



# World Christian Fellowship

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## Unveiled! Revelation 1:1

**Revelation 1:1-3**, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, <sup>2</sup> who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. <sup>3</sup> Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.*

The nature of this book is that it is a revelation.

Here are truths that have been concealed and are now revealed.

There are truths in the book of Revelation that were carried on the back of symbols, and figures of speech in the Old Testament.

There are truths in the book of Revelation that were veiled in prophetic language in the Old Testament.

Though there are no quotes from the Old Testament in this **404 verses** book.

There are no less than 275 of them that have some reference to or connection with Old Testament prophetic truth.

The relationships are not in terms of quotations but in terms of connections and references rather than direct quotations.

The book of Revelation is filled with the unveiling of that which was only initially suggested in the Old Testament.

It is obvious that John must have had in his own mind about the Olivet Discourse Jesus gave in **Matthew 24-25**.

There are many parallels to the teaching of our Lord in that great discourse.

So much has been revealed about the return of Christ, in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, through the teaching of the Lord Jesus Himself.

Paul wrote so much about the coming of Christ, the rapture of the church, and then in the judgment that He would bring upon the ungodly.

Peter also wrote about the coming of Christ in his epistles as he looks forward to that great event.

The epistles of John there is anticipation of the return of Christ.

James in his letter asked the believers to be patient and endure until the coming of the Lord.

The book of Revelation there is an explosion of detail about the return of Jesus Christ.

## 1. Revelation is revealing.

The Greek word is *apokalupsis*, from which we get the word apocalypse, means to take the cover off.

- To take the cover off,
- To uncover,
- To unveil, and
- To reveal.

That word has been used **18 times** in the New Testament. When it is used for a person, it always indicates that he becomes visible.

What we have here is truth becoming clearly visible.

The word *apokalupsis* is first used in **Luke 2**.

**Luke 2:25-32**, *And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.*  
<sup>26</sup> *And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he*

*would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. <sup>27</sup> So he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, <sup>28</sup> he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said: <sup>29</sup> "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word; <sup>30</sup> For my eyes have seen Your salvation <sup>31</sup> Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, <sup>32</sup> A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel."*

A light of apokalupsis, an unveiling, an uncovering.  
Here a person made visible.

Now the Messiah, the Christ, the Saviour has been made visible, and it speaks of the shining forth of a person.

**1 Peter 1:7**, the word is translated appearing.

**1 Corinthians 1:7**, it is translated coming or arrival.

**Romans 8:19**, manifestation.

An unveiling, an uncovering, someone made visible, the shining forth of a person for all to see, the appearance, the arrival, the manifestation.

All Scriptures are revelations, but in a very special way, this book is the revelation.

It is the revelation of Jesus Christ.  
It reveals Jesus Christ shining forth.

People read this book and are confused by it.  
People read it and assume that it is mysterious, strange, exotic, unsolvable riddle, some puzzle that man could never understand. They assume it is vague or obscure or complex or incomprehensible and confusing.

But this book is not hidden.  
This book is a revelation.  
It is not the covering but uncovering.

## **2. Theme of Revelation.**

### **What does it reveal?**

Many things.

We will find that it reveals warnings to the church about its besetting sins.

- Instruction to the church about the need for holiness.
- The power and glorious overcoming strength of Christ and the Christian over sin and Satan.
- Ultimate triumph of believers who are killed for the cause of Christ.
- Glory of worship.
- End of human history.

- Final political setup of the world.
- Triumph of God's saving purpose.
- Antichrist and the final battle.
- Alignment of the nations of the world.
- To fight the forces of evil patiently.
- The glories of Christ's Kingdom on earth and in the new heaven and the new earth.
- Triumph of God's saving purposes.
- Victory of Christ over all powers, human and demonic.
- End of Satan and sin.

It is the opposite of a mystery.

It is not a covering but unveiling.

The revelation of Jesus Christ.

Some people think that that means the book is from Jesus Christ, in a sense is true.

**Revelation 22:16**, *"I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."*

It is true that this revelation comes from Jesus Christ. But it is not best to understand John's statement in that regard.

It is not so much the revelation from Jesus Christ as it is the revelation about Jesus Christ. It is Christ who is unveiled here.

**Revelation 1:4-6**, Christ begins to be unveiled.

**Revelation 1:7-8**, Jesus in blazing glory.

**Revelation 2&3** Jesus' writing to the churches.

**Revelation chapters 4 to 22**, the whole theme of it is the unveiling of the glory of Christ in His second coming.

Jesus takes back the earth from the Satan, and establishes His Kingdom, both the Kingdom in this world and the Kingdom in the world to come.

Christ presented in glory and in majesty.

- ✓ The 4 gospels unveiled Christ in His first coming in humiliation.
- ✓ The book of Revelation unveils Christ in His second coming in exaltation.

This is the apocalypse. It is the ***apokalupsis Iēsou Christou***.

It is the unveiling of Jesus Christ.

The same phrase is used in other places in the New Testament.

**1 Corinthians 1:7**, *so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

**2 Thessalonians 1:7**, *and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,*

The same phrase, the ***apokalupsis Iesou Christou***.

**1 Peter 1:7**, *that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honour, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,*

The same words appear in one other text.

**Galatians 1:11-12**, *But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man.<sup>12</sup> For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

Paul writes as revelation of Jesus Christ not revelation from Christ.

Each of these uses of this same phrase, ***apokalupsis Iesou Christou***, are consistent with the idea that it is a revelation about Jesus Christ, not a revelation from Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is the great central theme of this book, which closes the Bible.

The first time our Lord came into this world, He came in the veil of our flesh. His deity was covered over with His manhood. His godhood was hidden by His humanity. Just once in a while did His deity shine through, as on the Mount of Transfiguration or as in His miraculous works.

But most of the time, the glory, the majesty, the deity, the wonder, and the marvel of the Son of God, the second person of the Holy Trinity, were veiled. These attributes were covered over in flesh.

- ✓ He was born in a stable.
- ✓ He grew up in poverty.
- ✓ He knew what it was to hunger and to thirst.
- ✓ He was buffeted and beaten and bruised.
- ✓ He was crucified and raised up as a felon before the scoffing gaze of the whole earth.
- ✓ The last time this world saw Jesus was when it saw Him hanging in shame, misery, and anguish upon the cross.
- ✓ He later appeared to a few of His believing disciples.

But the last time that this unbelieving world ever saw Jesus was when it saw Him die as a criminal, crucified on a Roman cross. That was a part of the plan of God, a part of the immeasurable, illimitable grace and love of our Lord. 'By His stripes we are healed.'

**Is all the world going to see our Saviour, dying in shame on a cross?**

No.

It is also a part of the plan of God that someday this unbelieving, this blasphemous, this godless world shall see the Son of God in His full character, in glory, in majesty, in the full-orbed wonder and marvel of His godhead.

Then all men shall look upon Him as He really is.

They shall see Him holding in His hands the title deed to the universe, holding in His hands the authority of all creation in the universe above us, in the universe around us, and in the universe beneath us.

Holding this world and its destiny in His pierced and loving hands.

Once we understand this book, it will become apparent that we are seeing the main central theme is Jesus Christ.

In fact, our blessed Lord Jesus Christ appears in seven chief images.

1. He is the risen glorified Son of God among the churches.
2. He is the Lamb in heaven, publicly invested with authority to carry out the determined preliminary judgments on men.

3. He comes to earth as the King of kings and Lord of lords.
4. He is Christ.
5. He is the judge on the great white throne.
6. He is the Lamb upon the throne of God and of the Lamb.
7. He is the root and offspring of David, the bright and morning star.

There are many other names revealed about Him.

- ✓ He is the faithful witness.
- ✓ He is the firstborn from the dead.
- ✓ He is the ruler over the kings of the earth.
- ✓ He is the alpha and omega. He is the beginning and the end.
- ✓ He is the One who is and who was and who is to come.
- ✓ He is the Almighty.
- ✓ He is the Son of Man.
- ✓ He is He who lives.
- ✓ He who holds the seven stars in His right hand.
- ✓ He who walks amidst the seven golden lampstands.
- ✓ He who has the sharp two-edged sword.
- ✓ He is Son of God.
- ✓ He is He who has eyes like a flame of fire and feet like fine brass.
  
- ✓ He is He who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.
- ✓ He is He who is holy.

- ✓ He who is true.
- ✓ He who has the key of David.
- ✓ He who is the amen.
- ✓ He is the lion of the tribe of Judah.
- ✓ He is the King of the saints.
- ✓ He is the Word of God.
  
- ✓ All of that in this book. He is the center of the book.
- ✓ He is the beginning and the end.
- ✓ He is the top and the bottom.
- ✓ He is the inside and the outside.
- ✓ He is the over and the under.

The heavens are opened in this book, and we are going to see a vision of Jesus Christ not in human form but in His sovereign majesty and eternal glory.

Stephen saw the Son of God in heaven when he was dying as a martyr in **Acts 7:56**.

What flashed across His eyes in a moment shall be prolonged in our vision as we go from chapter 1 to chapter 22. Jesus Christ, always seen in majestic glory never in humiliation.

### **The essential nature of the book?**

It is an unveiling, an uncovering of thing.

Details of the end of the universe and the coming of Christ.

**The central theme?**

Jesus Christ.

*V 1, The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him*

**3. Source/ Author.**

**Who is the divine source?**

God.

*“Which God gave Him.”*

God gave this book to Jesus Christ.

An interesting thought.

**What does Christ need God to give Him?**

**Mark 13:32**, *“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.*

**If Jesus is God, doesn't know that?**

**How is it that Jesus doesn't know the time of His return?**

In His humiliation, when He came as a servant into this world and humbled Himself and took on the form of a man and restricted the free exercise of His attributes. He limited His own knowledge.

Some suggest that God is saying, “I am now going to tell you what you haven’t up to this moment known. In your self-limiting condescension, you didn’t know the day or the hour. But in this book, I Am going to tell you the details of the end.”

But the facts are this book doesn’t even tell us the exact day or the hour, either.

So, this really doesn’t answer that question.

Now the Son of God is glorified and at the right hand of the throne of God, He has entered into the full exercise of all His attributes, including His omniscience.

Now Jesu knows anyway and didn’t have to wait until 96 A.D. when this book was written to find out.

- ✓ God made a promise to exalt Jesus Christ.
- ✓ God made a promise that Jesus Christ would be King of kings and Lord of lords, that He would be King of the earth.
- ✓ God made a promise that Jesus Christ would be heir to everything that the Father possesses.

Because Jesus humbled Himself and became flesh and He served the Father obediently, perfectly. Because He suffered and He died, God has given to Him this great revelation of the glory to come.

God is giving Him the full disclosure of what will happen in His glorification when He returns. This is Jesus' reward for such perfect, humble, faithful, and holy service.

It would be like a father saying to his son, "You have been a good son, and obedient, and in your faithfulness to me as your father, I have promised you that if you were faithful and you did what I asked and you accomplished the goals that I established for you, that I would give you, my inheritance."

Then the father says, "Now, son, here it is, I have it all written up in full and I hand it to you, it is now yours."

That is exactly what God has done with the book of Revelation. We are overhearing/Spying on the gift of this book which God the Father gave to His Son.

It is for Jesus.

God is the source.

The primary recipient is Jesus Christ.

Details of the awesome, glorious, wonderful story of what's going to happen in the future when the obedient Son comes back in full glory.

- The first token Father's pleasure of His Son was His resurrection, first down payment on the inheritance. God raised Him from the dead.

- The second evident token of the Father's pleasure was the ascension. He took Him to heaven and sat Him at His right hand.
- The third token of the Father's pleasure over the Son's obedience was the sending of the Holy Spirit because the Spirit was sent to indwell the church which Christ redeemed and loved.

The last token, this gift of this book, which outlines in detail the coming glory of Jesus Christ.

So that not only Jesus will be full anticipation but all who love Him can enjoy knowing all of this that we may praise Him, glorify Him, and honour Him in anticipation.

**Philippians 2:6-11**, *who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,<sup>7</sup> but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.<sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.<sup>9</sup> Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,<sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,<sup>11</sup> and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

**Philippians 2:9-11**, are played out in detail in the book of Revelation.

Jesus was faithful in His humiliation.

God is faithful to fulfill His promise in Jesus's glorification.

**The essential nature of this book?**

It is the revelation, the uncovering.

**The central theme of this book?**

Uncovering of Jesus Christ.

**Source of this book?**

God gave it to Christ as a testimony of the future glory which He will enjoy.

We are privileged to study together to understand and live in Great Hope!

When a father leaves an inheritance to a son and marks it out in the will and that is a sealed document. That is a document we are not allowed to look at. Nobody is allowed to look at it.

However, that this book has been opened for us.

**Revelation chapter 6**, we see the title deed of the inheritance unrolled and seven seals are broken, and they are all unveiled for us to understand.

#### **4. Recipient.**

**Who are the human recipients?**

*V 1, The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,*

John takes us another step in comprehending this book.

It is to be shown to His slave.

It is not just for Christ to see, understand and anticipate but it is to be shown to us.

It wasn't written for us.

God gave it to Jesus.

Jesus has given us the right to see it.

***Doulos***, slaves.

One clear reason why non-Christians find this book incomprehensible. It was never intended for them.

It was to be shown to people who are the willing slaves of Christ.

If Jesus Christ is not your Lord, then you wouldn't be expected to comprehend this.

The *doulos* is different than the *hupēretēs* or *diakonia*.

There were six different Greek words for servants.

This one was a unique slave. When we say bondsman it is about a slave who served out of love and devotion.

In the Old Testament, the Jews had a custom. If a slave said to his master, I love you and I want to serve you. I don't serve you out of duty or fear, but out of love for life. The master would take that servant over to the doorway and he would pull his ear and push it up against a doorway and through the lobe of his ear he would pound an awl.

He would make a hole in his ear. His ear was punched with that hole. Any slave who had his ear punched was making a statement that I serve out of love, not duty and I am bonded willingly to my master.

Only those kinds of people who will understand this book.

**1 Corinthians 2:14**, *But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

To the unbeliever, to the hypocrite in the church, the book is confusion. But to the loving, willing slave of Jesus Christ, it is an uncovering that makes things very clear.

If you are not a Christian, these truths are closed to you. You may understand the words that I say, it may make sense to you in terms of the data on the page. But it can never grip your life, it can never become real to you in your heart. You will never comprehend its significance fully and its meaning in terms of its real depth because you are not a bondsman.

In Matthew 13 Jesus was teaching in parables.

**Matthew 13:13-16**, *Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.* <sup>14</sup> *And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive;* <sup>15</sup> *For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.'* <sup>16</sup> *But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear;*

This is a book for Christians, and no one else can understand it.

## 5. Nature: Prophetical.

*V 1, The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,*

It is a prophecy about things which must shortly take place. This book differs from all other New Testament books. The gospels tell us what took place.

Jesus came and lived and died and rose and ascended. While there are references to the future, the theme of the gospels is what happened in the past.

Acts of the Apostles is the history of the church.

The epistles of Paul, James, Peter, John, Jude, and writer of Hebrews are all about explaining the meaning of the death and resurrection of Christ and its application to the life of the church.

So, they take the history of the gospels and Acts and move them into the present life of the church and the life of the believer.

- ❖ The first 5 books of the New Testament are about the past.
- ❖ The next 21 books/letters are all about the present and how we are to apply the realities of the work of Christ now.
- ❖ The last book, Revelation is about the future.

Revelation is about the things which must shortly take place. It is a book made up of prophecy about the future.

**Revelation 1:19**, *Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.*

**Three things:**

- The things you have seen, past.
- The things which are, present.
- The things which shall take place after these things.

That is the outline of the book.

**Chapter 1** is what John saw.

**Chapter 2 and 3** is what is.

**Chapters 4-22** is the things which shall take place after these things.

So, the prophecy starts in chapter 4 and extends all the way through chapter 22.

This is a prophetic book, in the future sense of prophecy.

In all prophetic literature, there is a two-sided emphasis.

- There is coming future glory for Christ in which the saints will participate.
- There is always that other side of coming future judgment on the wicked.

We will see the unveiling of the glory of Christ, the destruction of sin, Satan, demons, and sinners. While it surely predicts with detail the coming glory of Jesus Christ and the way the saints will share in that glory, it also predicts the damnation of sinners.

Revelation chapter 10, bittersweet.

- It is a book of judgment.
- It is a book of doom.
- It tells the end of the world, the end of human history, the end of sinners.

The darker side of the picture is never for one moment concealed. It is fully revealed.

God is just.

Sin must be punished.

Impenitence and rebellion will issue ultimately in misery and defeat, disaster, death, and eternal judgment.

This is no sentimental book.

- It is a serious book.
- It is a compelling book.
- It is a heart-wrenching book.
- It is a disturbing book.

There is no weak tolerance of evil.

There is a Lamb who has been slain, but there is the wrath of the Lamb also.

There is a river of the water of life, but there is a lake of fire as well.

Here we find a God of love who will dwell among men and wipe away all tears and abolish death and abolish sorrow and abolish pain.

But before that, He will send His enemies into a place of sorrow, pain, death, and tears that is unimaginable. So, there is no hiding of the dark side of the glory of Christ. A brighter day is to come, yes, but there is thunder before dawn.

We will look at the future. It will be back to the future as we go back to this ancient book written in 96 A.D. and see in it the future written by a man who was there.

For John the apostle was there, transported by visions. It is prophecy.

There are some people who don't think this is true.

Liberal theologians say that the book of Revelation is a look back, and it describes the events fulfilled in the reign of Nero from 54 to 68 A.D. It describes the time in which Paul and Peter were martyred. It looks back from the time of Emperor Domitian from 81 to 96 A.D., when all these things recorded occurred.

Absolutely impossible.

As we go through the book, it will become apparent that the things described did not happen then. If they did, nobody would be here.

**Why do we believe it talks about the future?**

*“The things which must shortly take place.”*

Obvious that these things haven’t happened.

**How about massive resurrections?**

**How about holocausts of unheard-of proportions where a third of the entire world is killed?**

**What about the destruction of the whole human system as we know it and the building of a new heaven and a new earth?**

There is only one way to look at this, and that is that it is a future prophecy.

We are embarking on a revelation of Jesus Christ from God to Christians about the future.

We are going to get transported to the future.

**V 1**, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,*

*Shortly?*

When John wrote that was two thousand years ago.

**What does that mean, shortly?**

Next week!