**INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION – CH. 1.**

**1. The Book of Revelation is the most discussed and written about book, with the widest (and wildest) range of interpretations of any book in the Bible.**

 **a. The range of interpretations is as multiple as its expositors. They include:**

 **b. Those teaching that it was all fulfilled in the first century AD.**

 **c. Those who teach the 7 churches as representing church ages, but put the rest of the book out in some distant, unknown future.**

 **d. Those who teach that the prophecy of this book portrays the events and journey of the entire church age, throughout all its history from Pentecost until the end.**

**2. Like all the rest of the Bible, Revelation is a book for the church, during its earthly journey.**

 **a. It begins with the founding of the church in AD 30, and ends with the return of Christ.**

 **b. There are teachings about pre-tribulation; post-trib; pre-millenial; post-millenial; and many more, all of which do not fit the prophetic mold of the book.**

 **c. Nothing in the book of Revelation will take place after the return of Christ.**

**3. Briefly review the principals of prophecy and how they apply to the Revelation.**

**4. THE INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF REVELATION IN CHAPTER ONE.**

 **V1. *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John.***

 **a. The name of the book: “The Revelation Of Jesus Christ”.**

 **b. It is an “unveiling” of things; not a closed mystery too hard to understand.**

 **c. To show unto his servants ---- his ministers of the word of God.**

 **d. Things which must shortly come to pass. (See also verses 19 & 4:1).**

 **e. And he signified it: SIGN – I – FIED; gave it in sign language.**

 **f. By his angel. Angel = messenger. See chapter 22:8-10 on this angel.**

**5. V2. *Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.***

 **a. (John, V1) Who bare record of the things he saw (that was revealed to him).**

**6. V3. *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.***

**a. This specific blessing is applicable to those who hear the prophecy of Revelation.**

 **b. The importance of hearing and obeying this prophecy is further emphasized: 22:18-19.**

 **c. For the time is “at hand” (for these things to begin to come to pass).**

 **d. Compare this “at hand” process to the expression: “the kingdom of God is at hand”. That is, it is time for it to begin, but will be centuries in completing.**

 **e. In Dan. 8:26; & 12:8-9, Daniel was told that his vision was sealed up for a later time.**

 **f. John’s vision is unsealed, or a revelation that is at hand. Explain how and why.**

**7. V4. *John to the seven churches which are in Asia: grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne.***

 **a. John is addressing the seven churches of Asia.**

 **b. But there are more than 7 churches in Asia: Antioch, Colosse, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe.**

 **c. From him which is, which was, and which is to come -- God (V1)**

 **d. And from the 7 Spirits before the throne --- the life of the 7 churches.**

**8. V5. *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.***

**a. An affirmation of the risen Lord, who has provided our salvation through his love.**

**9. V6. *And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.***

 **a. As Christians we are “kings and priests” unto God.**

 **b. We are to rule by the grace of Christ, over our lives, and as priests offer up sacrifices to God.**

**10. V7. *Behold he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindred of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.***

 ***a. This does not project a future event at the end of time for every eye to see him.***

 ***b. It refers to and magnifies the crucifixion of Christ, the only time he could be seen pierced by the Roman spear.***

 ***c. Compare: Jn. 19:37; Lk. 3:6; Zech. 12:10; Is. 40:5; Is. 52:10.***

**11. V8. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.***

 **a. The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, signifying that Jesus is first and last.**

**12. V9. *I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.***

 **a. I am your brother and companion in tribulation and the kingdom of Christ.**

 **b. I was in the isle of Patmos for the word of God and the testimony of Christ.**

 **c. Isle of Patmos, in the Agean Sea, off the coast of Asia Minor.**

 **d. About AD 95-96. Some believe this was about 67-68.**

 **e. if you properly interpret the prophecy of this book, when it was written won’t affect it.**

**13. V10. *I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet.***

 **a. This could be either the “Lord’s Day”, as in the entire gospel age; or the “Lord’s Day”, as in Sunday. Most likely the gospel age. He could not have written the book in one day.**

 **b. A great voice behind him, that sounded like a trumpet. Loud, clear, distinct.**

 **c. In O.T. times, the trumpet was the means of marshalling people for a distinct purpose.**

**14. V11. *Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, what thou seest write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.***

 **a. Write what I am revealing unto you in a book so it can be preserved.**

 **b. Send it to the 7 churches which are in Asia. (see V4)**

 **c. Obviously it was not intended just for these 7 churches as some argue. If that were the case, there would have been no need whatever to canonize it with the rest of the Bible.**

**15. V12. *And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw 7 golden candlesticks.***

 **a. I turned to “see” the voice that spoke to me.**

 **b. And what I saw was 7 golden candlesticks.**

 **c. The (7) churches are the light of the world.**

 **d. This voice is coming from among the 7 candlesticks.**

**16. V13. *And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to foot, and gird about the paps with a golden girdle.***

 **a. Remember how God was the God of Israel, even during her times of rebellion, captivity and disobedience.**

 **b. This is also true of the church. That does not mean that he justifies any of her wrongs.**

 **c. Though Israel was as the sand of the sea, only a remnant would be saved. (Rom. 9:27; Is. 10:22). The same is true of the church.**

 **d. The Son of Man is in the midst of the seven churches.**

 **e. The seven churches are symbolic of seven specific eras of the entire church age.**

 **f. Remember the 1st chapter is an introduction or greeting to the entire book.**

 **g. “7” is applied eleven times in this chapter.**

**17. V14-15. *His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire: And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.***

 **a. These many descriptions of the Son of Man, including those in V13, reflect how he appears before the church in her several eras.**

**NOTE: The church was not providentially destined to travel the journey which she has ultimately travelled. This message to the seven churches is not a description of the path she “must” follow, but a foretelling of the path she “would” follow (and historically did follow) by her own choices.**

**18. V16. *And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.***

 **a. The Son of Man is holding 7 stars in his right hand.**

 **b. The seven stars are the seven angels or messengers of the seven churches. (V20).**

 **c. The sharp two edged sword is the word of God. (Heb. 4:12).**

 **d. His countenance was like the brightness of the sun.**

**19. V17-18. *And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, fear not: I am the first and the last. I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.***

 **a. John prostrates himself before the stunning appearance of the Son of Man.**

 **b. I am the resurrected one.**

 **c. I have the keys to death and the grave (hell, hades).**

**20. V19. *Write the things which thou hast seen, and the thingsw which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.***

 **a. The things which have already occurred; the things which are now occurring; and the things which shall come to pass hereafter in the age of the church.**

**21. V20. *The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.***

 **a. The 7 stars in Christ’s right hand are the 7 ministering agencies of the 7 churches.**

 **b. The 7 candlesticks are the 7 churches.**

**22. Dear churches,**

**I have many things to say to you. That is the purpose of this letter. I will say it to you in symbols and figures. I want the church to read and understand this “Revelation”. Be sure to read all the things I have said to you in this book, and believe and obey them. The church will go through seven phases throughout its history and I have used seven churches of Asia Minor to represent each phase. I am in the midst of the church, in its good times and bad times; its joys and its sorrows. The 7 stars represent the ministering agencies throughout all the church. They are in my hands, accountable to me and I alone can give them light and revelation for the churches. I have represented the 7 church ages with a candlestick for each one. They are to be the light of God in this world. As you travel down the road of the things which are taking place even now, and further on down that road to the things which shall be hereafter, remember all the sayings of this book of prophecy and keep them faithfully. And always remember: “Though the church be as the sand of the sea shore, only a remnant will be saved. Yours for eternity, God!**