

**VICTORIOUS LIFE CHURCH BIBLE STUDY SERIES:  
THE BOOK OF REVELATION  
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**THE BEGINNING OF THE END  
CHAPTER ONE**

**I. THE INTRODUCTION (CONTINUED)**

**1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him**

The Book of Revelation above all, is the **Revelation of Jesus Christ** to us. If we catch everything else, the signs, the prophecies, symbols and creatures but miss Jesus in the book, we miss the Book of Revelation. Note first that the title is not "The Revelations (plural)," nor is the title "The Revelation of John." The title of the last book of the Bible, the Revelation of Jesus Christ. The title speaks volumes telling this is the **revelation**, uncovering (exposing to view by removing the covering), unveiling or disclosure of Jesus Christ, especially of the truths about Him and His victory over all God's enemies. This is revelation from Jesus and about Jesus. Jesus passes on the truth from His Father that He "wins" the victory and He reclaims and restores the planet earth.

**“This book is not intended to be a veiled document full of mysterious symbols, but an unveiling and clarification of things which have heretofore not been revealed by God.” -- (Tony Garland)**

REVELATION is Gods' final Word to man, bringing "order" out of the chaos of this sinful world.

**....., to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass;**

**Shortly** is the ancient Greek phrase *en tachei*, which means “quickly or suddenly coming to pass,” indicating rapidity of execution after the beginning takes place. The idea is not that the

event may occur soon, but that when it does, it will be sudden. The **MUST** happen suddenly. This means that the Book of Revelation is a book of *predictive* prophecy. It speaks of things that will happen in the future – at least future from the time of its writing. Not all prophecy is predictive, but this prophetic book clearly is predictive. God is giving this book to the church to remind them that He has a plan for the earth. Threads of prophecy are found throughout the word of God and together they make up God's full truth to the world. Revelation draws on all these strands of prophecy together and weaves them into a detailed picture of things to come.

**and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: 2 Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.**

#### **The Pattern of the Revelation**

1. Begins with God
2. Gave it to Jesus Christ
3. Jesus communicated to His angel
4. Jesus' angel communicated it to His bond-servant John
5. John wrote it down to who God's bond-servants.

#### **He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John:**

This describes *how* the message is delivered in the Book of Revelation. It is a book of signs: the angel **sign-ified** this message to John. It is a book that communicates in signs. It is true that the signs used in Revelation have been a source of confusion or controversy for some readers. Yet the signs are necessary because John expresses things of heaven, which Paul said he heard with *inexpressible words*

#### **2 Corinthians 12:4**

**How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.**

John described things he saw, so he could only use symbolic images to explain it. To us, this book is prophecy, but John simply recorded history unfolding before him, as he saw it. “John had visions from heaven; but he described them in his own language and manner.” The signs are also necessary because there is tremendous power in symbolic language. For examples, it is one thing to call someone or something evil or bad, but it is far more vivid to describe the image of a woman *drunk with the blood of the saints* (**Revelation 17:6**). Though it is filled with signs, the Book of Revelation is accessible to those who have an understanding of the first 65 books of the Bible, and especially an understanding of the first 39 books of the Bible, the Old Testament. The Book of Revelation is rooted in the Old Testament. It contains more than 500 allusions to the Old Testament, and 278 of the 404 verses in Revelation (that is almost 70%) make some reference to the Old Testament. This text speaks of the marvelous way the book is delivered to John the beloved. It was signified, meaning, it is a book of signs and symbols. About half of them are explained in the book itself. For example: Lamps represent assemblies of God’s people; stars represent angels; incense odors represent the prayers of the saints. Where the symbols are not explained, other parts of the Bible must be searched to find clues. One of the reasons why God chose symbols was that symbols possess a fixed nature. Words, change.

## II. THE BLESSINGS OF THE BOOK

v. 3 **“Blessed is he who reads... and keep those things which are written in it..”**

The Book of Revelation offers a particular and unique blessing to those who *read* and *keep* the message of this book. This is the first of seven beatitudes of Revelation

**14:13** “And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

**16:15** “Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

**19:9** 9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

**20:6** 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

**22:7** 7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

**22:14** 14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

Because they neglect the book Revelation, many people miss this blessing. For example, the Anglican Church virtually omits Revelation in its regular schedule of readings for both public worship and private devotions. This is a typical attitude towards the Book of Revelation. Many people believe that only fanatics want to dig deep into this book, but really, it is a book for anyone who wants to be **blessed**. Fortunately, John didn't say that we had to *understand* everything in the Book of Revelation to be **blessed**. There are some difficult things in this book that may only be understood as we look back at fulfilled prophecy; but we can be blessed by *reading* and *hearing* even when we don't fully understand.

**This promise also gives more reasons to know John believed this book was Holy Scripture.**

1. First, the words **he who reads and those who hear** show that this book was intended to be read publicly, just as other books of accepted Scripture.

2. Second, the promise of *blessing* itself shows that John regarded this book as Holy Scripture. In the Jewish world, such a blessing could never be pronounced on a merely human book.

#### SIX BLESSINGS OF READING THIS PROPHECY

**(1) The Prophecy Will Lead You to Praise**

**(2) The Prophecy Will Help You Make Sense Out of Suffering**

**(3) The Prophecy Will Lead You to Rejoice in God's Justice**

**(4) The Prophecy Will Cause You to Pray**

**(5) The Prophecy Will Lead You to Purity**

**(6) The Prophecy Will Lead You to Proclamation**

#### IV. THE SEVEN CHURCHES AND SEVEN SPIRITS

**4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;**

The **Seven Churches of Revelation**, also known as the **Seven Churches of the Apocalypse** and the **Seven Churches of Asia**, are seven major churches of Early Christianity, as mentioned in the New Testament [Book of Revelation](#). All of them are located in Asia Minor, present-day

Turkey."Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, and to Smyrna, and to Pergamum, and to Thyatira, and to Sardis, and to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

The churches in this context refers to the community or local congregations of Christians living in each city.

**“the seven spirits who are before [God’s] throne” ([Rev. 1:4](#)).**

The seven spirits are named again in Jesus's message to Sardis (Rev. 3:1) as well as twice in the throne-room scenes (Rev. 4:5; 5:6). The number seven is well attested in the Bible, being used in some form more than 800 times. It's often viewed as the number of completion or perfection, most notably when seven is associated with the completion of God's "very good" creation (Gen. 1). Throughout Revelation, John uses the number often—seven spirits, seven churches, seven stars, seven lamps, seven angels, seven cycles of judgment, and so on. In one interpretation, the "Seven Spirits" represent the sevenfold ministry of the Spirit as depicted in the Book of Isaiah.

As it is written:

**"The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD, and He will delight in the fear of the Lord." Isaiah 11:2–3 (NASB).**

Including the Spirit of the Lord, and the Spirits of wisdom, of understanding, of counsel, of might, of knowledge and of fear of the LORD, here are represented the seven Spirits, which are before the throne of God. The reference to the lamb in Revelation 5:6 relates it to the Seven Spirits which first appear in Revelation and are associated with Jesus who holds them along with seven stars. An alternative view is that the seven graces ("charisma") of Romans 12:6-8 reflect the seven spirits of God. The Holy Spirit manifests in humankind through these graces, reflecting the seven spirits of God. The seven graces are: 1. insight (prophecy); 2. helpfulness (service or ministry); 3. instruction (teaching); 4. encouragement; 5. generosity (giving); 6. guidance (leadership); and 7. compassion. This agrees with Isaiah 11:2–3 if "the Spirit of the Lord" is recognized as categorical and "the delight in the fear of the Lord" is added. (Isaiah 11:3)