

NASB 1977 The Revelation of Jesus Christ

1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His slaves, the things which must shortly take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His slave, John, 2 who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. 3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.

We come this morning to a milestone in our church. Perhaps that is a misstatement. Our church is 120 years old, or depending how you look at it, 17 or 18 years old, or from my perspective, the Lord has graciously granted me a ministry here with you folks and I am in my 14th year.

So I'll say at least a milestone in my role as pastor / teacher here with you. And that is because we finished our goal of working our way through Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians. Four defining letters of Paul's.

We spent 3 years and 2 weeks working through those letters together. And, a little advertisement, every manuscript from all of that combined teaching, and for that matter, every manuscript from the day I walked in the door here, is uploaded at our web pages.

So that collective cumulative resource is available 24-7 for research and study as well as being a source of accountability for me. Every word of every manuscript spoken in this congregation is findable.

I prayed over whether to begin the book of John, or Revelation. And I landed here this morning. Revelation chapter 1.

Now, if you go to our web site and go to sermons, and filter by scripture, and choose Revelation, you will find 50 previous studies as we worked through the Revelation beginning in September of 2012.

We did that roughly over a years time, but we did those on Sunday evenings, for a handful of people, over in the fellowship hall, and not as your pastor, just as lay teacher. (which is all that I still am)

Dennis Barr was the pastor here, and when I'd had enough at the Baptist church and came over here, (a much harder transition for my dear wife than for me), I offered to continue working through the minor prophets on Sunday nights, as I had been doing at the Baptist church. Dennis said, "can you start tonight?" And I said no, but I can begin next Sunday. That was in August of 2011. So we did roughly a year in the minor prophets before we taught the book of Revelation.

So, by the leading of the Holy Spirit and answered prayer, here I am again, beginning the Book of Revelation with you folks this morning. This morning will be mostly an introduction to this book.

Let me preface this book for you to begin our study. Turn with me if you're a fast turner and that's what you like to do, or maybe just listen, to the Old Testament book of Daniel. Chapter 9. A section that the ladies didn't like so much on Thursday nights study. Daniel 9:24

* The Coming Prince: The Marvelous Prophecy of Daniel's Seventy Weeks by Sir Robert Anderson *

24 "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy place.

These are weeks of years. So, we have a descriptive beginning point, and an end point. It's a fascinating study because you can count years from when this decree went forth, forward, to year 483, and you'll find Jesus, at the gate of Jerusalem, a week before His crucifixion, weeping over His people. That leaves 7 years unfulfilled of this prophecy.

What no one saw was a 2000 year parenthesis which is the church age. God sets His people, the jews, aside. Puts them on a shelf, as it were, Jesus exact words are, Your house is left unto you desolated, desolate, abandoned as it were, by God. Not forever though.

Jesus will remove His church, which ends that parenthesis called the church age, and that 7 year clock that will finish this prophecy to completion, will begin. 7 remaining years of Jewish history, still on the clock. Waiting like a clock in a chess game, for God to punch the button and start it ticking.

That will come up again during our time together in this book, but that isn't the portion of interest for this morning.

The angel, sent to Daniel, gives a list of things that will be finished forever, at the end of the final week of years. This is mind blowing. Almost too vast for us to comprehend. But God rattles them off like it's the list of afternoon errands.

For us, almost too big to comprehend, for Him, already done. Spoken, and therefore, already accomplished, although we get to witness some of the drama of the actual completion.

Here is the list that God intends to complete by the end of the final week of years. Just a few loose ends to tie up;

24 *“Seventy weeks have been decreed for **your** people and **your** holy city,* (Daniel's Holy City is Jerusalem, not Babylon where he is at. Daniel's people are the sons of Israel, the jews, to this day. The jews in Israel this morning bear the DNA of Israel. Those jews.)

24 *“Seventy weeks have been decreed for **your** people and **your** holy city,*

- to finish the transgression,
- to make an end of sin,
- to make atonement for iniquity,
- to bring in everlasting righteousness,

- to seal up vision and prophecy, and
- to anoint the most holy place.

The book of Revelation is the capstone that finishes this book we call the Bible. The entire book with all of its 66 books and 40 authors that spans a period of authorship of over 1500 years is actually a single theme.

In Genesis 3, paradise is lost. In Revelation 22, paradise is regained. In Genesis 3 sin and rebellion enter the world. Sin brings death, both spiritual and physical. And sin is like a genetic illness or disease that travels from parent to child. All have sinned. All are cut off from God. All are destined for eternal punishment. Unless God intervenes and atones, pays the debt for that sin.

And sin forfeits man's God given design to rule this cosmos and turns that rule over to Satan. Satan is ruler of this world because all are trapped in sin. Satan trapped the whole world in sin.

There is a sense that God created a perfect creation, for His glory and He created mankind for His pleasure of worship and fellowship, and Satan robbed God of His creation by introducing sin.

I want you to see that this book, the entire Holy Bible cover to cover, that we take for granted is a continuous theme from beginning to end. It is one problem and one solution. But it took 1500 years and 40 authors to write God's book. And we're still in the midst of the drama.

But the problem that began in Genesis 3 is forever solved by Revelation 22. Daniel gives us an outline of the problem and the solution in a condensation that no one but God Himself could ever achieve.

- to finish the transgression,
- to make an end of sin,
- to make atonement for iniquity,

- to bring in everlasting righteousness,
- to seal up vision and prophecy, and
- to anoint the most holy place.

Only God can write a book with a common theme, a problem initiated and a solution completed, that takes 1500 years to write and uses 40 authors. One book, one problem, one protagonist, one Hero, one victory, one beginning, one eternal ending, one overall theme, 1500 years being written, 7 millenia to completion.

Pinch yourselves. Here we are, nearing the end of the sixth millenium. 2000 years of the patriarchs, 2000 years of Israel, 2000 years of church, and we're just on the cusp* of all of the pre written drama of Israel's final seven years of history which brings the return of Jesus to reign at that most holy place for a 1000 years of paradise regained. *(note. I wrote that sentence just hours before the bombs rained down on Persia on Friday night Saturday morning)

Every single point written down by Daniel 2500 years ago, will be accomplished in this book of Revelation that we're embarking on. Cataclysmic events that culminate history, and finish sin and satan and rebellion against God forever. It's all in here.

I was looking for a word. Why do we all slow down on the freeway and gaze at the gore after an accident. The word I finally came to is the word salacious. Synonym; titilating. We are drawn to look at skin tingling gore. Why is that.

I don't know, it just is. It peaks our salacious interest. And people want to get to the good gory stuff in this book. We want to get past the seven churches and all that stuff and get to Revelation 6 where people are crying out for the mountains to fall on them. We want to gaze at the sensational stuff the same as we gaze at rockets landing in buildings.

We will get there. But *sensational* or not, that's not what this book is

about. This book is about Jesus ultimate victory and the ultimate defeat of the usurper Satan, as Jesus takes back this stolen planet and casts all rebellers into hell, and brings in everlasting righteousness.

Yes there is jaw dropping cataclysmic events. But glory and worship of our Almighty God and Saviour, the Lord, Jesus, is the correct thing to gaze at. So be patient. You bunch of ambulance chasers. We're going to revel in Jesus, not the gory details of the retribution that is due.

There is a built in sense though, that we all have a bit of, of impatience for the justice that is due. Part of me wants to see evil crushed and righteousness prevailed. We long for the justice of God to come and crush evil in this world. This book is the due finish to the unspeakable evil that Satan has brought upon this world.

Josh taught about righteous anger on Friday evening. It is righteous anger that makes us long for the retribution that is due to Satan, and indeed to particularly loathesome rebellers here and now. We wait patiently.

Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord. I WILL repay. Romans 12:19

So let's begin. I'm as anxious for justice as you all are. More impatient than most; *Vs. 1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His slaves, the things which must shortly take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His slave, John,*

Revelation. Apokalypsis. It simply means something not seen before that is revealed. Like an important painting that is commissioned and an audience waits to see it but it's got a veil which is suddenly dropped. Oooh. Ahhh. Or like the reveal when the people get to see their home on that show fixer upper, where they roll the 2 signboards with the giant picture of the *before*, to reveal the *after*. The big "reveal!"

That's an apokalypsis. Something previously unseen but now revealed. And in this case, it's a whole grand finale, the end of this book about Jesus, not before seen or known.

And in some sense, it's a double reveal. We will see a vision of the glorified Christ that we've not seen before. The last time we saw Jesus, soldiers were spitting on Him and there was a lot of blood from soldiers pounding a thorny crown on His Royal head. They led Him to a cross, actually He had to carry the cross in His weakened state. Then they drove nails through His hands and His feet. A spear was thrust into His side to make sure He was dead.

This vision of Jesus we will see here is much different. This book is given to reveal, to apokalypsis, Jesus glorified, by God.

So the Apokalypsis is a dual revealing. First of a Jesus we haven't seen before. Jesus glorified. And second is the prophetic revealing of events that surround the end of Satan's evil reign, the deposing of Satan as ruler of this world, and the retaking of this world by it's rightful owner, the Creator of all things. The Lord, Jesus, Christ. The very Messiah of Israel. God's anointed forever King who will reign forever in righteousness.

1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him

Deuteronomy 29:29 comes to mind.

29 "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law.

God has some secrets. He doesn't reveal everything. Even Jesus said that some times of events neither He nor the angels knew the day or the hour.

36 No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Matt. 24:36 And He's talking about the rapture of the church here, not His ultimate return 7 years later.

But by contrast, in verse one of the Revelation, Jesus tells us that God revealed these things to Jesus and He in turn gave them to His angel to

reveal them to John to give to the rest of the fellow slaves.

1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His slaves, the things which must shortly take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His slave, John,

Notice who the recipients of this revealing of new unknowable truths are.

1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His slaves,

Your version may say servants, or it may say bond servant. Apparently there is such an aversion to the word slave that we're embarrassed to admit that the original text used that word unapologetically. (8 cylinder word Mr. M).

The original readers understood unquestioningly that the word was the term for a person who largely could not come and go as he pleased because they were owned by someone else.

How horrible! Slavery is an affront to personal autonomy. Therefore, slavery is bad. Unless, unless the slave owner is Jesus. Listen again to my definition of slave; a person who largely could not come and go as he pleased because they were owned by someone else.

That's actually an accurate definition of all true christians. We are persons who can not come and go and do as we please, because we are owned by Jesus. He purchased us with His blood. He ransomed us, now get this, He ransomed us, bought us out of our previous slavery to a cruel owner who only hated us and sought for our destruction. Jesus bought us out of that slavery and adopted us. But we belong to Him. He purchased us and we are not our own.

1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His slaves,

doulois Noun, dative, plural. Slaves, plural. Christians belong to Jesus. He is Kurios. Master. Lord. And we are doulois. Slaves. Sweet slavery!

But, think for a moment about the exclusiveness of what is given. This is never before revealed truth about the deposing of Satan and retaking of this world by the Risen and Victorious King of Kings and Lord of Lords. These things are beyond finding out. No other way to know this information except that God tells us.

But one more thing. He gives this to His slaves. Well, there's a caveat there. If you are NOT one of His slaves, this book is meaningless. It is unveiled for the slaves. But it remains veiled for non slaves. If you are not a slave that belongs to Jesus, these words of this book are gibberish. Sensational nonsense.

People who are not christians come up with the most wild and ridiculous concoctions about this book. For them it's a 10,000 piece puzzle of a white wall. If you're not a slave of Jesus, you have about that much chance of understanding what's going on here.

God gave these things to Jesus to show to **His** (possessive pronoun) slaves. It's a challenge for the slaves. We need His indwelling Holy Spirit inside us. And we need to be submissive and obedient slaves. And we need to apply some diligence. Be willing to work inside this book. Study the whole book.

People look at this book and say it's daunting. It's impossible. Move along, nothing to see here. Read the gory stuff and let your hair stand up on your neck. Enjoy the salaciousness. But don't try to understand it. It's impossible.

Wrong. God gave it to Jesus and Jesus gave it to His slaves. He gives us some challenges. There are some difficulties. But He gave us this book so that we will know about future things. Future things like, He wins and Satan loses. Things we need to know about. He expects us to understand.

He occasionally gives pop quizzes. So prepare to work in this book.

Don't be a coward. Cowards cop out and say, it's impossible to understand and you're a fool to think you can.

God doesn't like cowards. Rev. 21:8 *“But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”*

Don't be a coward. Be a slave. This book is so much fun for us who are humble slaves of the King. It is sensationally gratifying knowledge to have.

1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His slaves, the things which must shortly take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His slave, John,

things which must shortly take place

OK, that's obviously an error. Oopsie, God. It's been 1930 years since John wrote that.

The word translated shortly, is tachei. It's a measurement word. Tachometer measures revolutions per minute. Did God make an oops? I have a couple of possibilities for you. Slow or delayed to you isn't necessarily slow or delayed to God. Peter helps us with that notion.

2 Peter 3:7-9 seems to work very well in this exact context. Peter's also talking about end time events when he says;

7 And by that same word, the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. 8 Beloved, do not let this one thing escape your notice: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. 9 The Lord is

not slow in keeping His promise as some understand slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish but everyone to come to repentance....

But I have a second possibility, not that we need it after Peter's words to the wise above. tachei can mean rapid fire. Staccato. Bang bang bang bang!

I think the angel may be telling us, once these things begin to happen, fasten your seat belt, it's rapid fire, on earth, from heaven. *the things which must shortly take place*

the things which must tachei take place *the things which must quickly take place ~ the things which must rapidly take place*
any of those would be accurate for the word tachei. It's almost Onomatopoeiac. tachei! tachei! tachei! tachei! Rapid fire. Quick.

When we start timing labor pains, we know that a baby will soon be welcomed into the world. I think that's the idea here with the word tachoi. The second half of that seven year period, you really don't want to be here. Much better to be one of His slaves and to be called out of this world.

and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His slave, John

The antecedent of the pronoun **He**, here, is Jesus. Jesus sent His angel to His slave John, to communicate future events. Very matter of fact.

One thing that struck me is the personal possessive pronoun that describes this angel. This angel is Jesus' angel.

Now we don't want to make too much out of that because we don't know much more than this written here, but apparently Jesus has an angel that is His angel. You say, well, I think they're all His angels. And that's right. Even the demons are ultimately His. They fear Him and obey Him.

But whoever this angel is, this is His angel. Jesus angel.

Perhaps it's Gabriel. In Daniel chapter 10, Gabriel was sent to Daniel with information and was held up for 21 days by Satan who is called the prince of Persia in that story. And Michael the arch angel was dispatched to come and help Gabriel.

Gabriel also shows up and speaks to Zecharias, father of John the baptist, to tell him that the forerunner of the Messiah will come through him. Zecharias argues with Gabriel. Not a smart move. And Gabriel seals up his mouth. He can't speak until after John is born.

Three times in the new testament it is stated that the law of Moses came through the agency of angels. So no surprise here that Jesus sent His angel to reveal these future events to His slave, John. New revelation brought through the agency of angels is not new in this book.

One final idea for this morning; *and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His slave, John*

John, the great apostle, who refers to himself as the disciple that Jesus loved, is just a slave among fellow slaves. He isn't Pope John. He isn't cardinal John. Bishop John, presbyter John, overseer, John. John is a fellow slave amongst slaves. If you have any hope of understanding the things in this book, you need to be a slave amongst the other slaves.

In fact, if you aren't a slave of Jesus, you might be better served somewhere else while we study this book. If you aren't one of His slaves, this book will be so much gibberish.

On the other hand, if you're here this morning, and you want to understand all that is revealed about things that we think are very close to happening, but you fear perhaps you aren't a slave of Jesus, cry out to Him to grant to you to be His slave.

There is some colorful history to the translation sometimes of bond slave.

A bond slave, in Israel, was someone who loved their master and wanted to be in his service forever, because of love. The motivation to choose slavery over freedom was love for the Master and his family. And there was a ceremony to make that happen.

In ancient Israel slavery was hopeful. If you hit rock bottom and became a slave to some other Israelite, to pay off your debt, like a bankruptcy, you worked for that person as a slave for 6 years, and then the slave owner is instructed to take of his flocks and give you, like a generous grubstake, some wealth to get started again, and then he sets you free.

But there's always a possibility that you and your family are thriving together with your owner and you don't want to be set free and separated.

If you asked your master to make you a slave of his only for all time, the ceremony to affirm that was that the master would take an awl and drive a hole through your ear lobe, and that let everyone know, you belonged to him forever. That's where the term bond slave comes from.

Deuteronomy 15:16 And it will be that, if he says to you, 'I will not go out from you,' because he loves you and your household, since he fares well with you; 17 then you shall take an awl and pierce it through his ear into the door, and he shall be your servant forever. Also you shall do likewise to your maidservant.

That's how it is with all of Jesus slaves. We fare well with Him, and we love Him and His household. We don't want to be anywhere else, except with Him.

And there are perks for His slaves. He gave this book that foretells the future before it happens **to** His slaves, **by** His slave John. A book that brings completion to every thing stated by Daniel in the verse we looked at.

*Isaiah 46:8 "Remember this, and be assured;
Cause it to return to your heart, you transgressors.*

*9 Remember the former things long past,
For I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is no one like Me,*

*10 Declaring the end from the beginning,
And from ancient times things which have not been done,
Saying, 'My counsel will be established,
And I will accomplish all My good pleasure',*

*11 Calling a bird of prey from the east,
The man of My counsel from a far country.
Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass.
I have formed it, surely I will do it.*

I'll finish this morning with a quote from my favorite preacher, my late pastor, John MacArthur. I quote;

In Genesis, you had the commencement of heaven and earth; in Revelation, you have the consummation of heaven and earth. In Genesis, we were given the entrance of sin and the curse; in Revelation, it's the end of sin and the curse. In Genesis, it was the dawn of Satan and his activities; in Revelation, it's the doom of Satan and his activities. In Genesis, it was the tree of life relinquished; in Revelation, it's the tree of life regained. In Genesis, death enters; in Revelation, death exits. In Genesis, sorrow begins; in Revelation, sorrow is banished. In Genesis, paradise was lost; in Revelation, paradise is regained. But most centrally, in Genesis, the Savior was promised; and in Revelation, the Savior is preeminent. end quote

You know, if you're going to throw out the book of Genesis, you'll also be throwing out the book of Revelation at the same time. Or as liberal christianity does, make Genesis an allegory and make Revelation an allegory. Both are literal history and literal truth folks.

Your Bible is one continuous drama and theme that begins in Genesis and ends in Revelation. We slaves are granted to understand God's sovereign

purposes as He moves toward His ultimate goal.

He takes back this world from Satan. He reigns in glorious peace for a final millenium. Then a new heavens and a new earth. Not one word of this book will perish in all of that eternity. And us slaves will be called home soon and be with Him forever in His glory.