

Insights In Prophecy

Unlock The Ancient Mysteries Of Daniel & Revelation

BIBLE DISCOVERY SERIES

11

LESSON

Lesson 11

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Read Revelation 1, 2 & 3

- Discover How The Visions of Revelation Relate To Daniel's Book Of Prophecy
- Investigate The Seven Promises For The Victorious Overcomers Of The Last Days

When we embark in the study of Revelation, we are projected into a different world. Here is something quite unlike the greater part of the Scriptures. Not only is the book unique, it can be difficult to understand. The book has stumped believers down through the centuries due to its complex nature; and therefore, its mysteries have been abandoned or have become the playground for bizarre explanations. However, the Greek word for revelation is *apocalypsis*, which means a "disclosure," or an "uncovering." So, what will its contents reveal, and when?

As we enter the final days, it is important that we study and understand the book of Revelation. In it are warnings we all must heed. And, this lesson series will prove that Revelation mirrors the prophecies of



Daniel and other ancient Biblical writings; this will not only add clarity to John's visions, but it will also allow us to draw out a clearer meaning of the two books. What is confusing in Daniel can be made clearer in Revelation, and vice versa.

Daniel is also a book specifically written for our day—the last days; and, we have attempted to prove it is much more than a book of historical events, which can be set aside as “no longer relevant”. The evidence has been presented in Lessons 1 to 10, proving that Daniel exposes apocalyptic, last-day events to the same degree as the book of Revelation.

Now we will endeavor to examine the visions of Revelation in the context of the knowledge gained in our study of Daniel. The five major time periods of Daniel represent a roadmap through the appointed time of the end. One time period—the 1260 days (Daniel 7:25; 12:7)—is repeated in Revelation five more times (11:2; 11:3; 12:6; 12:14; 13:5) for a total of seven, as though to focus on this important time frame as the primary length of the end-time counting periods.

The lessons to follow will continue to prove that Daniel and Revelation are twin books; both represent the same events and counting periods of the appointed times. As we delve deeper into the apocalyptic mysteries, the various components of the prophecies will ultimately merge as a mosaic portrayal of chronological events that will soon rise from the ancient pages to confront us as headline news events.

1. Whose revelation testimony was given to John the prophet (Revelation 1:1)? _____

Jesus made the prophecies known by sending His angel to His servant John.

Gabriel, the angel (Greek-*aggelos*, meaning *messenger*), is most associated with the proclamation and delivery of prophecy (Daniel 8:16; 9:21), and he might have been the one sent to John to deliver the “testimony of Jesus Christ.” The phrase “testimony of Jesus Christ” is repeated throughout Revelation (1:2; 1:9; 12:17). Revelation 19:10 clarifies, “the testimony of Jesus Christ is the *spirit of prophecy*”; in

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other words, the prophet's predictions of future trials and calamities, salvation and destruction, and the Kingdom of God soon to be established.

2. Deuteronomy 18:15, 18 promised that a "Prophet" would foretell things to come, and He would be from what race of people? _____

3. How long would the gift of prophecy be available, which proves a prophet may be called at anytime to serve God (Ephesians 4:11-13)? _____

Until we all come into the unity of the faith at Christ's revelation.

4. According to Revelation 1:3, blessed (happy) is the person who does what? _____

Reads, hears and takes to heart what is written in the book of Revelation.

Why? Because the end is near. Although written in Greek, the meaning of "hearing" and "keeping" in Hebrew gives deeper insight into what is implied here:

hearing – *shema*, to hear with understanding and obedience

keeping – *shamar*, to guard, protect, attend, take heed, observe, and preserve

The book of Revelation begins with a promised blessing to those who hear and obey. It ends with a curse (Revelation 22:18-19) to those who do not adhere to its teachings. Between these "bookends" is the message that those who hear and obey God's Word are the ones who will acquire life and the blessings of God, while those who disregard will die eternally. Consider the blessings of adhering to the prophecies from Yeshua found in Revelation 3:10, Revelation 14:12, Revelation 19:15 and Revelation 22:14. I plead with you, choose Jesus in faith and obedience, and receive His blessed life both now and for eternity.

Seven "spirits" are introduced in Revelation 1:4; they are before God's throne. These seven are mentioned several times in the book of Revelation (3:1; 4:5; 5:6). In the Scriptures seven represents perfection, so the perfect work of God is illustrated through the influencing work of the seven spirits. Hebrew 1:14 asks the question, "Are not all angels ministering *spirits* sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?" From this we learn the seven spirits represent seven angels/messengers who stand in the presence of God the Father (Isaiah 63:9; Zechariah 6:5; Luke 1:19).

5. What are the three titles assigned to Jesus (Revelation 1:5)? _____

The Faithful Witness signifies Christ's untiring work in representing God; the First Begotten of the Dead denotes His success over the grave; and, the Prince of the Kings of the Earth symbolizes God's sovereign control above the most powerful leaders of mankind—even over the Lawless One who is to come.

6. Faithful believers are already said to be "kings and priests." The original may be better stated, "a kingdom of priests" or "kingdom and priests." Review Revelation 5:10; 20:4, 6. What position will the overcomers have in God's kingdom? _____

7. Revelation 1:7-8 speaks of the "clouds of Heaven." What do the clouds represent (Matthew 16:27; 24:30-31; Jude 14-15)? _____

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The angelic host—the armies of Heaven, and resurrected believers.

John says "every eye shall see Him." Christ's coming will be a spectacular worldwide event and will result in the destruction of all who are disobedient (Matthew 24:27-28). Those who crucified Jesus will also see Him (John 19:37; Zechariah 12:10). Daniel 12:1-2 predicts a special resurrection of both just and unjust. In this group raised from the dead are quite possibly those who put Jesus to death, who will see Messiah coming in the heavens to face His wrath. The whole earth will "wail" in fear when they see Christ returning to take vengeance on those who have lived defiantly.

The LORD's Day

Revelation 1:9-10 says the prophet John was on the Island of Patmos when He received the testimony of Jesus—the events recorded in the book of Revelation. John said he was being engaged by the Spirit on the LORD's Day. In the clear context of Revelation, John was taken forward in time to the Day Christ is exalted as Savior and LORD in His glorified body. The Revelator sees Messiah judging His people on that day as High Priest in the Holy Place ministering among the golden candlesticks and dressed in garments of a high priest.

Commentators have attempted to suggest John was promoting Sunday in this verse, a day which later in Christian history would be referred to as the LORD's Day. However, around 90 A.D. when John received the visions, the early church still observed of the seventh day Sabbath. This Jewish prophet is relaying a vision on a day the LORD Jesus claimed as His own; therefore, John is likely speaking about the Day of the LORD of which he had just written: "Look, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see him" (v.7); that Day of "loud voice like a trumpet."

We want to remember two vital facts about the book of Revelation: First, it is a book of prophecy primarily concerning the time of Christ's return and the events that lead up to it (Revelation 1:1-3). Second, it is written by a Hebrew prophet who made many references to the language and expressions of the Old Testament. To him, the phrase *en teé kuriakéé heeméra* ("on the LORD's day")—and its Hebrew or Aramaic equivalent—would imply what is called in the Old Testament "the Day of the LORD," the time of the ultimate destruction that climaxes at the return of Messiah (Isaiah 13:6-9; Joel 1:15; 2:1; 2:11; Amos 5:18).

8. As for the day of worship, what is the LORD's Day according to the Word and the Word alone (Mark 2:28)? _____

The Son of Man is LORD even of the Sabbath.

If someone wants to insist that this text apply to a definite day of the week, he must look elsewhere to see which day the Scriptures call the LORD's Day. Jesus says in Mark 2:28 that He is LORD of the Sabbath; and therefore, as Master of that day, it belongs to Him. The day that belongs to Yeshua is the Sabbath, the seventh day of the week. Isaiah 58:13 calls the Sabbath "My [the LORD's!] holy day." The other six days are ours to fill with work and activities of life in general.

Finally, in the original commandment in Exodus 20:10, the LORD says, "*Remember* the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God." Therefore, if John's reference was to a day of the week—if he received the vision on the "LORD's day"—it was the seventh-day Sabbath, which God said to remember and not forget.

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9. When was the Sabbath first instituted and given to all of mankind (Genesis 2:2-3)? _____

10. Does Jesus affirm it still relevant to the last days (Matthew 24:20)? _____ How? _____

11. How do we know the Ten Commandments will be the measurement of end-of-time judgment (Revelation 11:18-19; 15:5-6)? _____

The Hebrew Scriptures give a clear connection between the revelation of the Ark of the Covenant and its contents—the Tablets of the Ten Commandments—at the moment of judgment for the sinners of this world.

Historical Background Of Sabbath & Sunday

The early church continued observance of the Sabbath by resting on the seventh day according to the God's Commandments, while Sunday grew in popularity as the day in commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus. For decades the two days were both held in esteem. In the first and second centuries, as Christianity's Jewish roots became more obscure and Gentiles gained leadership in the church, Sunday became the focal day of worship. It was the pagan day of sun worship and the day more common for worship to the Gentile converts.

The Sabbath became less important in the minds of religious leaders and converts so that by the fourth century, when the church had developed into an organized religion, the Sabbath was officially abandoned and the organized church made Sunday the official day of rest. Only pockets of Christian believers and the Jews through the centuries believed it to be their obligation to "remember" the seventh day Sabbath, as God's command.

The Catholic Church officially transferred the command of Sabbath rest to Sunday, but there is no Biblical basis for this edict. Although men have attempted to change the Sabbath day of rest and to institute laws promoting rest on Sunday, God's Word stands the test of time. If God intended just one day of man's choice in seven to be a day of rest, He would have said so. However, God said to "*Remember* the seventh day," for it is easily forgotten in a secular world. The Gregorian calendar we use in modern times confirms the seventh day. Judaism maintained and confirmed the day for over 3,000 years, by their consistent observance each and every week from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday, proving Saturday is the seventh day Sabbath rest of the Scriptures.

Daniel 11:28-30 says the Papal leaders "heart will be set against the Holy Covenant... he will return and show favor to those who forsake the Holy Covenant." Yeshua said with undeniable candor: "*I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.*" He linked the unchanging Law to the end of the age, and not until the disappearance of heaven and earth can the Commandments be modified or deleted. I don't know how Jesus could have made Himself any clearer on the matter.

Revelation distinguishes the authentic followers of Christ as those "who keep the Commandments of God" (Revelation 12:17), in contrast to those who will give their allegiance to Antichrist. He will forsake the Commandments for his own brand of Sabbath-keeping. Sunday will likely be both promoted and legislated as the law of the land. Idolatry and the worship of the Virgin Mary will be upheld, and God's commandment-keeping believers will face persecution, and even martyrdom, over these issues.

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Messiah's Future Glory

12. Revelation 1:13-17 describes the "Son of man." Compare this to Daniel 7:13. What title is found in both passages? _____

13. Jesus is claiming for Himself the title of *Son of Man* found in Daniel—a designation Judaism associates with Messiah. Compare the description of Michael—a title/name representing Messiah in the ancient book of Daniel before His human virgin birth—to Jesus in the book of Revelation. How are they similar?

Michael: Daniel 10:5-9

"eyes like flaming torches"

"belt of the finest gold around his waist"

"face like lightning"

"arms and legs like the gleaming of burnished bronze"

"voice like the sound of a multitude"

Daniel "fell in to a deep sleep, my face to ground"

Jesus: Revelation 1:13-17

14. In Revelation 1:18, Yeshua proclaims only He "hold[s] the keys of death and Hades [grave]." What happens when Michael stands at the end of the age (Daniel 12:1-2)? _____

There is a resurrection when the Archangel stands.

15. What does 1 Thessalonians 4:16 tell us about the return of the LORD Himself, and His voice that awakens the dead from the grave? _____

With Michael's loud voice, the "voice of the Archangel," the "dead in Christ will rise first." This is no ordinary messenger; it is the mighty life-giving earth-shaking voice of the Most High that raises the sleeping dead.

Sevens Of Revelation

The first chapter of Revelation ends with the messages of the sevens. John is told to write what he has seen in vision: what was then relevant to the Messianic congregations in his day, and events that will climax at the end of the age.

Heaven was intimately involved in the working of the seven congregations in Asia (today's Turkey), to whom the messages of Revelation were first sent. In the book of Revelation we'll discover seven churches (1:4) and seven golden lampstands (1:12). Seven stars (1:16, 20), the beast with seven heads (13:1), a dragon with seven crowned heads (12:3), and seven mountains (17:9) that represent seven kings (17:10). Major divisions of Revelation deal with seven seals (4:1 to 8:1), seven trumpets (8:2 to 11:19) and seven last plagues (chapters 15, 16). The six angels, plus the Son of Man, equal seven (chapter 14). Most important is the "Seventh Angel" who, when His voice begins to sound, will finish the mystery of God (10:7). With so many sevens in the book, we understand that "seven" represents fullness, completion and perfection—associated with and summed up by the returning King of kings, and the establishment of His Kingdom.

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Today, we should also heed the seven messages to the seven churches of Asia. At the time of John's writing there were assemblies established in each of the seven cities named in chapters 2 and 3. John gave the seven churches distinct messages for their day, made up of compliments, rebukes and counsel for each local audience. However, within each message are found insights for the generations that would follow thereafter; but more importantly, we will find mysterious warnings for the overcomers of the last days.

Some assemblies were complemented on their good deeds and hard work, but Jesus told them they had lost their first love. They were counseled to listen to what the Spirit tells them, and to not shut out the voice that leads to repentance. The messages suggest that although these believers were dedicated and religious, still Christ was asking for more—for a life of victory.

16. In each of the seven messages, the subject of "overcoming" is repeated. Look up each verse and consider the results of a victorious life in Christ:

Revelation 2:7 _____
Revelation 2:11 _____
Revelation 2:17 _____
Revelation 2:26 _____
Revelation 3:5 _____
Revelation 3:12 _____
Revelation 3:21 _____

Although the new birth defeat of sin and living in obedience is not a popular subject in Christendom today, Yeshua is our example of the ultimate overcomer (John 16:33). We cannot put our trust in any man's views, whether pope, priest, minister, president or king when it comes to spiritual matters. Maybe that's why there is an added emphasis in the book of Revelation: "Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says," (Revelation 2:7). God's Son is our Savior and the Mediator between God and man. When the masses will be trusting in religious leaders for spiritual and moral direction, wise believers must place their confidence ever more in Messiah and His Word. And, the test of a true messenger from God is whether he teaches the words of Christ and the "testimony" He gave to John in Revelation; if he does not, he is a false prophet.

16. The following are additional verses on living a victorious life. What can we learn from each verse?

1 John 5:4 _____
Romans 12:21 _____
1 John 4:4 _____
1 Corinthians 15:57 _____