

## 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.*

*4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come; and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne; 5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood, 6 and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father; to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. 7 BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen.*

*8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."*

We made a good start last Sunday morning. I was pleased with the foundation that the Lord helped us lay out together to try to understand the purpose of this book.

It is the capstone to the drama of the unseen battle between God and Satan who usurped this world and trapped mankind in sin. Six millenia of the drama of rebellion.

Man, who God created for worship and fellowship, trapped and separated from God because of sin. Duped into joining Satan's rebellion. Sin is fun. Sin is gratifying while it eats us up like a cancer and ultimately kills us.

God's plan of redemption unfolding for thousands of years. His annointed One who would come and ultimately rule here after He deposes Satan and

takes back this world that He created and owns.

God revealed all of it, before it happens, sometimes thousands of years before it would happen, in prophecy. The world will be surprised. Trapped by a tidal wave of judgement that is inescapable. But the irony of the judgement is that God has revealed all of it. Before it happens. There's no excuse.

Last week we also spent time on the fact that God's revelation is only received and understood by those who have repented from their rebellion and become obedient slaves in His family.

That's also a judgement. Blindness to what is lovingly revealed here is part of God's judgement on a rebellious world that hates Him. We look at these things and are terrified for our neighbors, but our neighbors would run us off with a stick if we tried to tell them.

God's magnificent judgement. He warns the world in plain black and white words that are not difficult to understand, but He does it in a way that if your sin is what you value, more than Him, the plain words will be nonsense.

A song that makes me laugh with glee every time I hear it. The Goldfield radio station plays it once in a while, otherwise you might not have come across it before. It's pretty high brow. Pretty long hair. It's by the Texas Lounge Lizards.

Momma don't allow no above ground nuclear testing 'round here.  
Momma don't allow no above ground nuclear testing 'round here.  
We don't care what momma don't allow .....massive explosion  
silence.....

We laugh because it's so ridiculous. We don't care what momma don't allow. Duped foolish mankind who doesn't care about what God allows. They mock His warnings. They hate Him. And God repays with blindness.

The end of all things is written down and easy (mostly) for the slaves to comprehend and worship God for what He will do, but the world is blind. These things are nonsense to the world around us.

Let's do a sidebar here. We have much work to do to work our way through this book. Let's do the occasional side bar that makes things seem imminent and real. My hope is that if we can do some responsible conservative and studied response to current prophecy we see unfolding it may be helpful.

Who named the action in Iran that we're undertaking. Who came up with the name Epic Fury? If it was Secretary Hegseth, then my hat is off to him. And the reason I ask is because there is a passage of prophecy in Jeremiah that speaks of this exact region, the exact real estate in question, and has the hebrew words; aph charown fierce anger. Epic fury.

Did the chief who named the action do it because they were considering Biblical prophecy, to be specific, Jeremiah 49. Let me read some of the words of that prophecy for you. Remember these words were written 2,623 years ago.

### *Prophecy against Elam*

Elam, if you look on ancient maps, is halfway between the Caspian Sea and the Persian gulf. In other words it is the region of modern Iran. Elam is the region of Ancient Persia.

*Jeremiah 49:34 That which came as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet concerning Elam, at the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, saying,*

*35 “Thus says the LORD of hosts,  
‘Behold, I am going to break the bow of Elam,  
The finest of their might.*

36 *'And I shall bring upon Elam the four winds  
From the four ends of heaven,  
And shall scatter them to all these winds;  
And there will be no nation  
To which the outcasts of Elam will not go.*

37 *'So I shall shatter Elam before their enemies  
And before those who seek their lives;  
And I shall bring calamity upon them,  
Even My **fierce anger**, ' (Epic Fury) declares the LORD,  
'And I shall send out the sword after them  
Until I have consumed them.*

38 *'Then I shall set My throne in Elam,  
And I shall destroy out of it king and princes, '  
Declares the LORD.*

39 *'But it will come about in the last days  
That I shall restore the fortunes of Elam, '''  
Declares the LORD.*

Is that what we're watching in real time? You all know that I err on the side of refusing to be sensational about prophetic events, assigning everything to everything. Silliness that detracts from the true gravity of prophecy.

So the first thing I did was read the commentaries to see if this ode against Elam had a classic obvious fulfillment in history past. It did not. The old commenters all said, this is future. It hasn't happened.

I don't know what all the words mean, but some of it certainly gets my immediate attention.

like; *'Behold, I am going to break the bow of Elam,  
The finest (or first, foremost) of their might.*

That seems pretty descriptive. Like maybe the first and foremost might be a nuclear bomb that was simply waiting for a bow, a delivery system. Perhaps. I'm not being dogmatic, but I want you to think a little bit.

and; vs. 36 speaks of scattering the elamites, Iranians, to the four winds, every nation on earth. Do you realize that when the shiite ayatollah's took over in 1979 the persians who could flee to other places did that, by the millions.

Vs 37 and 38 read like yesterdays newspaper.

*37 'So I shall shatter Elam before their enemies  
And before those who seek their lives;  
And I shall bring calamity upon them,  
Even My **fierce anger**, ' (Epic Fury) declares the LORD,  
'And I shall send out the sword after them  
Until I have consumed them.*

*38 'Then I shall set My throne in Elam,  
And I shall destroy out of it king and princes, '  
Declares the LORD.*

Not sure how the throne thing fits, but sometimes you wait for clarity. But destroying king and princes is pretty easy to decipher. Exactly what we saw happen.

How might this fit in prophecy, total, regarding end events. Ezekiel 38 and Isaiah 17 envisions an end times invasion of Israel by countries north of them. Modern Turkey and Russia for a couple. But importantly, that invasion happens on an Israel that is back in the land, 1948, and that is secure. At ease.

If our current action effectively cancels radical shiite moslem threats, then Israel could enter a time of peace and security. Seems to be a possibility.

Something to watch carefully. Just saying. OK, sidebar over. The purpose of an occasional sidebar is to anchor your feet in the fact that God's prophecy is not meaningless allegory, it is literal.

Not literal that a guy standing in Scotland in the 1600's would know what it means. But when things start to break loose, you can make literal alignments. Conservatively. Carefully. It's very easy to go off the rails, and Satan uses that, when it happens, all too often.

During world war 2, sensationalistic prophecy mongers were saying Hitler was the antichrist and doomsday was imminent. Pam's dad was terrified by that, and when it did not happen, he was hard as flint to prophecy or anything related to the Bible declaring future events. We are cautious.

OK, back to Revelation chapter one. Vss 2 and 3. Vs. 1 again for context and we'll stop for a moment at the end of vs. 2

*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.*

John. His slave, John saw stuff. He had a vision. In the vision God communicated with him in different ways. He heard God's voice alone. The very words of God, like thunder or rolling waters. He saw and heard Jesus. Jesus in glorified resurrected body. And he communicated with an angel sent to tell him future things.

John covers all those bases in verse 2. *John, 2 who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw.*

John is bearing witness of revelation that he received in several different ways. God Almighty, Glorified Jesus, Holy Spirit via angels. All of it is The Very Word of the Living God. We've got that settled by verse 2.

Notice also the words, even to all that he saw John saw things. With his eyes.

This keeps coming up again and again. Reality is based in what we see with our eyes, and what reliable people bear witness that they have seen with their eyes. We believe this book because John saw these things. Visually.

That's what's so distressing about AI. Within the last year it's dawning on everybody that sight is no longer truth. I'm watching non stop missiles blowing up non stop ships and buildings on my i phone and how do I know any of it's real. AI can generate all of it. Truth based in vision is being undermined. I believe that is a satanic plot.

John tells me; Believe it because I saw it! Satan is making it so nothing anyone thinks they saw means anything. AI undermines visual testimony. You only think you saw it. Lock your pre-AI printed Bibles in a vault. These things are true truth.

So what do we do with the Word of God?

*Vs. 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.*

This book comes with it's own built in blessing. Read this book. Hear this book. Heed this book. And blessing is automatic. It's built in.

Why do most christians treat this book like it's a snake that might bite you. Ignore that book. You can't understand it so leave it alone. It's pandora's box. Open it at your own peril. Mostly what we find is the belief that no one can actually interpret it, so better to just steer clear. That's very common.

It's almost as if the blessing got put in verse 3 as an encouragement. Read this and you will be blessed. Read it. Stop and hear it. Then heed it.

We don't punish our babies for things they don't know or understand yet. The fact that God tells us to not just read, not just hear, but to obey this book is because He expects us to understand what He has revealed here.

Ignore this book at your own peril. God gave it to His slaves, and His slaves can understand all that is needful in order to obey this book. Even if we stopped after chapter 3 and only considered the part that is expressly FOR Christ's church we would be enormously benefited.

*4 John to the seven **churches** that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come; and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne; 5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.*

I'm easily overwhelmed. And I'm lazy. Never a good combination. But I look at this particular passage and think, how am I going to unpack the inexhaustable. How am I going to unscrew the inscrutable.

This passage is so laden with wealth that I feel totally unqualified to even begin to scratch the surface. There is so much wonderful truth for us tightly packed in here.

*4 John* we know. ...*to the seven churches that are in Asia*  
John's format is a letter style format. He announces himself as author, but of course we know he means for us to know he is amanuensis. He's the secretary taking down diction from a higher up.

Jesus includes a "letter" letter to each of the seven churches. This region is where modern Turkey is now. Asia minor. And each of those churches was like a county seat. I can sort of picture scribes hard at work in each of those places copying the entire document of the revelation, not just their individual letter.

That would have been 7 copies, one for each church, and each located at the most important locality in the region so that other smaller places could

send scribes to make a copy from the original 7.

Those 7 churches were seven very real congregations, not so very different from our little group here. Real people with real problems of life, that got a letter directly from; The triune God.

For those who would claim that God never claims to be triune, a trinity, listen to who the letter is "from";  
*from Him who is and who was and who is to come; and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne; 5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.*

I want to come back to all of these descriptors, but first, we skipped the message of the author to the recipients. How does triune God greet His letter recipients?

*Grace to you and peace*

The God who is going to melt the mountains into puddles like hot wax with His fierce fury at the sinful rebellion of this world wants us slaves to know that He wishes for us; *Grace to you and peace*

For those who have repented and who have become partakers of eternal life, together with Jesus, their Lord and Saviour; From God to His slaves, grace and peace.

grace to you. For us there is unmerited love. We are un lovely but God has decided to love us. He has purposed to love us. It was a conscious choice that took effort.

Even from before the foundations of the world, God chose to envelop us, to baptize and immerse us in His everlasting love. That choice and that immersion into His love is called grace. Totally unmerited. Totally because He chose to do it.

We are the objects of His unmerited favor, and wealth, and blessing, and acceptance, and forgiveness, and love. Before we ever were, He chose to love us. That's grace.

And because of grace, there is peace. Inner peace. What the world likes to dream about but never attains in this world, wellness. We slaves have peace inside our hearts. If God is for us, who can be against us. Let's read Romans 8:28 - 31 together. Again.

This is why we can watch God melt mountains into valleys and be unaffected.

*28And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are (the) called according to His purpose. 29For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren; 30and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.*

*31What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?*

Fear not little flock. The God who spoke the worlds into existence from nothing, just His voice alone, has a greeting for you. *Grace to you and peace*

Trust me, you really want to be on God's side when the retribution breaks out.

Listen again to who writes this greeting of grace and peace to you who have bowed the knee to King Jesus and who love Him.

*4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come;*

*and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne;*

*5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.*

This greeting comes from three distinct "persons" who are One God.

First is the God who IS. *from Him who is and who was and who is to come;*

From eternity past to eternity future, God is. His name is I am. And He condescends to try to help our understanding. We can only reason and understand in time and space. We can only begin to understand time in continuum. past present future.

And God who dwells in eternity tells us. if it happened in history, I did it. If it is happening now, I am. If it is going to happen in the future I will cause it.

Our brains are finite. God is infinite. When this 5 minute life in time and space is over, Paul says, *then we will see, face to face. Now we see in a mirror dimly.* 1 Cor. 13:12

Our brains aren't wired for understanding eternity. Yet. We can only think in terms of time. We try to imagine eternity. And we fail. I freaked my daughter out. She was asking about life after life here, how does that work and I juxtaposed that I thought it is possible that we die, and christians have been dieing for 2,000 years, but what if the first moment in eternity, outside of time, is the words, Come Up Here. Rev. 4:1

What if the first event for those still alive in Christ, and those who have been gone from this world for an hour, and those who have been dead for 2000 years is "Come Up Here". Those alive, those dead for one day and those dead for thousands of years all together for their first moment in eternity.

We all entered eternity, however that works, at the same moment, but even that attempt at understanding is a fail because we can only think in terms of time. We can't fathom if there is a moment or how it works in eternity.

We can't unscrew the inscrutable. Our brains are too small. MacArthur used to say, you'll end up under the covers with a flashlight on saying the greek alphabet backwards. Our God dwells in eternity. Who was, who is, and who is to come. He IS. His name is I Am that I Am.

OK, next person who weighs in on this greeting.

*and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne*

This is the Spirit of Yahweh, the Holy Spirit, which rests on and Is Jesus. In Isaiah chapter 11, a prophecy about Messiah, the shoot of Jesse.

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*The Spirit of Yahweh will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and might, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of Yahweh.* Isaiah 11:2

God's Holy Spirit is a sevenfold spirit. Seven is God's number of completion and perfection. Jesus is perfect and complete because God's sevenfold Spirit rests on Him.

In Revelation 4, and 5 we will visit this sevenfold aspect, this complete and perfect Spirit that rests on Jesus.

How does that work. How is one Holy Spirit seven spirits, plural? How is one God three persons? How does God dwell forever in non time, non space? These are questions that those with wisdom simply say, I defer to You Oh God, you didn't make my brain smart enough to fathom the inscrutable God.

We do more damage when pride kicks in and we think we've got inscrutable God all boxed up and figured out. Stear clear of those folks. You're better off with us dummies who know when to simply bow down in worship before a God too glorious for our minds to comprehend.

I can't resist touching on one idea though that surfaced in my mind this last Friday evening at Josh's get together.

The final spirit named in Isaiah 11 is the fear of Yahweh. The fear of the Lord. This is very simple but once you see it, it's a truth you can't unsee.

Psalm 111:10 *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom*  
Now, then, I don't want to get political, but I have to ask. Is there a connection with the fact that our secular culture has abandoned any fear of God, they don't believe there even is a sky god, so no fear of God, and behold, how stupid we've gotten.

Is there a possible connection there. *The fear of the LORD is the **beginning** of wisdom.* The abandonment of the fear of the Lord is the beginning of utter ridiculous stupidity. Truth goes out the window. Logic goes away. Reason goes away. Sheer ridiculous stupidity reigns supreme in our godless land.

I don't want to get out in deep water and drown, but notice the word, beginning. All of the other seven fold spirits listed rely on this beginning one. The fear of Yahweh. The recognition that God IS, and that He owns everything and that He judges evil. All of it flies away when we abandon that beginning, the fear of God.

Well, we're out of time and I love it that we can pick right up next week and keep going where we left off. If the Lord continues to tarry and give us breath, we can.

We'll begin in verse 5 and our finite minds will be ravished looking at Jesus.

But before I let you go, in case we don't make it back together again, I have to revel in a single part of verse 5 that is particularly exciting for us in this first week plus of God sovereignly achieving His ends and His plan in this world.

Just a little preview. Just a little reminder about who's in charge in the middle east;

*5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.*

Jesus is currently, now, and forever; the ruler of the kings of the earth. Jesus is King of kings. He decides who rises up and reigns for a time and then who falls and is replaced at His pleasure, for His purpose. Jesus reigns in sovereign control over this planet.

I'll finish this morning with one of my very favorite completed prophecies. The one about Nebuchadnezer who God dealt with his pride by relieving him of his reason for 7 years. He went barking mad as the Brits would say, and he lived with the beasts of the field for 7 years. And then God restored him, with his kingdom still in place. A remarkable prophecy. You can read all of it in Daniel chapter 4.

*34 "But at the end of those days, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up my eyes toward heaven, and my knowledge returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever;*

*For His dominion is an everlasting dominion,  
And His kingdom endures from generation to generation.*

*35 And all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing,  
But He does according to His will in the host of heaven  
And among the inhabitants of earth;*

*And no one can strike against His hand  
Or say to Him, 'What have You done?'*

*36 At that time my knowledge returned to me. And my majesty and splendor*

*were returned to me for the glory of my kingdom, and my high officials and my nobles began seeking me out; so I was reestablished in my kingdom, and extraordinary greatness was added to me.*

*37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt, and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride*

I can't tell you how much pleasure that gives me that I know who is in charge. This book reveals THAT Jesus. The King over kings of this earth. Let us worship Him.