

## Introduction to the Book of Revelation

The Book of Revelation is mainly a book about Jesus Christ:

- This book reveals Jesus Christ in His risen glory in chapter 1.
- In chapters 2 and 3 He is speaking to His churches that are on earth.
- He is the slain and risen Lamb to whom all worship is directed to in chapters 4 and 5.
- The judgments of the coming seven-year period of tribulation on this earth are the display of the wrath of the Lamb as He is the only one who is able to open the seals on the scroll given to him by God, chapters 6 through 19.
- Jesus Christ returns to earth as King of Kings and Lord of Lords described in chapter 19 verses 11-21.
- The Millennial (1000 year) reign of Christ is described in chapter 20.
- The new heavens and new earth are created and ruled by Him in chapters 21 and 22.

The outline for Revelation is given to John in chapter 1 verse 19 where John is told to write:

- “The things you have seen.” The thing that John has seen is the vision of the risen and glorified Christ walking among the lampstands symbolizing 7 churches in chapter 1.

- “The things *which are*” are described in the letters to the seven churches of Asia Minor (Modern day Turkey) in chapters 2 and 3.
- “*The things Which shall take place after these things*” are the prophecies of chapters 4-22.

Revelation 1:19, “*Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things.*”

The book of Revelation reveals several things:

- Natural disasters of unparalleled intensity, rivaled only by the worldwide Flood of Noah’s day, will happen as God pours out His wrath on a sin-cursed earth as events unfold in the seven seal judgments, Revelation chapters 6-8.
- Death that annihilates 1/4<sup>th</sup> of the world’s population and then again, 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the world’s population before finally reaching the climax when God will destroy everyone who does not have their name written in the Lamb’s Book of Life, Revelation chapters 6-20.
- The political dynamics that lead to the unveiling of the most evil and powerful dictator the world has ever known, the Antichrist, Revelation chapter 13
- The destruction of the apostate religion and the economic collapse of the nations (Babylon destroyed). Revelation chapters 17-18.

- **The second coming of Jesus Christ as Lord of Lords and King of Kings and the ultimate battle of Armageddon as He will take control of the earth and will bind Satan in the bottomless pit, Revelation chapter 19.**
- **The annihilation of every unsaved person that is alive at the end of the Tribulation---only saved people will enter His millennial kingdom that immediately follows the tribulation period here on earth. Revelation chapters 19-20.**
- **The 1000 year rule of Christ, Revelation chapter 20.**
- **The releasing of Satan to deceive the nations for a season at the end of the 1000 year period. Revelation chapter 20.**
- **The most terrifying event of all, Revelation describes the final judgment and the sentencing of Satan, his rebellious angels, and all unrepentant humans to eternal banishment and torment in the Lake of Fire. Revelation chapter 20.**
- **Finally, God will destroy the heavens and earth we have today and will create a new heaven and New Jerusalem for His kingdom and for all those who have placed their faith and trust in Christ. Revelation chapters 21-22.**

**The 7 year tribulation period is directed mainly at the nation of Israel to bring them back to God. But, it also deals with the gentile people and nations who have rejected Jesus Christ and who hate the Nation Israel.**

Daniel chapter 9 brought this point to light about the Jews in verses 24 through 27. Luke chapter 21 verse 24 also mentions this period of time when God deals with the gentile nations when he wrote these words, *until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.*

Daniel 9:24-27, <sup>24</sup>“*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.*”<sup>25</sup>“*So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.*”<sup>26</sup>“*Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.*”<sup>27</sup>“*And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”*

There are a some key points we must look at in this passage to fully understand what the 7 year tribulation period is all about and what God's plan is.

- First of all, an explanation of what the Seventy weeks means.

The *seventy weeks* is a period of 490 years that started when the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the walls of that city is given to Nehemiah (Nehemiah chapter 2) in 445 BC.

Daniel 9 verse 25, <sup>25</sup>“*So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat.*”

(NOTE: The weeks are weeks of years so the seventy weeks equate to 7 X 70 years = 490 years. Notice in verse 25 that there is a 7 week period followed by a 62 week period. These two periods of time look like this; 7 X 7 years = 49 years followed by 7 weeks X 62 weeks = 434 years for a grand total of 49 years plus 434 years which equals 483 years. In verse 27 we note there is another period of time of one week which equals 7 years. This last 7 year period is the tribulation period of Revelation chapters 6-19.)

- In the 490 years these 6 items will be what God is going to do with the Jewish Nation, (1) to finish the transgression, (2) to make an end

*of sin, (3) to make atonement for iniquity, (4) to bring in everlasting righteousness, (5) to seal up vision and prophecy and, (6) to anoint the most holy place.*

NOTE: These six items are specific to Israel and when they are accomplished they will bring an end to the Jewish rejection of Jesus Christ and their rebellion against God.

1. To finish transgression means to eliminate ALL sin and disobedience from the Nation of Israel.
  2. To put and end to sin means to judge sin with finality. Jesus did this on the cross of Calvary when He said his final words, “It is finished.”
  3. To make reconciliation for iniquity means to furnish the actual basis for removing sin by making a full atonement to God for sin with the blood sacrifice of Jesus the Messiah.
  4. To bring in everlasting righteousness means to bring an eternal righteousness to Daniel’s people.
  5. To seal up vision and prophecy means that revelations by vision and prophecy will no longer be required.
  6. Anoint the Most Holy means to *anoint of the Messiah, Jesus Christ as Lord of Lords and King of Kings.*
- Daniel 9 verse 26, *after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off*---means that Jesus will be crucified.

- Daniel 9 verse 26, *the people of the prince who is to come (The Antichrist) will destroy the city and the sanctuary, The Roman Empire destroyed the temple in 70 AD. The revised Roman Empire will destroy the temple during the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation period.*

NOTE: The Roman Empire was illustrated as the legs of iron and feet of iron and clay of the statue in King Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel chapter 2. The Roman Empire is also illustrated in Daniel chapter 7 as the 4<sup>th</sup> beast rising out of the sea.

- Verse 27, *“and he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week---means that the Antichrist will sign a 7 year peace covenant with the Nation of Israel.*
- Verse 27, *but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering---means that in the middle of the 7 year period the Antichrist will stop the Jews from worshiping God in the temple.*
- Verse 27, *and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction (of the temple, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”-----means that the Antichrist will place a statue of himself in the temple and will desecrate the temple by making the people worship the statue rather than worship the Holy God.*

- In God's chronological clock between the time that the *Messiah* is crucified and the 7 year peace covenant between the Nation of Israel and the Antichrist there is a period of time we call the "Church Age." This "Church Age" is illustrated in chapters 2 and 3 of Revelation. This "Church Age" is an undetermined period of time known only by God and will end when the church is raptured into heaven, 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4:16-17.

Keep in mind that Christ was crucified sometime around 33 AD. He gave his disciples the authority to establish his church in Matthew chapter 28 verses 19-20, <sup>19</sup>*"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

At Pentecost, Acts chapter 2, the Holy Spirit came upon these disciples and they began preaching God's word with the power of the Holy Spirit and 3 thousand were saved and added to the church called the "Bride of Christ." This began the "church age" or some have called it "The Age of Grace." Since that time uncountable numbers of people have been saved and uncountable numbers of churches have been established.

The saving of people and the establishing of churches will continue until Christ calls his "Bride" home to be with Him in heaven. This event called "the rapture" is still in our future. For how long---no one knows but God.