

DRAFT Introduction to

# A Revelation of love:

A study of the Bible book of *Revelation*

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# Introduction and Overview

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## Fear not, but be Prepared

*[Revelation 1:1-2](#) (BSB) – This is the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants what must soon come to pass. He made it known by sending His angel to His servant John, who testifies to everything he saw. This is the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

**This is the revelation of Jesus to His church showing what will happen ([Rev 1:1](#)) so that we will be ready and prepared, and revealing Himself and His glory.**

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## ***Major themes in Revelation***

- **Love** – Believe it or not, *Revelation* is all about God’s love, and ...
- **Jesus Christ**, Who comes back for us, as He promised, for the purpose of ...
- **Redemption and restoration** to the way God always intended things to be when He initially created us; in other words, ...
- **Completion** of what God began in Genesis and in John chapter 1

## “Safe” *Revelation* reading plan

A major goal in this book is to remove the fear of the book of *Revelation*<sup>1</sup> that many people have. As the title says, it’s all about God’s love. But many people don’t realize that.

Some people are afraid to read *Revelation*. They’ve heard about the bothers, beasts, and battles from movies and books. They’re unpleasant and intimidating and scare people off. They needn’t.

The first thing to remember is that if you’re a believing Christian, they aren’t directed at you!

Sure, at worst there may be some collateral damage. But Jesus will be with us every step of the way and will take care of us and help us through it. And at best, we may not even have to go through it at all! (More on *that* when we discuss the “rapture” later on.) But really, it doesn’t matter: Either way, He loves us and He’ll take care of us<sup>2</sup>.

I always say that God seems to use both a carrot and a stick. His heartfelt desire, born out of His boundless love, is that *everyone* would turn to Him in faith and be saved, and His determination that *no one* who does will perish<sup>3</sup>. So He invites and even entices us with His love and blessings and many benefits. That’s the “carrot”.

But eventually, if that doesn’t work, He will get out His “stick” to *drive* us to Him<sup>4</sup>. That’s what *Revelation*’s bothers, beasts, and battles are: God’s attempt to get people to turn and cry out to Him for salvation from the bad stuff. But all that trouble is directed at those who do not yet believe, not at those who do. There may be collateral damage and believing Christians may be affected, but they are not specifically targeted, and God will be with us and sustain us no matter what happens.

Realizing this, and sort of backing into it easily, everyone can read *Revelation* without fear. Here is a plan:

First read:

- *Revelation* chapters 1 and 22 – Reasons, commission, and conclusions

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<sup>1</sup> For clarity, I’ll try to italicize *Revelation* when I’m referring to the Bible book of *Revelation*. I’ll try to keep it non-italic when I’m referring to a revelation in general or a specific revelation but not to the book.

<sup>2</sup> **God loves us:** [Revelation 9:4](#) – They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any plant or tree, but only those who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads

[Romans 8:31-32, 35, 37-39](#) – What then shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also, along with Him, freely give us all things. ... Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword. ... No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor principalities, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

<sup>3</sup> **God desires everyone to be saved:** [2 Peter 3:9](#) -- (BSB) The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some understand slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish but everyone to come to repentance

[John 3:16](#) -- (BSB) For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that everyone who believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life

<sup>4</sup> The “stick” quite often works. People often turn to God in times of trouble, medical and health issues, math exams, in foxholes, and so forth.

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- Then read *Revelation* chapters 1-3 and 21-22 – All the above plus the warning letters to churches and God's holy city (New Heaven and New Earth) (that's right – you'll be re-reading a couple of chapters; that's intentional)
- Then *Revelation* chapters 1-4 and 20-22 – All the above plus God's throne room, wedding supper for believers, and the vanquishing of evil
- Then *Revelation* chapters 1-5 and 19-22 – All the above plus the Lamb of God and God's final triumph

Then you're on your own: By this point you ought to be able to handle reading the whole thing:

- *Revelation* chapters 1-22, the entire book

## Why study *Revelation*?

*Revelation* was written by John shortly after he wrote his Gospel. In some ways, the Gospel of John is the beginning of the story of Jesus<sup>5</sup>, and *Revelation* is the end of the story (or the story of the end)<sup>6</sup>. Of course, we can also say that *Revelation* ends the story that Genesis begins (see “Appendix - Genesis and Revelation: Bookends of the Bible”, below).

In fact, the whole Bible is a single story from beginning to end, with a plot and a theme. The major theme is redemption. God created us in the first place to share His love and so that we would love Him back.

In the Garden, Adam decided to go his own way and not God’s – and every one of us throughout history has done the same thing. Going in a direction other than God’s – going in a direction other than the way that Eternal Life Himself is going – is eternal death. So the Bible is the story of God’s redemption and restoration of us to His original intent – mutual love and walking together. To solve the problem of our spiritual death, God paid our death penalty Himself – He came to earth as Jesus, the 200% man (100% man and 100% God) and died in our place, paying the penalty. But there’s still sin, separation, and evil in the world, and the final chapter of the Great Story comes in *Revelation*, when God ends all that once and for all and completes the restoration that began with Jesus’ redeeming death. We’ll see all this as we study *Revelation*.

While *Revelation* may not describe what’s yet happening in the world today, I find that, like the rest of the Bible, it is both relevant to today and is applicable to me and how I live my life. And regardless of when the events in *Revelation* occur, they are closer every day.

### *But why should we study Revelation?*

- Because the revelation was given to us by Jesus<sup>7</sup>
- Because the revelation is about Jesus, our Savior<sup>8</sup>
- Because He gave it for us<sup>9</sup>
- Because He gave it to prepare us for what’s to come<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> **Beginning and end:** [John 1:1](#) -- (BSB) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God

[Mark 1:1](#) -- (BSB) This is the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God

<sup>6</sup> **The end:** [Revelation 1:1](#) -- (BSB) This is the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants what must soon come to pass. He made it known by sending His angel to His servant John

[Revelation 22:13](#) -- (BSB) I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

<sup>7</sup> **By Jesus:** [Revelation 1:1a](#) -- This is the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave ...

<sup>8</sup> **About Jesus:** [Revelation 1:1a](#) -- This is the revelation of Jesus Christ ...

<sup>9</sup> **For us:** [Revelation 1:1b](#) -- ... to show His servants ...

<sup>10</sup> **To prepare us for what’s to come:** [Revelation 1:1c](#) -- ... to show ... what must soon come to pass. ...

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- Because we'll be blessed by God if we study and apply it<sup>11</sup>

### **What is Revelation all about?**

- It's all about Jesus Christ<sup>12</sup>
- It's all about what is to come<sup>13</sup>
- It's all about God's love and His desire that all turn to Him, repent, believe, and live<sup>14</sup>
- It's all about the restoration of all things to the way they were originally intended to be<sup>15</sup>

“We will help ourselves in understanding this book that is so often hard to understand if we recognize that its teachings are more about God and God's Christ than about the future, whatever its details. The God of the Book of Revelation is a God who inspires awe. ... In fact in the background of the entire Book of Revelation, even of the battle scenes, is the truth that the victory has been won already. The victory was won at the cross of Christ, the Lamb of God<sup>16</sup>, before which we can only stand in awe.”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> **For our benefit and blessing:** [Revelation 1:3](#) -- Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear and obey what is written in it, because the time is near

<sup>12</sup> **About Jesus:** [Revelation 1:1a](#) -- This is the revelation of Jesus Christ ...

<sup>13</sup> **About what is to come:** [Revelation 1:1c](#) -- ... to show His servants what must soon come to pass. ...

<sup>14</sup> **About God's love:** [2 Peter 3:9](#) -- The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some understand slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish but everyone to come to repentance

[1 Timothy 2:3-4](#) -- This is good and pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth

[Ezekiel 18:23, 32](#) -- Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? declares the Lord GOD. Wouldn't I prefer that he turn from his ways and live? ... For I take no pleasure in anyone's death, declares the Lord GOD. So repent and live

[John 3:16-17](#) -- For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that everyone who believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him

[Acts 3:19-20](#) -- Repent, then, and turn back, so that your sins may be wiped away, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus, the Christ, who has been appointed for you

<sup>15</sup> **About the restoration of all things:** [Acts 3:20-21](#) -- That times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus, the Christ, who has been appointed for you. Heaven must take Him in until the time comes for the restoration of all things, which God announced long ago through His holy prophets

[Romans 8:21](#) -- That the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God

[Acts 1:6-7](#) -- So when they came together, they asked Him, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” Jesus replied, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by His own authority

<sup>16</sup> **Victory already won at the Cross:** [Revelation 5:6](#) -- Then I saw a Lamb who appeared to have been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. The Lamb had seven horns and seven eyes, which represent the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth

[Revelation 19:13](#) -- He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and His name is The Word of God.

<sup>17</sup> Quotation from *BGCT Study Guide on Terror & Triumph: A Study of Revelation*

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It will also help if we consider what it meant to its original readers, since “The first readers of this book were dealing with great opposition and difficult, terrible circumstances. Maybe you are, too. If so, you may be in a better position to understand the book, for often the people who understand the revelation best are those who are suffering for the sake of Christ.”<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

# Background, setting, and intro to *Revelation*

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## ***What – Subject – Jesus Christ (Rev 1.1a)***<sup>19</sup>

## ***Why – Purpose – to prepare His church, disciples, believers***<sup>20</sup>

Jesus told and showed these things to John in order to show him what will happen. That is, God gave us this Revelation in order to prepare us for the future. (See also “How – Understanding Revelation – kinds of literature, layers of meaning”, below.)

*Revelation* is also intended to encourage us. The two-word summary of the entire book of *Revelation* is “God wins”. God is in control – always – and God is good and is loving. Jesus gave John this revelation out of love, and encouragement is part of that. It is encouraging to know that in this troubled and troubling world, and even in the far more troubling future of tribulation, and beasts and battles, God is in control and God loves us and will take care of us. (See also “Theme(s) of” and “*Revelation*’s theological message”, below.)

## ***Who – Jesus Christ ... and more***

*Author – Jesus Christ and God the Father*<sup>21</sup>

*Scribe – John, son of Zebedee and brother of James*<sup>22</sup>

Some commentators and theologians claim that there are several “Johns”, that John the Apostle, John the Evangelist, John the Elder, John the Revelator, John the son of Zebedee and brother of James, the author of the Gospel according to John, the author of each of the epistles ascribed to John, and the author of *Revelation*, are several different people. However, traditionally, all are recognized as one and the same person: John the son of Zebedee and brother of James. I take this traditional view as do an increasing number of modern theologians as well.

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<sup>19</sup> **The subject (the "what") is Jesus:** [Revelation 1:1a](#) -- This is the revelation of Jesus Christ ...

<sup>20</sup> **The purpose (the "why") is to prepare us:** [Revelation 1:1b](#) -- ... to show His servants what must soon come to pass. ...

<sup>21</sup> **The author is Jesus and God:** [Revelation 1:1a](#) -- This is the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him ...

<sup>22</sup> **The scribe is John:** [Revelation 1:1d](#) – ... He made it known by sending His angel to His servant John

[Revelation 1:4, 9](#) – John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from Him who is and was and is to come, and from the seven Spirits before His throne, ... I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance that are in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and my testimony about Jesus.

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*Narrators—Jesus<sup>23</sup>, Angels<sup>24</sup>, John (as recording scribe)<sup>25</sup>*

*Audience, to whom—the church, disciples, believers—including us!<sup>26</sup>*

*Subject—Jesus Christ*

It's all about Jesus, His return, and how God is redeeming and restoring all things through Him (see “What – Subject”, above). “... Christ is the key to life and history. Nothing really makes sense apart from the Christ ...”<sup>27</sup>

### **How— Understanding Revelation – kinds of literature, layers of meaning**

While the purpose of *Revelation* is to prepare us and to encourage us (see “Why – Purpose – to prepare His church, disciples, believers”, above), it can be very confusing.

I'm convinced that we won't understand some of this until it actually happens. Then it'll click. We'll say, “Say.... That sounds familiar. *That* was in *Revelation*. I didn't get it then, but I can see

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<sup>23</sup> **Narrator Jesus:** [Revelation 1:1a](#) – This is the revelation of Jesus Christ ...

[Revelation 1:2, 5](#) – Who testifies to everything he saw. This is the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. ... and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and has released us from our sins by His blood

[Revelation 22:16, 20](#) – “I, Jesus, have sent My angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright Morning Star.” ... He who testifies to these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

<sup>24</sup> **Narrator angels:** [Revelation 10:8-9](#) -- Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me again, saying, “Go, take the small scroll that lies open in the hand of the angel standing on the sea and on the land.” And I went to the angel and said, “Give me the small scroll.” “Take it and eat it,” he said. “It will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey.

[Revelation 17:1, 7](#) -- Then one of the seven angels with the seven bowls came and told me, “Come, I will show you the punishment of the great prostitute, who sits on many waters. ... “Why are you so amazed?” said the angel. “I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and ten horns

[Revelation 21:9](#) -- Then one of the seven angels with the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.

[Revelation 22:16](#) -- “I, Jesus, have sent My angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright Morning Star.

<sup>25</sup> **Narrator John:** [Revelation 1:1d](#) -- ... He made it known by sending His angel to His servant John

[Revelation 22:8](#) -- And I am John, who heard and saw these things. And when I had heard and seen them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had shown me these things

<sup>26</sup> **Audience:** [Revelation 1:1b](#) – This is the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants what must soon come to pass. He made it known by sending His angel to His servant John,

[Revelation 1:11](#) – Saying, “Write in a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.”

[Revelation 2:7](#) – He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will grant the right to eat from the tree of life in the Paradise of God.

[Revelation 22:16](#) – “I, Jesus, have sent My angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright Morning Star.”

<sup>27</sup> BGCT op cit.

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it now. And, having read it already, I'm prepared. I know what's going to happen, and I know what to do." But until then, there are parts that currently, we're humanly completely *unable* to understand.

### *Layers of meaning*

John often writes with several layers of meaning. We can read certain passages and ask, did he mean this or did he mean that? and often conclude that he intended to mean both. It's not either-or, it's both-and.

The more I read, the more I'm convinced that *Revelation* as a whole is intended to have at least three simultaneous layers of meaning:

- 1) It meant something to its **initial audience**, and that often had something to do with their persecution by Rome. They saw great encouragement that in spite of circumstances, God – not Rome – was (and is) in charge; and God would ultimately judge the Roman Empire for its sins. Not only is this instructive to us, but generally speaking a passage “cannot mean what it never meant”<sup>28</sup>. So interpretations inconsistent with this are suspect.
- 2) It also means something about what will actually happen at “**the end of the age**”, the end of time (or the times of the end); it's **prophecy – history before it happens** – about what will happen so that we, or those who will live through it – will be prepared and again encouraged. *Revelation* 1:3 <sup>29</sup> and several other passages clearly state that the book is prophetic.
- 3) It has **universal** meaning for all Christians and all churches of all time – lessons about God's love, protection, judgment, sovereignty, and what He requires of us: how we are to act in light thereof. After all, the God inspired the Bible and intended it for all of us of all ages<sup>30</sup>. “As the Muratorian Fragment (ca. AD 170) asserts, ‘John ... though he writes to seven churches, nevertheless speaks to all’ (lines 57- 60)”<sup>31</sup>

Any given passage can – and I think usually does – have meaning on *all* of these layers (and perhaps more) *at the same time*. As we discuss *Revelation* – particularly some of the problematic passages – it will help us to think of it on *each* of these levels.

Understanding *Revelation* is compounded by its use of several different types of literature, some of which are rather unusual and unfamiliar to 21st century ears.

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<sup>28</sup> Fee, Gordon and Douglas Stewart, 2014. [How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth](#). Zondervan Academic. 304 pgs. ISBN: 978-0310517825.

<sup>29</sup> **Prophetic:** [Revelation 1:3](#) – Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear and obey what is written in it, because the time is near.

<sup>30</sup> **Intended for all ages:** [Romans 15:4](#) -- For everything that was written in the past was written for our instruction, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures, we might have hope

[2 Timothy 3:16-17](#) -- All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for instruction, for conviction, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work

[2 Peter 1:20-21](#) -- Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture comes from one's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever brought forth by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit

<sup>31</sup> Quote from [NIV Zondervan Study Bible](#)

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### *Apocalyptic literature*

*Revelation* is apocalyptic literature.

“Apocalypse” is Greek for “revelation”. *Apocalyptic literature* is inspired writings about the end times and similar topics that can’t be figured out on our own but can only be revealed by God. Apocalyptic literature can appear like fantasy literature because it involves strange things unseen in the natural world and/or use of metaphorical, parabolic, and symbolic language similar to some poetry. Apocalyptic authors under persecution often used symbol, metaphor, and parable heavily to portray counter-cultural concepts to an “in crowd” (such as Christians) who would be more likely to understand it while the authorities (e.g., Romans) would hopefully view it as mere fantasy not worthy of note or persecution.

However, unseen things revealed by God can be difficult to distinguish from such symbols and metaphors, especially 2000 years later and in a different culture. This is compounded when future things are described that are so different than the present that they cannot be understood (or sometimes even recognized) until they actually happen. This makes understanding and interpretation difficult. Regarding this use of metaphor and symbol, “Revelation’s symbolic visions function like parables to encourage and exhort John’s readers and transform how they perceive the world.”<sup>32</sup>

### *Prophecy*

So *Revelation* is also prophecy<sup>33</sup>.

There are several ways to look at different kinds of prophecy. Perhaps most importantly, prophecy can be either *foretelling* the future or *forthtelling* God’s word either for the present or for all time. Sometimes prophecy can be both foretelling and forthtelling at the same time. *Revelation* appears to primarily include foretelling, but has both (see also “Layers of meaning”, above).

Here is a perspective that seems useful in looking at prophecy in the Book of *Revelation*:

*Verbal prophecy* is prophecy that is given by, or even dictated by, God. It is verbal prophecy when Isaiah says, “Thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone, A costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed. He who believes in it will not be disturbed.’”<sup>34</sup> Similarly, when he says, “Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?’ Then I said, ‘Here am I. Send me!’ He said, ‘Go, and tell this people: “Keep on listening but do not perceive; keep on looking but do not understand,” ’”<sup>35</sup> that is also verbal prophecy. Direct inspiration by God without explicit dictation of the exact words to use, can also be verbal prophecy.

*Visual prophecy* is visions given by the Lord and narrated by the prophet. The visions may be in dreams, or waking visions, or descriptions of being transported to Heaven or other places and

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<sup>32</sup> *NIV Zondervan Study Bible* op cit.

<sup>33</sup> **Revelation is prophecy:** [Revelation 1:3](#) -- Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this *prophecy*, and blessed are those who hear and obey what is written in it, because the time is near. [italic emphasis added]

<sup>34</sup> **God speaks in prophecy:** [Isaiah 28:16](#)

<sup>35</sup> **Another example:** [Isaiah 6:8-9](#)

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times, or some combination. When Isaiah describes Heaven in Isaiah 6:1-6 <sup>36</sup>, that's visual prophecy.

*Dramatic prophecy* is a prophetic message acted out for our benefit like a play. Ezekiel 4:1-3 <sup>37</sup>, where God tells Ezekiel to act out something that is an object lesson for Israel, is dramatic prophecy.

Unfortunately, these methods of prophecy may overlap and may be called by different terms. For instance, *experiential prophecy* is visual prophecy wherein the narrator is describing something that happened to him when he was actually transported to Heaven (as opposed to describing a visual phenomenon that he was told or inspired to describe without personally experiencing it himself). Theologians and poets may disagree, but this seems to me to be a hybrid, sort of halfway between visual and dramatic prophecy.

The Book of *Revelation* uses all of these methods of prophecy.

### Where – Heaven and Earth

*“There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.”*

*-- William Shakespeare, Hamlet, Act I, Scene v (lines 167-8)*

John received the revelations from the Lord while he was in Roman exile on the island of Patmos off the coast of what is today Turkey, near the city of Ephesus where John had been pastor and elder.

The things that the revelation describes take place both in the Near and Middle East on planet earth, and in Heaven.

### When – Past, Present, and Future

*Revelation 1:19 (BSB) – Therefore write down the things you have seen, and the things that are, and the things that will happen after this.*

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<sup>36</sup> **Visual prophecy example:** [Isaiah 6:1-6](#) – In the year that King Uzziah died, *I saw* the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted; and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above Him stood seraphim, each having six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling out to one another: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Hosts; all the earth is full of His glory.” At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook, and the temple was filled with smoke. Then I said: “Woe is me, for I am ruined, because I am a man of unclean lips dwelling among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of Hosts.” Then one of the seraphim flew to me, and in his hand was a glowing coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. [italic emphasis added]

<sup>37</sup> **Dramatic prophecy example:** [Ezekiel 4:1-3](#) -- “Now you, son of man, take a brick, place it before you, and draw on it the city of Jerusalem. Then lay siege against it: Construct a siege wall, build a ramp to it, set up camps against it, and place battering rams around it on all sides. Then take an iron plate and set it up as an iron wall between yourself and the city. Turn your face toward it so that it is under siege, and besiege it. This will be a sign to the house of Israel

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The Book of *Revelation* was written around AD 95-100, not long after John wrote the Gospel according to John, and the epistles of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John.

But now it gets tricky. The things described in the revelation take place in various timeframes from “soon”<sup>38</sup> (though “quickly” might be a better translation), through the end of time on earth, to the times in Heaven *after* the end, in the New Heaven and New Earth<sup>39</sup>. What’s more, it is quite possible (though somewhat unclear) that some of *Revelation* takes place at or near Creation on earth and/or in Heaven, or even in Heaven before the beginning of time. And it is also quite possible that the timeline of the book jumps forward and backward like flashbacks and flash-forwards in a novel or a movie. This, too, makes interpretation and understanding difficult.

As Paul Kroll points out, “John is not interested in chronology or creating a blueprint of end-time events.”<sup>40</sup> John describes what he’s been shown in different visions in Heaven, on Earth, in the past, present, and future, but he makes no attempt to fit it all together chronologically.

***What about Revelation 1:3, “the time is near”? It’s been 2000 years so far, and the clock’s still ticking. How is this “the time is near?”***

Time is relative. Greek has two words for time, at least one of which (this one) has several meanings. My online interlinear Bible and Strong’s concordance and dictionary prefer the translation, “the opportune time is near”. In other words, don’t delay or ignore this prophecy, because the time for “heeding the things which are written in it”<sup>41</sup> is near, in fact, it’s now. Once it actually happens, it’ll be too late.

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<sup>38</sup> **Soon:** [Revelation 1:1](#) -- This is the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants what must *soon* come to pass. He made it known by sending His angel to His servant John. [italic emphasis added]

<sup>39</sup> **After the end of earthly time:** [Revelation 21-22](#)

<sup>40</sup> Kroll, Paul, “Revelation 13 and its ‘beasts’ “, <https://www.gci.org/articles/revelation-13-and-its-beasts/>

<sup>41</sup> **The time is now:** [Revelation 1:3b](#) -- ... blessed are those who hear and obey what is written in it, because the time is near.

## Context and relationship to the rest of the Bible

*Revelation*, of course, is the last book and conclusion of the Bible and culmination and resolution of the story the Bible is telling.

*Revelation* is the ending “bookend” that frames, matches, and meshes perfectly with the beginning “bookend” of Genesis. Themes that are begun in Genesis and that wind through the whole Bible are concluded in *Revelation*. Ideas and visuals that are begun in Genesis are found again and concluded in *Revelation*. (see “Appendix - Genesis and Revelation: Bookends of the Bible”, below)

*Revelation* also complements and meshes well with prophecies by Daniel, Jesus in Matthew, Paul in Corinthians and Thessalonians, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and many other books of the Bible.

### *The conclusion and completion of the Bible*

The Bible tells the story of God and of Jesus Christ. Like any other story, it has themes, characters, a timeline, and a plot. We may not always see this clearly because the Bible is not set out chronologically. It is true nevertheless. And *Revelation* is the culmination, conclusion, and resolution of the plot. It completes the themes and ties up all the loose ends. In literary terms, it is both the (second) climax (since there are two) and the denouement of the story.

### *The overall plot and structure of the Bible story*

#### *What is the plot of the Bible and how does Revelation fit in?*

It’s the good, the bad, and the ugly – and the restoration.

#### *The intent, the plan—the good*

Before the beginning, even before Creation, there was always God. And He was always a Trinity. He was and is so great that one person has never been enough to encompass Him, as He’s actually one God with three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

God had such a great thing – *agape* love, which is His very nature – going amongst Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that He just *had* to share it with us. So He had to create us in order to share His love. But not being pure Spirit like Him, but having a physical body that has needs, He first had to create the earth to support us. And He had to create a universe to support *that*. So He created us and the entire universe to share His love.

So He did, and it was very good <sup>42</sup>

Now, for us to love God, He had to give us free will because robots can’t love. But that’s a risk because we could misuse our free will to reject Him or put something else before Him. Yet for that kind of love, it was worth that risk. So God did it.

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<sup>42</sup> **Creation was very good:** [Genesis 1:31a](#) -- And God looked upon all that He had made, and indeed, it was very good. ...

## A Revelation of Love

### *The problem—the bad*

Tragically, however, we did misuse our free will and put ourselves and other things first and rejected Him. This is how it happened:

God said, walk with Me here in the Garden in fellowship, walk this way. But we said, no, *I'd* rather go *that* way. Now, when eternal life itself, *Himself*, goes one way and we choose to go the other way, *we've* separated *ourselves* from eternal life. That's about as good a definition of sin as I've ever heard of. Now, what is that called, separating ourselves from eternal life? Eternal death, of course – and after all too short a time, physical death also, since we're unconnected from Life.

So who caused the Fall, the separation from God? We did; you and I did; we chose to go our own way apart from God. Adam first acted it out for us, but we did it. But Satan did, also. He's the one who tempted Adam and tempts us; he's the one who's goading us on and putting us up to it; he's the one who's trying to pull the strings behind the scenes. We fell for it, acted on it, and are culpable. But at the same time, so is Satan. Fortunately, his power is limited!

### *The battle for the heart—it could get ugly*

Unfortunately, that doesn't stop Satan from his narcissistic plan for world domination – indeed, his plan to un-seat God Himself and usurp His throne as ruler of the universe. He'll stop at nothing to achieve his goal, and he doesn't care about collateral damage. In fact, he'll try to take as many casualties as possible.

*“Now we are engaged in a great civil war.”*

*—from Lincoln's Gettysburg Address*

So, like it or not, we're caught up in the great cosmic war between good and evil, God and Satan. In fact, we're foot soldiers in the war. We're either on God's side as soldiers in God's army or we're on Satan's side as Satan's, perhaps unwitting, minions. There is no fence sitting. We shouldn't be surprised if there are casualties.

What's the prize? Our souls. Our eternity. And the world itself. More specifically, God's plan has always been to restore things to the way they were originally intended before the Fall – to restore us to loving fellowship with Him. That, of course, requires that we repent from our sins, turn around 180 degrees and stop going our own way, and believe in Him as our Lord and Savior. If we fail to do so, Satan ultimately owns us and our destiny is the same as his<sup>43</sup>. If we repent and believe, we've not only been saved from destruction but have enlisted in God's army.

As members of God's body of saved believers, the church, the Body of Christ, we are God's hands and feet on earth to do His will, as He, the Head of the Body, decides. This involves a life of gradual sanctification as we are being conformed into His image; spreading the Good News of salvation so that many others may be saved; helping others; engaging in spiritual warfare when the battle turns in our direction; and doing whatever other things He specifically wants us to do at any given moment. Sounds like the US Army: training, recruiting, humanitarian relief, combat, and “other duties as assigned”.

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<sup>43</sup> **If we don't follow God, Satan owns us and we're doomed:** [Revelation 20:10, 15](#) -- And the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, into which the beast and the false prophet had already been thrown. There they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. ... And if anyone was found whose name was not written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire

## Background, setting, and intro to Revelation

Fortunately, the battle's already won. Christ won it for us on the cross when God came to earth and paid our death penalty for us. But that hasn't stopped Satan. It's similar to the Battle of New Orleans which was fought after the official end of the War of 1812 because the word hadn't yet gotten to Louisiana. Satan (presumably) does know his fate, but he continues to fight and wants to take as many casualties with him as possible.

It's important to note that none of this is describing the Great Tribulation and battles of *Revelation*. That's quite another thing and we'll get to it later. This is the body of the whole Bible from Genesis 4 to Jude, this is normal life as we know it.

*Everything restored to the way it was always intended*

Nevertheless, the end is sure. There has never been any doubt about it. Satan is *greatly* mismatched. God wins in the end. And when He does, He restores all things to the way He originally intended them before Creation – fellowship together with Him and harmony with each other<sup>44</sup>.

So it begins in Genesis, “Once upon a time long, long ago...” and ends in the New Heaven in *Revelation* “And they lived happily ever after.” How is that anything less than the epic story of all epic stories!??

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<sup>44</sup> God restores all things in the end: [Revelation 21-22](#)

## Summary and overview of the book of *Revelation*

That is the plot of the story of the Bible, and *Revelation* is its final chapters, its denouement.

But what is the *theme* of the Bible? There are several recurring themes in the Bible, but the major theme throughout the entire Bible, both Old Testament and New Testament, is Jesus Christ and His redemption of us – the “scarlet thread of redemption”.

The entire Old Testament promises, points to, and prophecies of Jesus and His redemption; the Gospels tell of His life on earth and what He did for us; the Book of Acts tells what He continued to do through the Holy Spirit; the New Testament letters explain it and show how we should apply it in our lives; and *Revelation* completes the story and brings it to fruition with Jesus’ Second Coming and His restoration of all things.

### *Theme(s) of Revelation*

“*Revelation*’s theological message is that God sovereignly rules now and will defeat evil, vindicate his suffering church, and consummate his kingdom. *Revelation*’s theological message *challenges* readers to repent of and resist worldly compromise, spiritual complacency, and false teaching<sup>45</sup>. It also *encourages* and *strengthens* believers to hold fast to their testimony about Jesus, steadfastly

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<sup>45</sup> **Challenge to repent and resist:** [Revelation 2:14-16](#) -- But I have a few things against you, because some of you hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to place a stumbling block before the Israelites so they would eat food sacrificed to idols and commit sexual immorality. In the same way, some of you also hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. Therefore repent! Otherwise I will come to you shortly and wage war against them with the sword of My mouth

[Revelation 2:20-23](#) -- But I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads My servants to be sexually immoral and to eat food sacrificed to idols. Even though I have given her time to repent of her immorality, she is unwilling. Behold, I will cast her onto a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her will suffer great tribulation unless they repent of her deeds. Then I will strike her children dead, and all the churches will know that I am the One who searches minds and hearts, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds

[Revelation 3:2-3](#) -- Wake up and strengthen what remains, which was about to die; for I have found your deeds incomplete in the sight of My God. Remember, then, what you have received and heard. Keep it and repent. If you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know the hour when I will come upon you

[Revelation 3:15-19](#) -- I know your deeds; you are neither cold nor hot. How I wish you were one or the other! So because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to vomit you out of My mouth! You say, ‘I am rich; I have grown wealthy and need nothing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked. I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, white garments so that you may be clothed and your shameful nakedness not exposed, and salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. Those I love, I rebuke and discipline. Therefore be earnest and repent

## Background, setting, and intro to Revelation

endure trials, and resiliently hope in God's present and future reign (1:9; 2:10; 3:11; 12:17; 14:12; 22:7 46)."<sup>47</sup> (See also "Purpose", above.)

As noted above, major themes in *Revelation* include:

- **Love** – Believe it or not, *Revelation* is all about God's love, and ...
- **Jesus Christ**, Who comes back for us, as He promised, for the purpose of ...
- **Redemption and restoration** to the way God always intended things to be when He initially created us; in other words, ...
- **Completion** of what God began in Genesis and in John 1

### *God's love*

It seems to me, rather unexpectedly, that **the major theme of *Revelation* is God's love!** Not doom and gloom, not tribulation, not beasties and battles, but God's love. (By the way, some people are too scared of this to even want to *read* the Book of *Revelation*. But one of the implications of this theme of God's love is that there's nothing for us to fear in reading this book.)

Amazingly, all those things are incidental side effects of His love. God's very nature is love, and He loves *all* the people He has created. He doesn't want *anyone* to reject Him and perish, but wants *everyone* to repent, turn to Him, and be saved<sup>48</sup>. God loves us so much that He will do anything it takes to make this happen – including even coming to earth in the form of Jesus and

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<sup>46</sup> **Encourages and strengthens:** [Revelation 1:9](#) -- I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance that are in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and my testimony about Jesus

[Revelation 2:10](#) -- Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Look, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison to test you, and you will suffer tribulation for ten days. Be faithful even unto death, and I will give you the crown of life

[Revelation 3:11](#) -- I am coming soon. Hold fast to what you have, so that no one will take your crown

[Revelation 12:17](#) -- And the dragon was enraged at the woman, and went to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And the dragon stood on the shore of the sea

[Revelation 14:12](#) -- Here is a call for the endurance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus

[Revelation 22:7](#) -- "Behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of prophecy in this book.

<sup>47</sup> NIV Zondervan Study Bible op cit.

<sup>48</sup> **God desires everyone to be saved:** [2 Peter 3:9](#) -- The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some understand slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish but everyone to come to repentance

[1 Timothy 2:4](#) -- Who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth

[Ezekiel 18:23, 32](#) -- Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? declares the Lord GOD. Wouldn't I prefer that he turn from his ways and live? ... For I take no pleasure in anyone's death, declares the Lord GOD. So repent and live

[John 3:16-17](#) -- For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that everyone who believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him

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dying on the cross to pay our death penalty for us. (Of course, it doesn't work unless we *accept* Who He is and what He did for us.)

In *Revelation*, we can see two of God's major tactics to get people to repent and believe: He uses both a carrot and a stick. In love, God invites us and even entices us to come to Him. That's the carrot, and that's most of the New Testament and the early parts of *Revelation*. But if that doesn't work, if we still don't come, then He uses the stick to *drive* us to Him. That's the middle part of *Revelation*, the tribulations, battles and beasties, doom and gloom. They're all intended to drive unbelievers to Him to beg for relief, recognize Him for Who He is, repent, and believe. This may be wrathful and punishing, but there's actually no real judgment until the very end, and that is only for those who have refused to ever believe no matter what.

Note that this all applies to unsaved unbelievers<sup>49</sup>. Believers are already in God's court, Kingdom, and care. They don't need to be driven. The tribulations, battles, beasties, doom and gloom is not designed or intended for believers. This is why we need not fear the Book of *Revelation* or what it depicts of the future: The bad stuff doesn't apply to us; only the good stuff applies to believers (possible collateral damage notwithstanding).

But the bottom line is that the Book of *Revelation* is all about God's love, to take any means necessary to get the maximum number of people to turn to Him, believe, be saved, and spend eternity with Him.

### Summary of Revelation

As noted above, the two-word summary of the entire Book of *Revelation* (and the Bible, for that matter) is "God wins" or, if you prefer, "God wins in the end". But I think a much better summary would be, "God wins; there's nothing to fear." There has never been any doubt of the outcome, and *Revelation* shows this. But there's more to it than that; and again, it's really all about God's love. Nevertheless, God's ultimate triumph is very encouraging – and very true.

### Structure of Revelation

So let's look at the structure and flow of *Revelation* in a little more detail.

There are three major sections of the Book of *Revelation*:

- Christ and His church (Rev 1-3)
- Bothers, battles, and beasties<sup>50</sup> (Rev 4-18) [that's the "stick"]

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<sup>49</sup> **Only harm those not sealed for God's love and ownership:** [Revelation 9:4](#) – They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any plant or tree, but only those who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads

[Romans 8:31-32, 35, 37-39](#) – What then shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also, along with Him, freely give us all things. ... Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword. ... No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor principalities, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

<sup>50</sup> Some call the body of *Revelation* things like "The Judge and the Judgments" or something similar. But that's misleading because the true and final judgment doesn't come until Chapter 20.

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- The King and His Kingdom (Rev 19-22) [that's the restoration]

We'll see the details of this structure as we go through the chapters. But a summary of the structure of the chapters is something like this:

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Christ and His church                          | (Rev 1-3)      |
| 1) Prologue: Christ, Church, and Commissioning | (Rev 1)        |
| 2) Seven warning letters to churches:          | (Rev 2-3)      |
| – Ephesus                                      | (Rev 2:1-7)    |
| – Smyrna                                       | (Rev 2:8-11)   |
| – Pergamum                                     | (Rev 2:12-17)  |
| – Thyatira                                     | (Rev 2:18-29)  |
| – Sardis                                       | (Rev 3:1-6)    |
| – Philadelphia                                 | (Rev 3:7-13)   |
| – Laodicea                                     | (Rev 3:14-22)  |
| Bothers, battles, and beasties                 | (Rev 4-18)     |
| Intro  | (Rev 4-5)      |
| 3) God's Throne Room                           | (Rev 4)        |
| 4) The Lamb of God and scroll with seals       | (Rev 5)        |
| By the numbers: Seals, Trumpets, Bowls, etc    | (Rev 6-18)     |
| 5) First six seals                             | (Rev 6)        |
| 6) An interlude preserving God's people        | (Rev 7)        |
| 7) 7th seal and first 6 trumpets               | (Rev 8-9)      |
| 8) The angel and the bittersweet scroll        | (Rev 10)       |
| 9) Two Witnesses                               | (Rev 11.1-14)  |
| 10) 7th Trump and Christ's eternal reign       | (Rev 11.14-19) |
| 11) The woman, the dragon, and war             | (Rev 12)       |
| 12) Two unholy beasts                          | (Rev 13)       |
| 13) 2nd 144K and Grapes of Wrath               | (Rev 14)       |
| 14) Bowls of wrath                             | (Rev 15-16)    |
| 15) The harlot, the beast, and Babylon         | (Rev 17)       |
| 16) Babylon's destruction & world response     | (Rev 18)       |
| The King and His Kingdom                       | (Rev 19-22)    |
| 17) Rejoicing in Heaven                        | (Rev 19.1-8)   |
| 18) Christ's triumphant return                 | (Rev 19.7-21)  |
| 19) The defeat of Satan & reign of Christ      | (Rev 20.1-10)  |

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- 20) The final judgment (Rev 20.11-15)
- 21) New Heaven and New Earth (Rev 21.1-9)
- 22) New Jerusalem (Rev 21.10-22.5)
- 23) Conclusion – *Come!* (Rev 22.6-21)

### ***So What? What should we do about it?***

***What is Jesus asking and commissioning you to do?***

***How will you do what Jesus is asking you to do?***

***Does Jesus have our church well in hand? How does He walk amidst our church?***

## Appendix - Genesis and Revelation: Bookends of the Bible

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The Bible is all a single, true Story from beginning to end. The last part of the last book in the Bible reads like the close of the Story begun in the first part of the first book in the Bible. That's no accident. In a sense, they're the "bookends" that frame the Bible. Like any other story, the Bible not only has characters and themes and chapters, but it has a plot. Genesis begins the great Story; and Revelation ends it, draws it to a conclusion, and ties up all the loose ends. Genesis and Revelation mesh together as perfectly as fingers in praying hands.

Here's a comparison --

| <b><i>Beginnings in Genesis:</i></b>  | <b><i>The end in Revelation:</i></b>   |
|---|--|
| "In the beginning God created the Heavens and Earth" ( <a href="#">Gen 1:1</a> )  | "I saw a New Heaven and a New Earth" ( <a href="#">Rev 21:1</a> )  |
| Holy Spirit of God "broods" over creation ( <a href="#">Gen 1:2</a> )             | Holy Spirit of God invites, "Come!" ( <a href="#">Rev 22:17</a> )  |
| God created first heavens and first Earth ( <a href="#">Gen 1:1-3</a> )           | God created the New Heaven and New Earth ( <a href="#">Gen 21</a> )  |
| "The darkness He called night" ( <a href="#">Gen 1:5</a> )                        | "There shall be no night here" ( <a href="#">Rev 21:25</a> )   |
| "God made the two great lights [Sun and Moon]" ( <a href="#">Gen 1:16</a> )       | "The city has no need of the Sun nor the Moon" ( <a href="#">Rev 21:23</a> )   |
| "The gathering together of waters He called the sea" ( <a href="#">Gen 1:10</a> ) | "And the sea is no more" ( <a href="#">Rev 21:1</a> )  |
| Man lived in a special garden (Eden) ( <a href="#">Gen 2:8-9</a> )                | Believers live in a special new garden in the New Jerusalem ( <a href="#">Rev 22:1-2</a> )                             |
| Tree of life in the garden ( <a href="#">Gen 2:9</a> )                            | Tree(s?) of life in the New Jerusalem ( <a href="#">Rev 22:2</a> )   |
| Man's primeval home was by a river, as seen in <a href="#">Genesis 2:10</a>       | Man's eternal Home will be beside a river, as seen in <a href="#">Revelation 22:1</a>                                  |
| "In the day you eat thereof you shall surely 'die'" ( <a href="#">Gen 2:17</a> )  | "Death shall be no more" ( <a href="#">Rev 21:4</a> )  |
| Bride formed for her husband ( <a href="#">Gen 2:21-23</a> )                      | Bride adorned for her husband ( <a href="#">Rev 21:2</a> ); wedding supper of the Lamb ( <a href="#">Rev 19.7-10</a> ) |
| Satan appears as deceiver of mankind in <a href="#">Genesis 3:1, 4</a>            | Satan disappears Forever in <a href="#">Revelation 20:10</a>   |
| Shown a garden into which defilement entered ( <a href="#">Gen 3:6-7</a> )        | Shown a city into which defilement will never enter ( <a href="#">Rev 21:27</a> )                                      |

## A Revelation of Love

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Walk of God with man interrupted ( <a href="#">Gen 3:8-10</a> )                      | Walk of God with man resumed ( <a href="#">Rev 21:3</a> )  |
| Initial triumph of the serpent / Satan ( <a href="#">Gen 3:13</a> )                  | Ultimate triumph of the Lamb ( <a href="#">Rev 20:10; 22:3</a> )   |
| Redeemer promised ( <a href="#">Gen 3:15</a> )                                       | Redemption accomplished ( <a href="#">Rev 5:9-10</a> )   |
| Christ the seed of the woman ( <a href="#">Gen 3:15</a> )                            | Christ the root and descendant of David ( <a href="#">Rev 22:16</a> )  |
| “I will greatly multiply your pain” ( <a href="#">Gen 3:16</a> )                     | “Neither shall there be pain any more” ( <a href="#">Rev 21:4</a> )  |
| “I will greatly multiply your sorrow” ( <a href="#">Gen 3:16</a> )                   | “There shall be no more death or sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain” ( <a href="#">Rev 21:4</a> ) |
| “Cursed is the ground for your sake” ( <a href="#">Gen 3:17</a> )                    | “There shall be no more curse” ( <a href="#">Rev 22:3</a> )  |
| Daily sorrow ( <a href="#">Gen 3:17</a> )  | “There shall be no more sorrow” ( <a href="#">Rev 22:3</a> )   |
| Man’s dominion broken in the fall of the first man Adam ( <a href="#">Gen 3:19</a> ) | Man’s dominion restored in the rule of the new man, Jesus Christ ( <a href="#">Rev 22:5</a> )                      |
| Return to the dust ( <a href="#">Gen 3:19</a> )                                      | No more death ( <a href="#">Rev 21:4</a> )   |
| God made them clothing of skins ( <a href="#">Gen 3:21</a> )                         | God dressed believers in clean, white, fine linen ( <a href="#">Rev 19:14</a> )                                    |
| They were driven from the Tree of Life in <a href="#">Genesis 3:22-24</a>            | The Tree of Life re-appears and access to it restored in <a href="#">Revelation 22:2</a>                           |
| First paradise closed ( <a href="#">Gen 3:23</a> )                                   | New paradise opened ( <a href="#">Rev 21:25</a> )  |
| They were driven from God’s Presence in <a href="#">Genesis 3:24</a>                 | “They shall see His face” ( <a href="#">Rev 22:4</a> )   |

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I find it amazing, don’t you?

Suggested further readings about Genesis and Revelation –

- Halley, Henry, 1965. [\*Halley's Bible Handbook: an Abbreviated Bible Commentary\*](#). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. Page 740.
- Wilkinson, Bruce and Boa, Kenneth, 2005. [\*Talk Thru the Bible\*](#).. Nashville: Thomas Nelson. Page 515.

## Appendix - Genesis and Revelation: Bookends of the Bible

- Garland, Tony. “13.8 Genesis and Revelation as Bookmarks”, <https://www.bibles-tudytools.com/commentaries/revelation/introduction/genesis-and-revelation-as-bookends.html>
- “[Paradise Restored \(NZSB\)](#)”, *The NIV Zondervan Study Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. Kindle Edition eBook(Kindle Locations 296468-296482).