

The Time of the End – Part One
A Series on the Book of Revelation
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Adapted from Arlen Chitwood's Book; Presented by Jeanne Alley

Revelation 1:1-3

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, 2 who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. 3 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.

1). The title of this series, "The Time of the End," is an expression taken from Dan. 8:17; 11:35, 40; 12:4, 9, referring specifically to a future time which the Jewish people will pass through at the end of Man's Day (the 6,000 years of this age). This "time of the end" encompasses the time immediately before and including the time when "the Sun of righteousness" arises "with healing in his wings" -

Daniel 12:-1-3

1 "At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book. 2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt. 3 Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever. 4 "But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase." 5 Then I, Daniel, looked; and there stood two others, one on this riverbank and the other on that riverbank. 6 And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, "How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?" 7 Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished. 8 Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, "My lord, what shall be the end of these things?" 9 And he said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. 10 "Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall

understand. 11 "And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days. 12 "Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days. 13 "But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days."

Malachi 4:1-6

1 "For behold, the day is coming, Burning like an oven, And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," Says the LORD of hosts, "That will leave them neither root nor branch. 2 But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings; And you shall go out And grow fat like stall-fed calves. 3 You shall trample the wicked, For they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet On the day that I do this," Says the LORD of hosts. 4 "Remember the Law of Moses, My servant, Which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, With the statutes and judgments. 5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. 6 And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."

a) This "time of the end" is shown in the Book of Daniel to encompass events during the last seven years of Man's Day (the final "week" in Daniel's Seventy-Week prophecy) and events at the time of Christ's return which lead into the Messianic Era, the Lord's Day.

b) The Book of Revelation parallels the Book of Daniel in that it deals centrally with events during this same future time, ending, as well, in the Messianic Era. The Book of Revelation though deals not only with Israel (as the Book of Daniel does) but this book also includes God's end-time dealings with the Church as well.

c) We will see in the Book of Revelation that events surrounding the Church are introduced and dealt with first (chs. 1-4). And in the chronological sequence through which events in the book move, God deals with the Church first, for a revealed reason: The bride must be removed from the body (which will occur following decisions and determinations at the judgment seat) prior to events surrounding two things:

1) the redemption of the inheritance (chs. 5-19), and

2) the bride becoming Christ's wife (chs. 5-19).

d) These two events will occur simultaneously through God's judgment upon the earth-dwellers (Israel and the nations, following the removal of the Church) during and at the conclusion of the final seven years of Daniel's Seventy-Week prophecy (chs. 6-19).

e) Then, at the end of the Book of Revelation, matters are projected out into the ages beyond the Millennial Kingdom (chs. 21, 22). Scripture has very little to say about that which occurred prior to Man's Day (before the restoration of the heavens and the earth seen in Gen. 1:2b ff), and it has very little to say about that which will occur following the Millennial Kingdom. But Scripture does reveal enough about these events to allow man to piece the whole thing together.

f) God has revealed, in the Scriptures, the necessary information which will allow man to know and understand why he was created in God's image, after His likeness, at a particular time in history. And, through this revelation, man can know and understand why the fall occurred and why God provided redemption following the fall (which, as the reason for man's creation, centers around regality – having to do with the government of the earth – to be realized during the seventh day, the seventh millennium, the Messianic Era, the age to come).

g) And man can also know and understand that God has far-reaching plans for the individual created in His image, after His likeness. Man's destiny beyond the Millennial Kingdom, clearly revealed at the end of the Book of Revelation, is to have a part in the government of the universe itself.

2). The word "Revelation" (v. 1) is a translation of the Greek word 'apokalupsis,' which means to "disclose," "reveal," "uncover." And this word, along with its verb form (apokalupto), are together used forty-five times in the New Testament in passages such as –

Romans 16:25

Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation [apokalupto] of the mystery kept secret since the world began 26 but now has been made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures has been made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith

1Corinthians 2:9

But as it is written: Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." 10 But God has revealed [apokalupto] them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

Galatians 1:11

But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation [apokalupto] of Jesus Christ.

(Also see Eph. 3:3, 5; I Peter 1:7, 13; 4:13)

a) The Book of Revelation, the Apokalupsis, the “Apocalypse,” is about a disclosure, an uncovering, an unveiling of that which the Father had previously given to and would accomplish through His Son. And that which the Father had previously given to and would accomplish through His Son is seen in both Old and New Testament Scripture as “all things” –

John 16:15

"All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.

Colossians 1:16

For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. 18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. 19 For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, 20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.

Hebrews 1:1

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;

b) Then, more directly, and in the words of the book itself, that being made known pertains to a revelation of the Son Himself. This book is an opening up of that which relates all that the Father has given to and would accomplish through His Son, revealed through a revelation of the Son Himself.

c) And the revelation of the Son, according to this opening verse, is going to be accomplished through a specific, revealed means – through revealing “things which must shortly [Gk., tachos, ‘quickly,’ “speedily’] come to pass.” That is to say, once this revelation of the Son begins through an unfolding of future events, the revelation will occur in a quick or speedy fashion – actually over time covering little more than seven years.

d) According to John 1:1, 14, the incarnation of Jesus the Son, was simply the Word (the Old Testament Scriptures) becoming flesh. There is the written Word (which is living [Heb. 4:12]), and there is the living Word (which is the written Word, inseparably connected with the Father, made flesh).

e) The Book of Revelation is an opening up of the Old Testament Scriptures through a Person, through the Word which became flesh. And don't think that we've forgotten the New Testament, for the thought of an opening up of only the Old Testament Scriptures must extend to and include an opening up of the New Testament Scriptures, for there is nothing in the New that cannot be found, after some fashion, in the Old. If there were, there could not be the necessary corresponding completeness between the written Word and the living Word at a time before the New Testament even began to be penned.

f) The existence of "the Word made flesh" (Jesus) preceding the existence of the New Testament clearly relates the truth concerning the content of the New Testament. The New can only be an opening up and revealing of that previously seen in the Old. To state or think otherwise is to connect the Word made flesh with one Testament and disconnect Him from the other — an impossibility.

- In short, the Old Testament is complete in and of itself; the Word made flesh incorporates this same completeness, and the New Testament adds nothing per se to this completeness. Any supposed subsequent addition would be impossible, for this would be adding to that which God had already deemed complete through the incarnation, the Word being made flesh.

g) This is why Christ, shortly after His resurrection, began at "Moses and all the prophets" (an expression covering the whole of the O.T.) when He appeared to and began making Himself known to two disciples traveling from Jerusalem to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-31). The living Word, using the written Word, began putting together different facets of a word picture pertaining to Himself. And He could have gone to any part of the Old Testament to accomplish this, for the whole Old Testament was about Him.

h) Through this means, those being addressed would be able to see one (the word picture) alongside the other (the Word made flesh). And, comparing the two, they would be able to come into an understanding of not only the identity of the One in their midst but an understanding of that which had occurred in Jerusalem during the past several days as well.

i) And this is the manner in which the Book of Revelation must be studied. Since it is an unveiling of the living Word, it is equally an unveiling of the inseparable Old Testament Scriptures. So there is really only one way a person can come into a proper and correct understanding of the various things opened up and revealed in this book (which, of course, would be equally true of any other portion of Scripture).

3) The word "signified" in Revelation 1:1 is a translation of the Greek word *semaino*, which is the verb form of the word for "sign" (*semeion*). The Apostle John introduced, opened up, and developed matters in his gospel account through signs. And in the

Book of Revelation, matters are introduced, opened up, and developed in a similar manner.

a) God, throughout His revelation to man, shows an affinity for the use of types, numbers, signs, and metaphors to make Himself, His plans, and His purposes known. And this must be recognized, else man will find himself failing to go beyond the simple letter of Scripture.

- Man, for example, will find himself understanding Biblical history but failing to understand the God-designed typical significance of that history. Or if numbers, signs, or metaphors are used – which they often are – he will fail to understand the God-designed significance of these as well.

b) At the very outset, God makes it clear that the Book of Revelation has been structured in a particular manner, closely related to the manner in which John was led by the Spirit to structure his gospel.

- The Gospel of John was built around eight signs which Jesus had previously performed during His earthly ministry, and these signs were recorded and directed to the Jewish people during the time of the reoffer of the kingdom to Israel (which occurred between 33 AD and about 68 AD). And the Book of Revelation – dealing largely with the Jewish people once again (exclusively, along with God’s dealings with the nations through Israel, in chs. 6-19) – uses the verb form of the word for “sign” at the very outset in order to reveal the manner in which this book has been structured.

c) The word “signified,” a translation of *semaino*, has to do with making something known through a manner which carries the reader from a somewhat indirect means to a direct means, using an illustrative statement as a means of explaining a matter. And this is seen accomplished in the Book of Revelation centrally through the use of numerous numbers and metaphors, though other illustrative means are used as well.

4). God’s use of angels and angelic ministry comprises another major facet of the Book of Revelation, forming another key to coming into a proper understanding of the book. God uses angels in all facets of His activities as He governs a universe from a place which Scripture locates by direction – “the uttermost parts of the north” (Isa. 14:13, ASV).

a) This place is located at a northern-most point, north of the earth. And this place in relation to the earth would be located more specifically north of Jerusalem; and more specifically yet, this place would be located north of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem;

and even more specifically yet, this place would be located north of the brazen altar in the courtyard of the Temple located on the Temple Mount.

- The brazen altar is where the sacrifices took place — “on the side of the altar northward before the Lord.” And sacrifices occurring at this brazen altar occupied center-stage in Scripture in exactly the same respect that Christ’s sacrifice at Calvary occupies center-stage in Scripture, for the former foreshadows the latter, with God requiring death and shed blood throughout (Lev. 1:11; cf. Job 26:7; Ps. 75:6, 7; Heb. 9:22).

b) All angels in God’s universal kingdom either rule provinces in the kingdom (e.g., the earth is one such province) or have some other type connection with the rulership of the different provinces. That is to say, all activity of angels within the kingdom of God would have to be activity somehow connected with God’s universal rule within this kingdom.

c) In this respect, all angels would have some part in this rule, whether directly or indirectly. Some angels would rule as heads of state (ruling over provinces, as Satan presently rules over the earth); other angels would rule under these angels (as angels presently rule under Satan); others would hold positions as watchers and holy ones (as seen in Dan. 4); others would occupy positions surrounding God’s throne (as seen in Rev. 4, 5, 7); and others would comprise the armies of heaven (as seen in the camp of Israel in the Old Testament, or as seen among those who will accompany Christ when He returns to the earth [cf. II Kings 6:17; Matt. 24:31; II Thess. 1:7; Rev. 19:14]).

d) Though God appeared in Moses’ presence and acted directly, God used angels when giving the Law (Acts 7:53; cf. Deut. 33:2; Ps. 68:17; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2). And something very similar occurred when John “was in the isle called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev. 1:9b). The Son acted directly in the revelation of Himself to John, as the Father had previously acted directly in that made known to Moses at Sinai (cf. Ex. 19:3ff; Rev. 1:10ff).

e) But, though direct intervention occurred by both the Father and the Son at these different times, angelic ministry was also involved. And in both instances a kingdom was in view — the Old Testament theocracy, and the theocracy yet to exist.

5). The Book of Revelation is the only book in Scripture containing a specific statement at the beginning of the book relative to blessings awaiting the one hearing, reading, and keeping the things stated in the book –

3 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.

However, though this is the only book which opens with a statement of this nature, the same thing would have to be true of any portion of Scripture. Such a thought could not be confined to just the Book of Revelation but would have to be true concerning Scripture as a whole, for the whole of Scripture presents one complete picture, through numerous word pictures, of all facets of the person and work of Jesus Christ. And one part cannot really be placed above another part in this respect. The Book of Revelation simply cannot be separated in this manner from the whole of Scripture, for this book is about the whole of Scripture (cf. Ps. 12:6; 138:2; II Tim. 3:15-17).

a) The Book of Revelation brings all previous revelation together in an apex, with the “mystery of God” being brought to a completed state in this book –

Revelation 10:7

...but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.

b) Numerous things in the New Testament are referred to through the use of the word “mystery.” For example, there is:

- the “mystery” of the kingdom [Mark 4:11; ‘mysteries’ in Matt. 13:11; Luke 8:10],
- the “mystery” of Israel’s blindness [Rom. 11:25],
- the “mystery” of the rapture of the Church [I Cor. 15:51],
- the “mystery” revealed to Paul [Eph. 3:3],
- the “mystery” of Christ [Eph. 3:4],
- the “mystery” of Christ and the Church [Eph. 5:32],
- the “mystery” of God [Col. 2:2],
- the “mystery” of iniquity [II Thess. 2:7],
- the “mystery” of the faith [I Tim. 3:9],
- the “mystery” of godliness [I Tim. 3:16],
- and the “mystery” of the woman and the beast [Rev. 17:7].

c) The word “mystery” is a translation [more of an Anglicized form] of the Greek word ‘mysterion.’ The word, as it is used in Scripture, has to do with that which cannot be explained by man, requiring an opening up through Divine means. The word has to do with something revealed in the Old Testament, which is later more fully opened up and developed in the New Testament. Apart from Divine revelation in the Old Testament, man couldn’t know about the mystery in the first place; then, apart from Divine revelation in the New Testament, the mystery would not be opened up and further revealed.

d) Therefore, a mystery, contrary to common teaching and thought in certain circles, cannot be something completely new, separate from and unknown in the Old

Testament. The fallacy behind that type reasoning we've already discussed: there is nothing in the New that is not in the Old, else, as previously stated, the Word made flesh before the New was penned would have to be separated from the New – an impossibility.

e) "The mystery of God" in Rev. 10:7 – the revelation of God, which began with Gen. 1:1 – has, at this point in the book, been opened up and fully revealed through a revelation of the Son. And the completion of God's revelation surrounding this mystery can occur at this mid-point in the book – Chapter 10 – for the same reason that "the kingdom of the world" can become that "of our Lord, and of his Christ" in Rev. 11:15 (ASV), at this mid-point in the book as well.

- In both instances (Rev. 10:7; 11:15) the seventh trumpet has just sounded, signaling a completion of God's judgments upon the earth-dwellers. And a completion of these judgments can be seen at this point in the book because, as the seven trumpets form the judgments of the seventh seal of the seven-sealed scroll seen in chapters five, six, eight, and nine, the seven vials of wrath about to be poured out are seen when the seventh trumpet sounds (Rev. 10:1-11; 15:1-16:17). (We will explain this further tonight at Bible study.)
- This is why, in chapter five, a search is made only for One worthy to take the seven-sealed scroll from God's right hand and open the seven seals, with nothing stated about a sounding of the seven trumpets or a pouring out of the seven vials. Since the seven trumpets form the judgments of the seventh seal (Rev. 8:1, 2), and the seven vials are seen when the seventh trumpet sounds, the whole of God's judgments in chapters six through eighteen are encompassed within the breaking of the seven seals of the scroll. Thus, the search in chapter five is only for One worthy to take the scroll which God held in His right hand and open the seals of this scroll.

(The structure of the Book of Revelation in the preceding respect [e.g., how the end can be seen in the middle of the book, in chs. 10, 11b], along with the relationship of the trumpet and vial judgments to one another, will be dealt with at length in the many weeks to come.)

6). It is within a book where everything is brought to an apex – where Old Testament Scripture concerning God, Israel, and Gentile world power during the Times of the Gentiles is opened up and fully revealed – that the Spirit, through John, began the book through calling attention to the blessings reserved for those reading, hearing, and keeping those things contained in the book.

a) The thought of reading and hearing would need no clarification, but the thought of keeping would. For example, how is a person to keep parts of the book relating to

judgment, etc.? The word translated “keep,” ‘tereo’ in the Greek text, does normally mean “to keep.” However, as in any language, context will often determine and govern different ways that a word is used and is to be understood. And such would be the case with tereo in Rev. 1:3.

b) The word, for example, is used in Matt. 23:3; 28:20 more in the sense of “observe,” as translated in the KJV and NASB. And the word, contextually, is used in a similar sense in Rev. 1:3 – “observe” or “give heed” (ref. NASB). In this apex of revelation, where Old Testament Scripture is opened up and revealed, blessings have been promised for those who read, hear, and observe or *give heed* to the things being made known to and recorded by John.

c) And the text goes on to provide a reason for “reading, hearing, and observing”, stating, “for the time is at hand.” “At hand” is the same expression used in Matt. 3:2; 4:17 when John and Jesus announced the kingdom of the heavens as being “at hand.” The Messianic King was present in Israel’s midst, with an offer of the kingdom, contingent on the nation’s repentance. Thus, the announcement of the kingdom could be made in this manner, that it was “at hand.”

- And something very similar is seen in Rev. 1:3. The full revelation of the Son, from the Old Testament Scriptures, is about to occur. God will complete His dealing with both Israel and the Church during Man’s Day, bringing these dealings to a full end; and this will be for purposes having to do with the Messianic Era. Then God’s Son, with Israel and the Church occupying their proper positions in the kingdom, will take the sceptre and reign.
- Thus, the same expression, “at hand,” as seen when Christ was on earth the first time, with the kingdom in the offing at that time, could only aptly describe the circumstances, conditions, and time seen in this closing book in Scripture.

Truly, the kingdom of the heavens is at hand. Let’s diligently read this book, hear this book, and observe – give heed to – all that is written within this book.