



Revelation - 22 chapters

Title:

The Revelation of Jesus Christ – not only is this the first phrase in the book, but this phrase accurately describes the content of this book. In this book is narrated the full and final revelation of Christ and the complete consummation of God's Kingdom. This book is also called the Apocalypse, which is the same word as Revelation, borrowed from another language.

Author:

The author identified himself by name as John. This is most likely John the son of Zebedee, one of the original 12 disciples, who also wrote the Gospel of John and the three Epistles of John. John was writing while in exile on an island called Patmos. He was apparently being unjustly punished by the Roman empire for being a Christian leader.

Occasion and Purpose:

The occasion of this book was that the church was undergoing real and potential suffering and persecution for being Christian. And John saw that the persecution and suffering were only going to increase in the days ahead. The Roman empire was ramping up oppression of Christians at this time. And John saw that the church was somewhat unprepared to remain faithful. Some of the churches were compromised by sin or false teaching. Many were comfortable and complacent. So, the purpose of this book was to warn the church of suffering, encourage the church in suffering, and strengthen the church to be victorious, even through suffering. Revelation encourages the church by giving them an eschatological perspective – reminding them of the end, and how God's side will be victorious at the conclusion – by reminding them that the outcome is certain, because God is sovereign and faithful, and by giving the church a heavenly perspective – that all their suffering is part of God's greater purposes to bring this age to an end and inaugurate the new heavens and new earth.

Themes:

1. **Worship** – In this book, there is a strong contrast between the true worship of the One True God, and the false worship of a variety of pretenders and attempted rivals to God. Revelation makes it clear that everyone worships and gives their primary allegiance either to God or to false idols. And people are conformed to the character, either of God and Christ, or to the dragon and the beast. And this book highlights the exalted, holy, eternal nature of God and Christ, and the many ways that they are completely worthy of all our worship and delight.
2. **Deception/Persecution** – In Revelation, there are two prominent strategies of the enemies of God's people. One strategy is the use of force and legal coercion to tempt God's people to unfaithfulness. This can also take the form of social and economic pressure, that Christians would be forced to choose between luxury and ease (or even basic necessities) and faithfulness to Christ. The other strategy is deceit – pretending and propagandizing that things are something that they are not – claiming that false gods are actually in authority and control.
3. **Patient Endurance** – The Christian's response to trials and persecution is to be patient endurance in faith. Revelation counsels God's people to overcome in every situation, by knowing and trusting the truth about Who God is and what He is doing in their situation. We are to overcome by loving God more than anything else, including our life.
4. **Vindication/Judgment** – In Revelation, God's people are promised that they will win if they remain on God's side. God will punish those who hurt His people, and God's righteous judgment is celebrated in heaven, and will be celebrated in all the universe when God completes the judgment of His enemies and the vindication and reward of His faithful people.

5. **God is in Control** – The theme that underlies all of Revelation is the fact that the One True God is in sovereign control of all of history, even when it may not seem to be so. All that happens in Revelation happens by His activity and permission. He is on the throne, ruling as King over everything. And all the universe and all of history is centered around His throne and His sovereign purpose, which are being consummated in Christ, and will be fully consummated in the New Heavens and New Earth.

Summary:

In response to the increasing persecution by the Roman empire, God encouraged and strengthened His suffering people by reminding them that He is greater than any pretend gods or wannabe ultimate authorities. He proclaimed that He is in control and is bringing His enemies into judgment and His people to full vindication and reward. Therefore, His people are encouraged to be vigilant and patient in their faithful endurance, knowing that God's ultimate victory is assured and that their reward will be eternal (and that the alternative is terrifying).

Organization:

1:1-8 Introduction	
1:9-3:22 Vision on the Lord's Day	
	1:9-20 Vision of the Glorified Christ and John's Commission 2:1-3:22 Letters to the Seven Churches
4:1-16:21 Vision of Heaven	
	4:1-5:14 God's Sovereign Control of History 6:1-16:21 Series of Sevens on Earth
	6:1-8:5 Seven Seals 8:6-11:19 Seven Trumpets 12:1-14:20 Seven Cosmic Events 15:1-16:21 Seven Bowls
17:1-21:8 Vision of the Prostitute	
	17:1-18 The Great Prostitute 18:1-24 The Fall of Babylon 19:1-20:15 The Final Victory over Evil 21:1-8 The New Creation Purged of Evil
21:9-22:5 Vision of the Bride	
	21:9-27 New Jerusalem 22:1-5 Eden Restored
22:6-21 Epilogue	

Key Verses:

1:1-3, 1:17-19, 2:1-7, 4:8-11, 5:1-13, 6:9-11, 12:7-12, 13:1-10, 13:11-15, 16:5-7, 17:1-3, 18:1-5, 19:1-7, 19:11-21, 21:1-8, 22:1-6, 22:12-17