

# REVELATION UNVEILED: AN ENDURING HOPE – WEEKLY REVIEWS

## Introduction Takeaways:

1. The Book of Revelation was written at the end of the first century for the churches in Asia Minor, which were part of the Roman Empire.
2. It is an apocryphal, apocalyptic book intended to be subversive. It uses symbols of the Roman government to offer the church hope amid suffering. It is rife with symbolism.
3. This is neither a timeline for the “last days” nor a prediction of the church throughout history. It shifts back and forth between visions of the seven judgments, depictions of biblical history, moments of what is happening in Heaven, and a chapter on Jerusalem specifically.
4. Revelation concerns all persecution from every era and nation and the end-of-times judgments.
5. Christianity conflicted with loyalty to Rome. Roman society members were expected to participate in local temples and religious practices.
6. The church was facing persecution in various forms ways:
  - a. shunned business
  - b. social outcasts
  - c. secret worship services
  - d. jail
  - e. torture
  - f. murder
  - g. execution

## Revelation 1 Takeaways: The letter, its purpose, and its author revealed

1. The book is a revelation directed by God, revealed to John by Jesus regarding what is occurring in the invisible Kingdom of God, and a revelation of God’s plan and purpose for the Earth.
2. In Revelation 1:1-8, The trinity is established and serves as an overview of the Gospel.
3. John identifies as a Christian brother, persecuted for the sake of Jesus Christ and exiled to the island of Patmos.
4. Jesus stands/dwells in the midst of his Church (7 lampstands), and every church has an angel (7 stars).

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Revelation 2 & 3 Takeaways: The Church must repent and be prepared for persecution

1. The Seven Churches mentioned symbolize the Universal Church.
2. Each of the seven letters to the churches has six sections: a descriptive greeting, a commendation (except Laodicea), a condemnation/criticism (except Philadelphia), a warning, an exhortation, and a promise.
3. Jesus is concerned that Rome is infiltrating the church, and the church needs to repent.
4. The Church will need to be prepared to withstand the persecutions to come.

Revelation 4 Takeaways: Act I, Heaven's cast of characters revealed

1. Jesus shows John what is happening in Heaven.
2. A vividly colorful description of worship in heaven.
3. We are introduced to the 24 elders, the 4 living creatures, and the Holy Spirit (the 7 spirits).

Revelation 5 Takeaways: God's plan for Earth can only be revealed through Jesus

1. God has a scroll that contains His purpose and plan for Earth. The scroll is sealed with seven seals that no one is worthy to open.
2. The only one deemed worthy to open the scrolls is Jesus, whose image transforms into a "Lamb Who Was Slain."
3. Jesus does not conquer with a sword but through his blood and the words he speaks.
4. There's worship in Heaven.
5. The lens widens to include myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands worshipping around the throne.

Revelation 6 Takeaways: Our first introduction to the judgments/disciplines

1. Revelation focuses on seven judgments or disciplines.
  - a. There are three descriptions of the same seven judgments. Called a Triad, or Progressive Parallel, think of these three sets as a weather forecast
    - i. Scroll & Seals (chapter 6) – Forecast of an impending storm
    - ii. Trumpets (chapters 8 & 9) – You can hear thunder in the distance
    - iii. Bowls (chapters 15 & 16) – You are in the midst of a storm
2. Each of the seven "judgments" is more like a discipline. God is trying to attract the attention of those who have yet to enter the Kingdom. As each seal is broken, more disastrous calamities are visited upon the Earth: the absence of peace, war, an oppressive economic system, famine, pestilence, etc. The goal is to wake up the non-followers of Jesus and cause them to turn toward God.

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Revelation 7 Takeaways: Setting the saints apart and dedicating them to God.

1. There is a pause to number (to set apart, to seal) God's servants, first Israel and then servants from every tribe and nation.
2. Those set apart for God have God's seal on their forehead.
3. We witness great worship in heaven and the influx of martyred followers of Jesus.

Revelation 8 Takeaways: Silence before God as the saints pray for relief; trumpets are introduced, and one-third of the Earth is destroyed.

1. The seventh seal is opened to a time of silence when the prayers of the saints under oppression cry out to God from the tribulation.
2. We are introduced to the second unveiling of the seven judgments; the Seven Trumpets. One-third of the Earth is destroyed.
3. Revelation 8 lists four judgments and warns of the remaining three, calling them "woes."

Revelation 9 Takeaways: Judgments turn into "woes," and Satan is introduced.

1. The fifth and sixth trumpet judgments are revealed, leading to war, pestilence, and poison air.
2. We are introduced to the Dragon, and he is named.
3. The saints remain safe while the unbelievers refuse to repent for their murders, sorcery, and prostitution thefts.

Revelation 10 Takeaways: A prophecy is held back, another is bittersweet

1. A promise is made: No more delays. When the seventh trumpet sounds, the mystery of God will be revealed.
2. John receives a prophecy that is sweet to the taste (the Word of God is sweet) but is also described as "gut-wrenching" (the Word of God is bittersweet; the cost of discipleship is great).

Revelation 11 Takeaways: Concerning Israel's specific call to repentance

1. Chapter 11, another "meanwhile," concerns Israel.
2. The inner Temple, Holy of Holies, is "measured" or set apart from the outer court (Gentiles).
3. The vision is set in Jerusalem, with two "witnesses"—similar to Moses and Elijah—testifying to the Gospel.
4. In the meantime, worship has erupted in heaven once more, and the Ark of the Covenant is revealed within God's temple (which disappeared sometime in the late first century).

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Revelation 12 Takeaways: Act II, A historical review of Satan's battle against God's kingdom since creation

1. The visions of chapter 12 include a history lesson on God's relationship with Satan since creation, as well as Satan's relationship with the Woman.
2. The woman symbolizes Eve, then Israel, then Mary (the mother of Jesus), and ultimately the Church, as she transforms into each character through the chapter.

Revelation 13 Takeaways: The Beasts, or Wild Things

1. Beast/Wild Thing #1 is all about power and world domination, representing the way Satan works through governments
2. Beast/Wild Thing #2 is all about propaganda; its number is 666
3. The desire of the Dragon is the corruption and destruction of God's creation, he seduces the powerful through brute strength and deception. His aim is to be worshipped by all of humanity.

Revelation 14 Takeaways: