



# The Canadian *Lord's Day* Association

## Bible Course Acts to Revelation Lesson 69

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Revelation

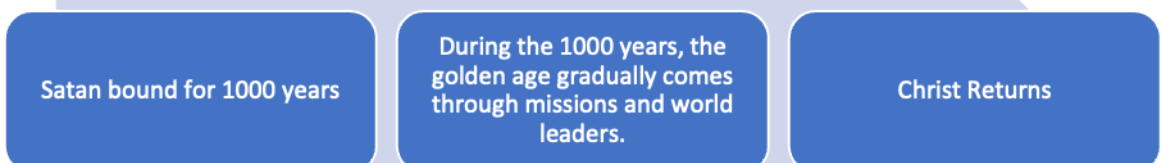
The book of Revelation was written by the apostle John on the island of Patmos approximately 90 – 96 A.D. during the time of persecution by the emperor Domitian. Revelation is written to the seven churches in particular and also to the church as a whole. In general, Christians today almost ignore the book except for a few well-known texts. Large portions of the book are unfamiliar to us.

Since the book of Revelation addresses the last days, often the “millennium views” are incorporated into discussions about this book. The millennium views are based on Revelations 20 where John speaks of Satan being bound for 1000 years. Briefly, the three predominant views of the last days are:

**Premillennialism** The view that the second coming of Christ will come before the 1000 years that “Satan is bound.” This view tends to view God’s kingdom as physical and national while the rest of Revelation views the kingdom as spiritual and worldwide. Premillennialists view Christ’s kingdom in the future, when it is already being formed.



**Postmillennialism** The view that is the same as premillennialism except that the second coming of Christ will be after the 1000 years that Satan is bound. This still puts Christ’s kingdom in the future rather than a present reality and makes it a physical rather than spiritual kingdom. Postmillennialists think that the world will get better and better over the 1000 years. The Bible indicates that the end will be a perilous time (II Tim 3:1-9, II Thess. 3, Matt 24, II Peter 3).



**Amillennialism** The view that the 1000 years is a symbolic period of time. The millennium is not a future but present reality. The 1000 years is 10 x 10 x 10: a number of fullness or the entire gospel age. Revelation is a symbolic vision. The images are not consistent with a literal interpretation.

The word “Revelation” means “unveiled.” Similarly, the word used often today: “apocalypse,” means to unveil. The first verse of Revelation begins, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ.” Revelation was written to comfort God’s people in the midst of persecution by showing what will be coming and confirming that God is in control and Christ already is the victor over Satan and his angels. This is why Jesus says to John, “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand” (Revelation 1:3).

There will be many unusual things in this book of the Bible and to understand them we need to approach Revelation differently. Studying Revelation is like visiting a foreign country. The person who first studies the culture and language will have an advantage. So the most beneficial reading of Revelation also requires some background study. Remember overall that Revelation has everything to do with Jesus Christ and not so much about specific events in world history. It is not a horoscope to determine future events. To understand the symbols, it helps to learn how the symbol was used in the old Testament or by Christ or by the apostles.

There are five views of interpreting Revelation:

- **Preterist** The book of Revelation should be understood only in terms of John’s day. The events are mostly complete by John’s death. The statement, “to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass” are now complete. According to this view, Revelation has no significance for today except as a memento of past history.
- **Historicist** The 7 churches referred to 7 ages and the book of Revelation gives a preview of church history from Christ’s birth to the end of the world. Some of the symbols have been fulfilled in great events of history. Others are yet to be fulfilled.
- **Futurist** This view also feels that the book of Revelation addresses church history and that chapters 4 – 22 are events that lie in the future and will occur prior and during Christ’s return (premillennial view). Many also believe that the letters to the seven churches represent seven ages of Church history from the first to the second coming of Christ. This view gives no comfort for John’s day nor for the church of today since it always is in the future.
- **Idealist** Events and personages must not be regarded as historical but as symbolical, illustrating the great conflict between the good and the evil. Revelation principles apply to all since we have always been living in the last days. The symbolism should be understood practically to give comfort to the church of all ages.
- **Eclectic** This approach takes the strengths of the previous approaches. The Reformed view is the Eclectic view with a heavy emphasis on the Idealist approach.

Revelation offers cyclical accounts (see also More than Conquerors by Hendrickson). There is one revelation with seven different views, visions, or angles. The seven sections of the book (1-3, 4-7, 8-11, 12-14, 15-16, 17-19, 20-22) expound four themes:

1. Comfort for believers in persecution
2. God's controls all things
3. Christ's revelation of His glorious, complete, and final victory over Satan and his followers
4. Warning for unbelievers of fast coming judgment

Our response should be that of John (Rev. 1:17) to fall at the feet of Christ overwhelmed with fear, awe, and worship.

1. Who is the author of Revelation? \_\_\_\_\_
2. To whom was it written? \_\_\_\_\_
3. When and where was Revelation written? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Match the following.

_____ a. Christ will come before the 1000 years that Satan is bound.	1. Amillennialist
_____ b. Christ will come after the 1000 years that Satan is bound.	2. Apocalypse
_____ c. Revelation only applies to the time of John.	3. Futurist
_____ d. Revelation is church history through the ages.	4. Historicist
_____ e. Revelation is mainly events before and during the 2 <sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ.	5. Idealist
_____ f. Revelation contains principles for all of church history.	6. Postmillennialist
_____ g. The 1000 year reign of Christ is symbolic.	7. Premillennialist
_____ h. To unveil or uncover.	8. Preterist

*Read Revelation 1:1-8*

*John shows no evidence of anger, sorrow, or despair at his exile to Patmos. John rejoiced to be where God wanted him to be. Are we happy with our place?*

John, now over 90 years old and the last living apostle, writes to the seven churches of Asia – real churches in western Turkey. The number seven is used often as a number of completion. Revelation is written to the complete church. The seven churches, although real churches, represent seven types or kinds of churches. John's exile to a small, lonely island was God's way of providing His word and the testimony of Christ to the church of all ages.

5. John writes to the seven churches with a focus on each person in the Trinity.

- a. The Father: Grace be unto you, and peace, from \_\_\_\_\_  
which \_\_\_\_\_ and which \_\_\_\_\_,  
and which \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. The Spirit: ...and from the seven (complete, number of fullness)  
\_\_\_\_\_ which are before His throne.
- c. The Son: ...And from \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, who is:
  - i. The \_\_\_\_\_ - He  
is a Savior that gave everything and is faithful to His promises.
  - ii. The first \_\_\_\_\_ of the  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - iii. And the \_\_\_\_\_ of the  
\_\_\_\_\_ of the earth. Domitian, Nero, Caesar are  
all under Christ.
  - iv. I am \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
(v. 8).

Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_

### *Meditation*

Before any creatures were, He was: One with the infinitely perfect, good, and glorious God. He was then all that He afterwards showed Himself to be. Creation and redemption did not change Him. They only revealed what He was before. They only provided objects for those beams of glory to rest upon, that were shining as fully before, from all eternity.

He is the brightness of His Father's glory, and the express image of His person. All the purity, majesty, and love of Jehovah, dwell fully in Him. He is the bright and morning Star; He is the Sun of righteousness, and the Light of the world; He is the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the valleys—fairer than the children of men. His riches are infinite; He could say, "All that the Father hath is mine." He is Lord of all. All the crowns in heaven were cast at His feet; all angels and seraphs were His servants; all worlds His domain.

The feet were human that stood upon Mount Olivet. The eyes were human eyes that looked down upon the dazzling city. The tears were human tears that fell upon the ground. But oh, there was the tenderness of God beating beneath that mantle. Look and live, sinners. Look and live. Behold your God. He that hath seen a weeping Christ hath seen the Father. This is God manifest in the flesh.

Gems of Robert Murray McCheyne