

Sermon  SNAPSHOTS

A close-up photograph of a human eye. The iris is replaced by a detailed image of the Earth, showing continents and oceans. The eye is looking slightly to the right. The background is a soft, warm glow with bokeh light effects.

REVELATION

PART 1

The position taken in this work may be said to be both **historical** and **preterist**; historical because we believe the events portrayed as ‘things which must shortly come to pass’ actually occurred and can be read about in history, and preterist in that those events were fulfilled unto the people of John's day. To look for the fulfillment of the things which were ‘shortly to come to pass’ hundreds or even thousands of years into the future is to miss the point of the book entirely. The events that were foretold can be found in the history of that day – in the first century. There is little in the book that remains to be fulfilled. However, the message that brought joy, comfort, and hope to Christians **then** is still as fresh and meaningful to us **today**, and **every Christian needs that message.**”

FOUR KEYS TO UNDERSTANDING THE BOOK OF REVELATION

The book of Revelation is one of the most fascinating books in the Bible! It is also one of the most difficult to understand. There have been many proposed interpretations by many learned men; **but they cannot all be correct!** This short outline will reveal four key thoughts which can help us with our interpretation...



This book is a “revelation” (Revelation 1:1)

- A *revelation* is something that is *disclosed* or *made known*! (Ephesians 3:3)
- This *necessarily implies* the ability to *understand* its message! (Ephesians 3:4)
- So, we should study it, *confident* that we can understand it! (Revelation 1:3)

This book was “signified” (Revelation 1:1)

- This word means “to express by *signs* or *symbols*” (Revelation 1:20)
- This will “rule out” a *strictly literal* approach to the book!
- We must also *accept John’s own explanations*! (Revelation 17:7-10)

Yet, not everything is symbolic!

- With no literal “anchors,” symbols are indiscernible!
- Notice some of the “literal” things in the book:
Jesus, God, angels (1:1); seven churches of Asia (1:4); John, Patmos (1:9); resurrection (1:18); Heaven (4:1); Euphrates (9:14); mystery of God (10:7); temple, holy city (11:1-2,8); Satan (12:9); the kingdom of God (12:10); gospel (14:6); seven mountains/kings (17:7-10); the final judgment (20:11-15); the invitation to come to Christ (22:17)

It reveals things to “shortly take place” (Revelation 1:1,3)

- Any proper interpretation must take this into account!
- Thus, to place its *primary events* in our day is gross error!
- That being said, there are some “future” things (20:11-15)



I truly hope that these few thoughts will help you as you begin to study the book of Revelation! One final thing to remember: Always seek God’s blessing to understand His will (2 Timothy 2:7).

--Lanny Smith

Fishers

Church of Christ

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