of history. He stands in the midst of God's throne (5:6), executing justice in the land (ch 6-20). He has readied the glorious Kingdom of God where man is no longer estranged from his Creator, but living peacefully in communion.

CLOSING THOUGHTS: To first century Jews, as well as to us, the comprehension of Jesus as fully God and fully man is impossible. Human perception is based on subject/object consciousness and the apparent separation of things in space. "The father is not the son" and "The son is not the father." The book of Revelation seeks to defeat that limitation of the finite mind to elevate the reader to spiritual truth. The Son is different from the Father and yet He is not! It is incomprehensible and yet we can "feel our way" into knowing it is true. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, and your ways are not my ways," says Yahweh. Isa 55:8.

ADDENDUM: LAMB PASSAGES IN REVELATION

- 1. Slain Lamb standing in middle of God's throne:** I saw in the middle of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the middle of the elders, a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. Rev 5:6
- 2. Lamb takes the book evoking worship:** Now when he had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. Rev 5:8
- 3. Slain lamb receives all praise:** saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb who has been killed to receive the power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing!" Rev 5:12
- 4. Lamb/God praised by all living things:** I heard every created thing which is in heaven, on the earth, under the earth, on the sea, and everything in them, saying, "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be the blessing, the honor, the glory, and the dominion, forever and ever! Amen!" Rev 5:13
- 5. Martyrs for testimony of the Lamb:** When he opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been killed for the Word of God, and for the testimony of the Lamb which they had. Rev 6:9
- 6. Fear of Lamb's wrath:** They told 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." Rev 6:16
- 7. Lamb receives praise:** After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no man could count, out of every nation and of all tribes, peoples, and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, dressed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands. Rev 7:9
- 8. Salvation comes from God and the Lamb:** They cried with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation be to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" Rev 7:10
- 9. Lamb's blood is cleansing:** I told him, "My lord, you know." He said to me, "These are those who came out of the great suffering. They washed their robes and made them white in the Lamb's blood." Rev 7:14
- 10. Lamb leads to springs of supernatural waters:** "For the Lamb who is in the middle of the throne shepherds them and leads them to springs of life-giving waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." Rev 7:17
- 11. Lamb's blood saves:** They overcame him [accuser] because of the Lamb's blood, and because of the word of their testimony. They didn't love their life, even to death. Rev 12:11
- 12. Lamb is possessor of the Book of Life:** All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been killed. Rev 13:8
- 13. Lamb and Father's name on forehead of devotees:** I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with him a number, one hundred forty-four thousand, having his name and the name of his Father written on their foreheads. Rev 14:1
- 14. The redeemed follow the Lamb:** These are those who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are those who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These were redeemed by Jesus from among men, the first fruits to God and to the Lamb. Rev 14:4
- 15. Lamb over-sees the destruction of beast followers:** He [beast follower] also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of his anger. He will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. Rev 14:10
- 16. Beautiful song of the Lamb:** They sang the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are your works, Lord God, the Almighty! Righteous and true are your ways, you King of the nations." Rev 15:3.
- 17. Lamb is warrior, overcomer, Lord of Lord and King of Kings:** These will war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with him are called, chosen, and faithful." Rev 17:14

18. Lamb's wedding: "Let's rejoice and be exceedingly glad, and let's give the glory to him. For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his wife has made herself ready." Rev 19:7

19. Blessed are those invited to Lamb's wedding supper: He said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb.'" He said to me, "These are true words of God." Rev 19:9

20. Lamb's wife is New Jerusalem: One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls which were loaded with the seven last plagues came, and he spoke with me, saying, "Come here. I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." Rev 21:9

21. Lamb's city built on 12 foundations (apostles): "The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb." Rev 21:14

22. God/Lamb is the temple: I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. Rev 21:22

23. God/Lamb give light: "The city has no need for the sun or moon to shine, for the very glory of God illuminated it and its lamp is the Lamb." Rev 21:23

24. Lamb has Book of Life: "There will in no way enter into it anything profane, or one who causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life." Rev 21:27

25. God/Lamb give living water: "He showed me a river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Rev 22:1

26. God/Lamb on throne and no curse: "There will be no curse any more. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will serve him." Rev 22:3