

Revelation, Part 1

Knowing the End from the Beginning

Howard Liverance, January 17, 2024

Introduce Ark and Rubric

Course

- Timeline hand-out sheet
 - Two breaks: options instead of first break (someone else teaches it, I teach remotely)!
 - Second break is Gwinnett County Schools Spring Break
- Website?

Book

- Revelation, by John McArthur (intended as a supplement – not the class itself)

About Me

- Saved at 23 when a friend challenged me to read the bible.
- Served in missions in Micronesia, Chile, Mexico.
- Seminary trained at Western Conservative Baptist (Portland-based) but left the area before completing.
- Worked for 12 years in international ministry leadership for Radio Bible Class (RBC or ODB).
- I've literally preached all over, including Europe, Africa, Asia, South America and the Caribbean.
- Currently work for the CDC in computer technology and continue bible teaching as opportunity arises.
- My greatest joy is to see believers grow in knowledge and faith through exposure to the Word of God.

Questions for the class

- What thoughts/concerns/experience have you had about with book of Revelation?
- Why do you think there are supposedly many “interpretations” of the book?
- Why have you decided to sign up for this class and what do you want to get from it?
- Why am I teaching this class? I believe the time is near, and we need to know what's ahead.

Introduction

- Many people shy away from Revelation because:
 - They believe it is difficult because has too much vivid imagery.
 - Someone told me yesterday they don't like Revelation because it's too frightening!
 - Only if you're not a believer...
- In addition, some people say the book is very confusing, and has “many different interpretations”.
- God's intent for the book is not to “obscure” truth, but to “reveal” it. That's what *revelation* means!
- It is also the only book in the bible that pronounces a blessing on those that read and **listen**, TWICE!
 - *Rev 1:3, Blessed is he who reads and those who hear (to listen) the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; **for the time is near.***
 - *Rev 22:7, Blessed is he who **heeds** (to watch over, to guard) the words of the prophecy of this book.*
- So then WHY do Christians generally stay away from it?
 - I firmly believe this book is so important that Satan does not want anyone reading it. WHY NOT?
 - It clearly describes Satan's final rebellion and ultimate demise., and Christ's ultimate victory.
 - It was written by a first century man (John) to describe what he sees in heaven and on future earth.
 - Paul had a vision of heaven and was at a loss for words:
 - *2 Cor 12:1-3, I will reluctantly tell about visions and revelations from the Lord. 2 I[a] was caught up to the third heaven fourteen years ago. Whether I was in my body or out of my body, I don't know—only God knows. 3 Yes, only God knows whether I was in my*

body or outside my body. But I do know 4 that I was caught up[b] to paradise and heard things so astounding that they cannot be expressed in words, things no human is allowed to tell.

- In Daniel 8:26, Daniel is told to seal up a specific vision.
- Revelation 10:4, there are some things John is told to “seal up”.
- Some people believe Paul experienced this when he was stoned and left for dead in: Acts 14:19; (NLT) Then some Jews arrived from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowds to their side. They stoned Paul and dragged him out of town, thinking he was dead. 20 But as the believers[a] gathered around him, he got up and went back into the town. The next day he left with Barnabas for Derbe.
- What we have *heard or read* about the book is often confusing and contradictory. WHY?
 - Many false teachers have intentionally distorted to book to make it match their own theology.
 - 2 Pet 2:1-3 (NLT) But there were also false prophets in Israel, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will cleverly teach destructive heresies and even deny the Master who bought them. In this way, they will bring sudden destruction on themselves. 2 Many will follow their evil teaching and shameful immorality. And because of these teachers, the way of truth will be slandered. 3 In their greed they will make up clever lies to get hold of your money. But God condemned them long ago, and their destruction will not be delayed.
 - Others unintentionally distort its meaning by ignoring how it fits in with other scriptures, such as the books of Daniel, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah, Matthew, and in many NT epistles

So what will be our approach in this class?

- **Literal**; we prefer the simple meaning of the scripture and avoid complicating it
- **Chronological**; Rev is filled with time words: “after these things I looked”, “then I looked”, and “after this I saw”.
- **Pre-Tribulation Rapture**; The true church will be taken before the seven year Tribulation
- **Pre-Millennial Tribulation**; The tribulation period precedes a 1,000 year reign of Christ on this earth
- **Dispensational**; God works in various ways in various times throughout history. As seen throughout the bible.
 - Heb 1:1-2; God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 [a]in these last days has spoken to us [b]in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the [c]world.
- **The Jews are still God’s chosen people** and **Israel is distinct** from the Church when mentioned in Revelation.

- We are not going to twist scripture to try to make it mean something it doesn’t.
 - Most alternative views make unsupportable assumptions and need to convolute the chronology.
- We are not going to add meaning where that meaning can’t be supported biblically.
 - When the simple meaning of the text is clear, no other meaning will be imputed to the text.
- We are not going to ignore meaning that is obviously there.
 - This is another technique often used to support alternative views.
- Symbolism is interpreted within the textual context, drawing on historical norms and cross-references.
 - For example, the beast coming up out of the sea in Rev 13 is clearly explained in Daniel 7.
- I use NASB (for accuracy with the Greek), NLT for readability.

Having said all of that!

I understand the interest in the End Times, BUT WE NEED PERSPECTIVE AND BALANCE! This is an intro to this class.

QUESTION: What’s the **major theme** of Revelation? What does the first verse say?

Jesus said we should recognize the signs of his coming (Both 1ST Advent and AND 2ND Advent).

Over 300 Messianic prophecies in the OT were fulfilled by Christ. Here are just 10.

(BTW, there are over 2,500 prophecies in the Bible, about 2,000 of which have already been fulfilled to the letter)

<u>Prophecy</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Fulfilment</u>
Messiah would be born in Bethlehem	Micah 5:2	Mat 2:1 Luke 2:4-6
Christ's Triumphant Ride into Jerusalem on a Colt	Zech 9:9	John 12:12-15, Mat 28:8-11
Rejection of Christ by His Own People	Isa 53:1-3	John 1:10-11, John 12:37-38
Jesus was Silent before His Accusers	Isa 53:7	Mark 15:5
The Soldiers Cast Lots for his garments	Psalm 22:17-18	John 19:23
Not One of His Bones Would be Broken	Numbers 9:12	John 19:31-37
They Would Pierce His Hands and Feet	Psalm 22:14-16	Mat 27:35, Luke 24:39
Jesus Will Die as a Sacrifice for Our Sins	Isaiah 53:5-6	1 Peter 2:24
Jesus was Buried in a Rich Man's Tomb	Isaiah 53:9	Mat 27:57-60
Jesus Would Rise from the Dead	Psalm 16:10	Mat 28:6

Yet Israel mostly missed Him. What's His heart about this?

Mat 16:2-4, When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' 3 And in the morning, 'There will be a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Do you know how to discern the [b]appearance of the sky, but cannot discern the signs of the times?

John 5:39-40, You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; 40 and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.

1. In His last few days on earth, Jesus lamented over Israel's hardness concerning Him

- a. **Mat 23:37-39** ³⁷ "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. ³⁸ Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! ³⁹ For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'"
- b. **(Parallel verse Luke 19:41-44)** ⁴¹ When He approached *Jerusalem*, He saw the city and wept over it, ⁴² saying, "If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. ⁴³ For the days will come upon you ^[s]when your enemies will throw up a ^[l]barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, ⁴⁴ and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."
- c. **Through Jesus, God expressed His compassion for a lost nation**
 - i. God is sovereign and can bring to pass whatever He wills.
 - ii. Yet, He does not force Himself on anyone.
 - iii. He is also not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (2 Pet 3:9)
 - iv. Those who reject his offer of grace are storing up wrath for themselves (Rom 2:4-11)
 - v. Destruction and desolation were coming then and are coming now!

2. Brief history of the world, and the Jewish nation (all dates are approx.)

- a. 4004 BC Creation (Irish Bishop James Ussher, 17th century)
- b. 2350 BC Flood (James Ussher)
 - i. <https://web.stanford.edu/~meehan/donnely/bibchron.html#:~:text=In%20this%20way%2C%20Bishop%20Ussher,the%20date%20at%202459%20BC>.
- c. 2000 BC, Abraham leaves Ur of the Chaldees. The age of "the PATRIARCHS" begins.
- d. 1446 BC the year of the Exodus.
- e. 1406 BC Conquering the Holy Land, the Tabernacle.

- f. 966 BC Solomon begins building the temple.
- g. 586 BC Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon captured Israel, Solomon's temple destroyed.
- h. 539 BC Persia conquered Babylon.
- i. 516 BC the second temple was completed (see Ezra).
- j. 430 BC Malachi was written, prophesying the coming of "Elijah" and beginning the 400 "silent years"
- k. 140 BC the end of Greek occupation, when the Maccabean revolt ejected them.
- l. 37 BC King Herod gave the temple an extreme makeover.
 - i. with inlaid gold everywhere, and a large wall surrounding the courtyard. IT WAS OPULENT!
- m. 27 BC, Rome ruled in ISRAEL.
- n. 33 AD Pilate crucified Jesus.
- o. 66 AD The Jewish revolt against Rome, Jews fled to Masada.
- p. 69 AD The siege of Jerusalem by the Romans.
- q. 70 AD Herod's Temple was destroyed in 70 AD setting fire to scaffolding.
 - i. The only remains of the Temple: The (Western) Wailing (crying) Wall.
- r. 72-73 AD The siege of Masada

3. Jesus speaks about the Temple (literally the heart of the Pharisaical tradition of animal sacrifice)

- a. **Mat 24:1-2** Jesus came out from the temple and was going away ^[a]when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him. ²And He said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down."
- b. In 70 AD, when the Temple was destroyed, not one stone left on top of another (gold melted)
- c. **The Jewish sacrificial system was (intentionally) abolished and has never resumed.**
 - i. So, you could say that for 2000 years Israel has had no means for atonement for sin

4. Why was Israel taken away into captivity in the Old Testament? In a word, disobedience!

- a. Isaiah 5. I'll let you draw your own conclusions...
 - i. They became materialistic, taking advantage of others, pushing out the poor 5:8
 - ii. They were pleasure seekers, and partiers 5:11-12
 - iii. They dragged their sin around in public, unashamed, and boasting in it (Pride) 5:18
 - iv. They mocked God saying, "hurry up and do something! What can God do?" 5:19
 - v. They called evil good, and good evil, darkness is light, and light is darkness 5:20
 - vi. They participated in drunkenness, and boasted about how much they could drink 5:22
 - vii. They took bribes to let the wicked go free, and instead punished the innocent 5:23
- b. Does any of this sound familiar?
- c. But these verses are just for Israel, right? We can't take them out of context!
 - i. **Jer 12:17** Any nation who refuses to obey me will be uprooted and destroyed. I, the LORD, have spoken!"
 1. But in today's world, it is not just any nation, but ALL nations!
 2. Because of lawlessness, people are already leaving the big cities in droves.

So we have on the one hand God's love for, and patience for the lost

- **2 Pet 3:9** ⁹The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

And on the other hand, His promise to judge those who rebel against him

- **Jude 1:14** "Listen! The Lord is coming with countless thousands of his holy ones ¹⁵to execute judgment on the people of the world. He will convict every person of all the ungodly things they have done and for all the insults that ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

Two schools of thought about the end of the world:

1. Right at the door, Mat 24:33, Mar 13:9
2. Where is the promise of His coming? 2 Peter 3:4 (nothing ever changes)

So, when is it?

Mat 24:14 ¹⁴ **This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole ^[a]world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.**

Mat 24:36-44 ³⁶ **“But about that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. ³⁷ For ^[a]the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. ³⁸ For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they did not ^[b]understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be. ⁴⁰ At that time there will be two *men* in the field; one ^[c]will be taken and one ^[d]will be left. ⁴¹ Two *women* will be grinding at the ^[e]mill; one ^[f]will be taken and one ^[g]will be left.**

⁴² **“Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. ⁴³ But ^[h]be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁴ For this reason you must be ready as well; for **the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will.****

Act 1:6-7 ⁶ So, when they had come together, they *began* asking Him, saying, “Lord, is it at this time that You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷ But He said to them, “It is not for you to know periods of time or appointed times which the Father has set by His own authority.

No man knows (in fact, the verse seems to say that the Son does not even know)!

How will it happen?

- 1 Th 5:3 ³ While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then ^[a]destruction ^[b]will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape.

Traditional Jewish wedding parallels to His Church

- The Bridegroom chooses his bride and pledges himself to her.
- The Bridegroom pays the bride price for his bride to her father (who is her father in our context?).
- The Bridegroom returns to His Father’s house to prepare a place for his bride.
- The wedding doesn’t happen until the father says it’s time.
- The bridegroom waits, patiently, preparing.
- Without warning, the shophar is blown.
- The wedding party goes to collect the bride and carry her away.
- Then follows the wedding feast (only the invited guests).

What are the next major events in biblical calendar?

- The Rapture of the Church (everything is in place for this to happen) Nothing is lacking!
 - How do we know the church will not go through the tribulation?
 - Historical precedent. The righteous were saved from judgement.
 - The Flood of Noah.
 - Sodom and Gomorrah
 - ***Rev 3:10 (NLT), “Because you have obeyed my command to persevere, I will protect you from the great time of testing that will come upon the whole world to test those who belong to this world.***
- Tribulation (7 years, divided as 3 ½ and 3 ½) the days will be cut short for the sake of the elect (Mat 24:22).
- Armageddon – all unbelievers are killed by Christ by only speaking the Word.
- Satan and his angels thrown into the abyss.

- Those believing during the Tribulation pass into the Millennial Kingdom, we reign with Christ on earth.
- We will all reign with Him in His Kingdom on earth for 1000 years.
- Satan released once again, final battle, the Great White Throne of Judgment.
- Satan is bound forever, along with all unbelievers in the Lake of Fire.
- The current Universe is then completely burned up (it melts with fervent heat – 2 Pet 3:10)
- New Heavens and a new Earth, and the New Jerusalem, known as the eternal state.

Can we look to the Talmud for some insight into the timing (a book of rabbinical writings)?

- Six thousand years is the duration of the world. Two thousand of the six thousand years are characterized by chaos (tohu); two thousand years are characterized by Torah (law), from the era of the Patriarchs until the end of the Mishnaic period; and two thousand years are the period of the coming of the Messiah.
 - <https://www.sefaria.org/Sanhedrin.97a.9?lang=bi>
- That is the course that history was to take, but due to our sins that time frame increased. The Messiah did not come after four thousand years passed, and furthermore, the years that elapsed since then, which were to have been the messianic era, have elapsed.
 - <https://www.sefaria.org/Sanhedrin.97b.14?lang=bi>

Their counts are all off because most Jews don't believe Jesus' 1st coming marked the age of Messiah!

Most Jewish scholars put a "Sabbath Rest" at the end of the 6,000 years, corresponding to 1,000 years of peace, to which to the evangelical marks the Earthly Millennial Kingdom, the earth's "sabbath rest".

So how do we calculate the end? We have to admit that biblical dates and times are not always exact!

Loosely based on the Talmud's 2000-year prediction for the "period of the coming of Messiah":

Then, there have been at least four ways to try to calculate (do we calculate from the rapture or the end of trib?)

1. Estimates of Jesus' birth year 6-4 BC: **1994-1997** (Harold Camping, Family Radio, September 6, 1994)
2. Estimates of the start of Jesus' ministry: AD 26-30 + 2000 (-7) = **2019 - 2030**
3. The estimated 33 AD date of the crucifixion: 33 + 2000 (-7) = **2026 - 2033**
4. The Day of Atonement coinciding with an estimated 70th Jubilee year: **Next October** during Yom Kippur
 - a. Compelling archaeological and prophetic evidence suggests the ram's horn announcing the 70th Year of Jubilee will sound on the Day of Atonement in October 2024 (standinfaith.org)
 - b. Rosh Hashana coincides with the Day of Atonement, when the high priest entered the temple.

However, since we're using a Jewish calendar, estimated dates, and the Talmud for all of this, the wrench in the works is the phrase in the Talmud "the end of the Mishnaic period (oral tradition)", which is said to be 220 AD, and THAT pushes the 2nd coming out roughly 200 years from now! (Will God wait another 200 years? I don't think so)

- Personally, I favor something happening in the next 4-7 years, but that can't be proven biblically.
- We have to accept that there are many things God doesn't want us to know, and this is one of them!
- IF anyone provides a date, you can BE SURE that's not it (Jehova's Witnesses).

Now, a few words about numerology: God created numbers, but spiritual meaning isn't necessarily everywhere!

Seven is completion, representative of the perfection of the six days of creation, and a 7th, Sabbath rest.

Six, falling short of completion or perfection, representing man, also man was created on the sixth day.

666 Rev 13:18 (John MacArthur) his number is six hundred and sixty-six. This is the essential number of a man. The number 6 falls one short of God's perfect number, 7, and thus represents human imperfection. Antichrist, the most powerful human the world will ever know, will still be a man, i.e., a 6. The ultimate in human and demonic power is a 6,

not perfect, as God is. The 3-fold repetition of the number is intended to reiterate and underscore man's identity. When Antichrist is finally revealed, there will be some way to identify him with this basic number of a man, or his name may have the numerical equivalent of 666. (In many languages, including Heb., Gr., and Lat., letters have numerical equivalents.) Because this text reveals very little about the meaning of 666, it is unwise to speculate beyond what is said.

Wrap UP

God will start to wrap things up! But there is a principle in place that we can't ignore, and that's up to Him! That is:

Rom 11:25-28 (NLT); I want you to understand this mystery, dear brothers and sisters,[a] so that you will not feel proud about yourselves. Some of the people of Israel have hard hearts, but this will last only until the full number of Gentiles comes to Christ. 26 And so all Israel will be saved. As the Scriptures say,

“The one who rescues will come from Jerusalem,[b]

and he will turn Israel[c] away from ungodliness.

27 And this is my covenant with them,

that I will take away their sins.”[d]

28 Many of the people of Israel are now enemies of the Good News, and this benefits you Gentiles. Yet they are still the people he loves because he chose their ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The relationship between Jews and Christians is undeniable.

- God used a partial hardening of the Jews to take the gospel to the Gentiles.
- God is using the faith of Christians to provoke the Jews to jealousy for God.
 - *Rom 11:11-12 (NLT)*; *Did God's people stumble and fall beyond recovery? Of course not! They were disobedient, so God made salvation available to the Gentiles. But he wanted his own people to become jealous and claim it for themselves. 12 Now if the Gentiles were enriched because the people of Israel turned down God's offer of salvation, think how much greater a blessing the world will share when they finally accept it.*
- I believe the Tribulation serves two main purposes 1) to punish unbelief, 2) to bring the Jews to repentance.
- We are going to talk about all of this in the weeks to come!

Knowing all this, what should we do?

- Prayer and personal holiness
- Consume God's Word, know what it says, and apply it to all of life.
- Continue to share the gospel, especially the judgment part! Only the sick need a doctor (everyone is sick)!
- Isaiah preached judgment, and God said no one would listen, yet there is a tenth portion, a holy seed.
- God knows those who are His!

Fin

Additional NOTES:

The date of Jesus' birth?

Therefore, according to the texts above we can approximate the month of Jesus' birth to be around the time of Tishri (**mid to late September**). To arrive at this date, start at the conception of John the Baptist, Sivan (June), count forward six months to arrive at Gabriel's announcement of the conception of Jesus, Kislev (December), then count forward nine more months, the time it takes for human gestation, to reach Tishri (September), when Jesus was born. <https://www.bibleinfo.com/en/questions/when-was-jesus-born>

Jesus was "about" 30 years old when he began his public ministry (Luke 3:23) AND John mentions 3 Passovers are during his ministry [John 2:23](#); [6:4](#); [12:1](#)), so his ministry lasted about three years.

Most scholars believe he was born between 4 and 6 BC

<https://reasonabletheology.org/year-jesus-actually-born/>

Using 30 years exactly as his age, then His public ministry began then "roughly" between 24 and 26 AD and ended 27 to 29 AD (based on his birth year).

Add 2000 years to those numbers and you have 2027 to 2029 for the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom.

Subtract seven years for the tribulation (Daniel's 70th week) and you have 2020 to 2022.

Other scholars put his triumphal entry into Jerusalem as 33 AD (a number we have seen a lot of), the same year as his crucifixion (ignoring the estimates of his birth year and age when he began ministry)

This stretches out the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom to 2033, less seven years of tribulation, we arrive at 2026.

The Final Days of Jesus: The Most Important Week of the Most Important Person Who Ever Lived Paperback Illustrated, January 31, 2014 by Andreas J. Köstenberger (Author), Justin Taylor (Author), Alexander Stewart

Based on their math, anytime between 2022 and 2026 marks the start of the tribulation.

- **Yom Kippur** (the day of atonement) foreshadows the salvation of Israel, and the year of Jubilee, cancellation of all debts. Yom Kippur this year is Begins Oct 11, 2024 at sundown; ends at nightfall on Oct 12, 2024
- **Rosh Hashanah** (the Feast of Trumpets, basically the Jewish new year-foreshadows the coming of messiah), Rosh Hashanah this year is Evening of Wed, Oct 2, 2024 – Fri, Oct 4, 2024