

The Continuation of the Kingdom

The Revelation of St. John, Part One

The Biblical Hope: Part IX

Revelation 1:1-20

Stuart W. Bryan

Outline of Revelation

- A. Introduction (1:1-8)
- B. The Things that John Saw (1:9-20)
- C. The Things that were (2-3)
- D. The Things that were coming (4-22:5)
- E. Conclusion (22:5-21)

I. Another Distinction (2 Pet 3:16)

In our study of eschatology, we should distinguish between *clear* and *less clear* texts of Scripture: some passages in Scripture are _____ to understand than others. Peter informs us that in Paul's letters there are "*some things hard to understand*" (2 Pet 3:16). Accordingly, a basic principle of interpretation is that *less clear* texts are to be explained by *clearer* texts. The Westminster Confession notes that "*when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture...it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly*" (I.9).

II. The Primary Speaker

The primary speaker is the Triune God, Father (1,4), Son (1,5-6,10,12), and Holy Spirit (4). "*Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come [the Father], and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne [the Holy Spirit], and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth [the Son].*" The Son receives primary focus:

A. The Eternal Son (1:6, 8, 11, 17 cf. John 1:1-2)

The Son is Eternal God, the _____. The Christology of Revelation 1 matches the Christology of John 1:1, "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*" The Son is distinct from the Father (1,4) and yet equal in power and glory with the Father (8,11,17). The Son is fully God.

B. Jesus our Savior (1:1, 2, 5, 7, 9 cf. Mt 1:21; Jn 1:14)

The Eternal Son of God is also *Jesus* _____ *Savior*. The Eternal Son of God took on human flesh and became incarnate as the man Jesus (1,2,5,9) in order to save us from our sin (5) by being crucified for us (7). The Son is fully Man.

C. Christ the Lord (1:1, 2, 5, 9, 13, 18 cf. Dan 7:13-14)

The Eternal Son of God is also Christ _____ Lord (1,2,5,9). The titles "*Christ*" and "*Messiah*" are the same – they mean God's Anointed Ruler, God's King. This identification of Jesus as Messiah is tied directly to the resurrection (5, 18). Jesus is Lord because He has risen from the dead. And note that while He is Lord particularly of His Church (13, 16, 20), He is also the Lord of all (5-6,18). He is the *Son of Man* (13) who is "*given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed*" (Dan 7:14).

III. The Audience

- John (1, 4, 9)
- Seven Historical Churches (4, 11)
- Church at Large (1)

IV. The Topic

So this book is intended to *reveal* truth (1) and to *prophecy* coming events (3a) so that John and his readers could obey (3b). John is told, “Write the things *which you have seen* (1:9-20), and the things *which are* (2-3), and the things *which will take place after this* (4 - 22:5 cf. 4:1)” (1:19). The theme of Revelation is summarized in verses 7-8.

Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth [land] will mourn because of Him. Even so. Amen. ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,’ says the Lord, ‘who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.’”

The theme is the vindication of Jesus’ Almighty power in the overthrow and destruction of those who crucified Him, the leaders of _____. Their murder of the Messiah would bring upon them and all _____ great tribulation and sorrow. B.B. Warfield wrote, “...he who can understand our Lord’s great discourse concerning the last things (Matt. 24), cannot fail to understand the Apocalypse, which is founded on that short discourse and scarcely advances beyond it.”

V. The Timing (22:6,7,10,12,20 cf. Dan 8:26; 12:4, 9)

This is confirmed by our last question, “When were these things going to take place?” This question is not hard to answer. Only an assumption that Revelation is speaking of the Second Coming leads us to ignore or miss the time indicators which point to the imminent destruction of _____ as the main topic of Revelation (1:1,3). The imminence of the events is confirmed at the close of the book (22:6,7,10,12,20). The command that John not _____ the words of this prophecy is an allusion to Daniel 8:26, “Therefore _____ up the vision, for it refers to many days in the future.” Daniel 8 prophesied events during Alexander the Great’s Empire, events which would take place a couple hundred years after Daniel’s death.

VI. Conclusion

1 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised In the city of our God, In His holy mountain. 2 Beautiful in elevation, The joy of the whole earth, Is Mount Zion on the sides of the north, The city of the great King. 3 God is in her palaces; He is known as her refuge. 4 For behold, the kings assembled, They passed by together. 5 They saw it, and so they marveled; They were troubled, they hastened away. 6 Fear took hold of them there, And pain, as of a woman in birth pangs. 7 As when You break the ships of Tarshish With an east wind. 8 As we have heard, So we have seen In the city of the LORD of hosts, In the city of our God: God will establish it forever. Selah 9 We have thought, O God, on Your lovingkindness, In the midst of Your temple. 10 According to Your name, O God, So is Your praise to the ends of the earth; Your right hand is full of righteousness. 11 Let Mount Zion rejoice, Let the daughters of Judah be glad, Because of Your judgments. 12 Walk about Zion, And go all around her. Count her towers; 13 Mark well her bulwarks; Consider her palaces; That you may tell it to the generation following. 14 For this is God, Our God forever and ever; He will be our guide Even to death.