

READING REVELATION:

**Finding the Good News
in the Scariest Book of the Bible**

Wayne C. Kannaday

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About the Author

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About the Contributor for the Youth Options

Deacon Deborah Poole serves as the SC Synod Coordinator for Children and Youth. She recently retired after 30 years as Coordinator for Family Ministries at Mt. Hermon (1993-2005) and Pisgah (2005-2023) Lutheran Churches. Deborah lives in Lexington, and enjoys reading and gardening.

Scripture Studies from the South Carolina Synod

During the South Carolina Synod Assembly in 2023, a Resolution on *Living into the Unity of the Body of Christ* was presented and adopted. The hope of this resolution was to encourage our congregations to unite in the study of Scripture and renew their love for the sacred texts by taking a deeper look together at even the challenging passages that can be difficult to understand in our current contexts. We recognize that the Scriptures were originally written in Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic and that the collection of books was initially intended for people who lived several thousand years ago, but we also know that the Scriptures are God's living Word for us today. So, how can we best study Scripture and what can they mean for our growth in faith and life?

A group of leaders in the South Carolina Synod were gathered to serve as the Synod Bible Team to collaborate on ways we could fulfill the hope of the Resolution. Knowing that Bible Study is best done together and not alone, this Bible Team has worked together over the past year to create materials that can be used with small groups in any congregation. Our hope is that these studies will be a blessing to all who use them.

These Studies are being shared in two sections. Section One will be sent out in May 2024 to allow leaders to prepare for group studies that may be used beginning August 2024 through January 2025. Section Two will be shared in the Fall of 2024 to allow leaders to prepare for group studies that may be used beginning February through July 2025. In an effort to make this user friendly we did not date any of the courses. You may use them in whatever order you wish, and you may claim the flexibility to use the material in a timeline that suits the needs in your context. Each Study also includes questions and/or activities that can be used to supplement the study when offered to Youth.

The South Carolina Synod Bible Team includes: Josh Kestner, Josh Knutson, Shelley Allen, Steven Gallego, Kevin Ogilvie, Lisa Isenhower, Bobby Morris, Joanna Gragg, Libby Bedenbaugh, Arden Hallman, Heather Apel, Deborah Poole, Wayne Kannaday, Ginny Aebischer.

Section One Studies:

1. Introduction to What that Bible is and What the Bible is not
2. Themes in the Gospel according to Luke
3. What Child is This? How the Old Testament Prepares us for the Coming of God's Messiah
4. Jesus is born: Matthew and Luke's Birth Stories
5. Reading Revelation: Finding Good News in the Scariest Book of the Bible
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It has been said, "Jesus didn't even mention many of the issues that divide us, but Jesus did have something important to say about unity." (see John 17)

Blessings in your Study of Scripture,
+Bishop Ginny Aebischer

**READING REVELATION:
Finding the Good News
in the Scariest Book of the Bible**

Session One: Introducing the Scariest Book in the Bible

Theme

Reading Revelation with faithful understanding requires us to get beyond our anxiety about the book and recognize its genre, context, and purpose.

Text

The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place; he made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, ² who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. ³ Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear and who keep what is written in it; for the time is near. (Rev. 1:1-3 NRSV)

Note: Time will not permit us to read all of Revelation in class together. For our purposes we will recommend reading the following passages over the four weeks of this course. Of course, you may extend the number of sessions and delve deeper into the Revelation as you wish.

Week 1	Revelation 1:1-20; Revelation 2:1-3:22
Week 2	Revelation 4:1-7:17
Week 3	Revelation 12:1-13:18
Week 4	Revelation 19:1-20:3; 21:1-11, 22-27; 22:1-21

The Scariest Book in the Bible

Revelation is for many the scariest book of the Bible. Granted, its dramatic imagery can prove baffling and its unfamiliar literary devices impenetrable. But this alone simply means that the book is challenging and invites study (as do many books of scripture). That is why we have designed this course.

What is scary about the Revelation, in actual fact, is not the book itself but how some have misrepresented and misinterpreted it so that it has become a text of terror. For example, since the 19th century, various revivalists and cult leaders have read into the Revelation clues for predicting the second coming of Christ and the great judgment. Novelists and filmmakers have sensationalized and subverted its content into troubling storylines about being left behind at the rapture (which is not a biblical concept) or suffering the horrors of something called Armageddon or being plunged into a lake of fire or falling victim to some sinister Satanic beast.

1. *What wild things have you heard associated with the Revelation?*
2. *Have you ever read any books or heard any sermons or seen any movies that use Revelation (or imagery from it) in ways that you find puzzling or disturbing?*

Context and Genre

The author of this book, known as John the seer, wrote this to his readers (identified as the seven churches in Asia Minor) not to frighten them but to inspire them, not to make them afraid but bold, not to alarm them but to encourage them. The core of his message centers not on the end of the world but on the establishment of heaven on earth, not on the terrifying nature of Satan but on the awe-inspiring nature of God, and not on a distant future but on “what must soon take place” (1:1). Since we are told John was on the island of Patmos in exile, we can deduce that he and his churches were enduring a situation of hostile persecution. In other words, in this book John is preaching good news in tough times to the churches he shepherds. That’s what makes this book relevant for readers of all times and places.

Specifically, the seer is told to write three things: “what you have seen, what is, and what is to take place after this” (1:19). These three subjects serve as the organizing framework of the book. What John has just seen is a vision of the Son of Man commanding him to write; this is the substance of the first chapter. In writing “what is” John addresses a letter to each of his seven churches, indicating how well he knows them by referencing both their marks of faithfulness and their flaws; these letters appear in chapters 2-3.

Chapters 4-22 report what is (soon) to take place, but these chapters do so employing elements of the literary genre known as “apocalypse” or “apocalyptic literature.” Apocalypses characteristically involve a supernatural entity revealing to a human recipient through dreams, ecstatic visions, or heavenly journeys some divine message, cosmic mystery or relevant future. They also feature highly symbolic imagery drawn from the Bible, Mesopotamian mythology, Greco-Roman philosophy, numerology, and more. Most apocalypses are written *pseudonymously*, that is, by a writer claiming to be some revered spiritual hero from the ancient past.

This final section of Revelation, then, bears many of the marks of an apocalypse. A supernatural entity (God/Jesus) reveals to the human (John the seer) through visions and a heavenly journey (see chapter 4:1) a divine message of hope that God through Jesus will intervene in the readers’ current dire situation in a timely and relevant way. In terms of authorship, however, Revelation is not pseudonymous. The writer is not pretending to be some ancient spiritual hero, but represents himself as the spiritual leader of the congregations of Asia Minor to whom he addresses the book.

Purpose

Let us close with a word about purpose. Notice the first five words of the book: “The Revelation of Jesus Christ...” The original Greek word we translate as “revelation” literally means “to unveil, to remove the cover.” And both the source and content of the revelation is “Jesus Christ.”

Did you ever read with your kids any of the “Where’s Waldo” books? These books were characterized by busy, complex illustrations of Waldo’s travels and adventures in which Waldo in his signature red-stripped shirt and jeans always appeared but could be very hard to spot. So, despite the complicated intricacy of people and things on every page, the real object was to locate Waldo.

Apply that principle to the Revelation. Think of it as a “Where’s Jesus?” book. Look for him in the various scenes across the book. This is the key to unlocking the meaning of the Revelation: the purpose of the book is to reveal Jesus! Unlike Waldo, however, Jesus appears in a number of guises. Here he is the Son of Man, wearing a white robe and a golden sash with eyes like flame of fire (1:12-18); there he is the great Lion of Judah who looks like a Lamb with seven horns (5:1-14). Over there he is the newborn child of a woman clothed with the sun threatened by a dragon (12:1-6); later he appears as a rider bearing the inscription “King of kings and Lord of lords” (19:11-16). And that’s not all. Look for all the different ways Jesus shows up. Enjoy detecting Jesus throughout the book.

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

3. *What in today’s reading surprised you or intrigued you? Was anything new?*
4. *What are the three things Jesus told John the seer to write? How do they serve as a framework for the book?*
5. *How would you explain to a friend what we learned and discussed, such as what an apocalypse is or the Son of Man or what/who is revealed in the Revelation?*
6. *What ideas or insights will you take away from today’s session?*
7. *Did anything in the session speak to you personally about your own faith journey or about the work of the people of God?*
8. *What questions remain for you? (Let’s bring them with us into subsequent sessions?)*

Session 2: Letters to the Seven Churches

Theme

We survey the first of the letters to John's seven churches, this one addressed to the congregation at Ephesus, in order to understand the framework of the book and the pattern for understanding the message to each of the churches.

Text

"To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands: ²I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance. I know that you cannot tolerate evildoers; you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them to be false. ³ I also know that you are enduring patiently and bearing up for the sake of my name, and that you have not grown weary. ⁴ But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. ⁵Remember then from what you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. ⁶ Yet this is to your credit: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. ⁷ Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To everyone who conquers, I will give permission to eat from the tree of life that is in the paradise of God. (Rev. 2:1-7 NRSV)

Review and Introduction

Last time we recognized the threefold framework of the book of the Revelation. The seer was told to write (1) what he had seen, (2) what is, and (3) what is to take place soon after (1:19). The core of that first chapter describes *what he had seen*, namely Jesus in the guise of "*the Son of Man*," with a face like the sun, hair white as wool, eyes like fire, feet like bronze walking among seven golden lampstands, with a voice like the sound of many waters (think thunderous waterfall) emanating from a mouth from which issues a two-edged sword and holding in his hand seven stars. When the seer falls down to worship him, the Son of Man tells him not to be afraid for he is the first and the last, the one who was dead and is now alive forever, possessing the keys of Death and Hades (1:12-18). Turns out he is the one who commands the seer to write the three units of the book.

1. *Does seeing what John is told to write as formulating an outline of the book help alleviate discomfort in approaching the Revelation?*
2. *How do you react to the dramatic description of the Son of Man? What about this sounds like Jesus and what, if anything, does not?*

Now we turn to the second unit, "what is." Chapters two and three comprise this section of the book and are written in the general form of ancient letters directed to the seven churches that John serves as spiritual leader (perhaps what we would think of as

Bishop). Each begins with (a) an address, (b) the identification of the author, (c) salutation, (d) message, and (e) closing. Let's look at the paradigmatic format and content of the first of these letters in order to prepare us to unpack all seven.

The Letter to the Church of Ephesus

John is told to address this message, "*To the angel of the church in Ephesus.*" The word "*angel*" literally means "messenger" and in this context appears to refer to the leader of the congregation (probably what we would think of as Pastor). Although John is the transcriber of the message, he makes clear that the words are not his, but belong to "one who holds the seven stars in his right hand and who walks among the seven golden lampstands."

Two questions naturally arise.

3. *Who is it that walks among lampstands and holds stars in his hand?*
4. *And to what are these lampstands and stars referring?*

We read earlier (1:12, 16) that it was the Son of Man who walks among golden lampstands holding in his hand seven stars. This formula proceeds through all seven letters. Some facet of the full description of the Son of Man in chapter one will be used to identify him (Jesus) as the source of the content of each of the letters.

Secondly, look back at Revelation 1:20. From time to time the text itself will interpret its obscure, strange, and esoteric imagery for us, as it does here. "*As for the mystery of...the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.*" Anytime we see the phrase, "as for the mystery," the text is interpreting itself.

With the correspondents now identified we can proceed with the message itself. I know you, says Jesus through his scribe. That—to be known by Jesus—is good news. The Lord knows the Ephesian believers and their works, intolerance of evildoers, and most of all their patient endurance under suffering for the sake of Jesus. Jesus tells them he knows and understands them even as he turns his attention to their spiritual flaws.

"*But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first*" (2:4). As Jesus *knows* them he also *notices* them. He does not overlook the regression of their behavior. The love they once demonstrated has recently waned, and they have two choices. Repent and return to practicing the love of God and neighbor to which they were called or watch as their lampstand is removed, that is, as their congregation collapses from within.

That said, Jesus offers another word of affirmation before he closes. He credits them with hating the work of "*the Nicolaitans,*" which we are told, he also hates. "Hate" seems a harsh word, and should be read here in the context of a faith community anguishing under political oppression and religious persecution. As for "*the Nicolaitans*" themselves, little is known. They are probably best understood as a sect of heretical Christians whose teachings and/or practices impaired the faith of other Christians.

The letter to the church of Ephesus closes with a two-part pattern that comprises a formula for each of the remaining letters. First, “*Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches*” (2:6) echoes familiar words from Jesus (e.g., Mt. 11:15, 13:9; Mk 4:9, 23; Lk 8:8), calling upon those who *hear* him to *heed* him. Secondly, Jesus offers a promise embodied in imagery that will occur subsequently in the third part of the book. “*To everyone who conquers,*” says Jesus, “*I will give permission to eat from the tree of life that is in the paradise of God.*” Thus Jesus concludes with a bold promise expressed in a metaphor of salvation or eternal life.

5. *How does it feel to be known by Jesus?*
6. *If such a letter were addressed to your church, what would Jesus affirm as faithful? What might he confront?*
7. *Could you now try to follow this paradigm for the other six letters and delineate the format and message of each?*
8. *Did anything in this session speak to you personally about your own faith journey or about the work of the people of God?*

Session 3: In the Throne Room of God

Theme

We will explore the beginnings of the visionary heavenly journey experienced by John the seer as he enters the throne room of heaven and encounters Jesus in yet another guise.

Text

Then I saw in the right hand of the one seated on the throne a scroll written on the inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals; 2 and I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" 3 And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it. 4 And I began to weep bitterly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. 5 Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals." 6 Then I saw between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders a Lamb standing as if it had been slaughtered, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. 7 He went and took the scroll from the right hand of the one who was seated on the throne. (Rev. 5:1-7 NRSV)

Entering the Throne Room of God

With chapter four John the seer begins writing the third unit of the Revelation, "what must take place after this." The remainder of the book constitutes an "apocalypse," the literary form we discussed in our first session. This is where we begin to encounter unearthly creatures and strange sights and impenetrable mysteries, but we must not become distracted lest we miss finding Jesus in the midst of all the racket. Keep looking for how Jesus appears and what he is doing. Remember that the theme of a Christian apocalypse is not the finality of the world but the fidelity of God.

One of the characteristic features of this genre, we noted, consisted of visionary heavenly journeys. Self-described as "in the Spirit" (4:2), John commences such a journey by stepping up through a door into the heavenly throne room of God. There he sees a radiant God seated on the divine throne around which shines a rainbow. Around the central throne are twenty-four others on which sit elders dressed in white robes and golden crowns. Thunder and lightning emit from the throne. In front of it burn seven torches which, we are told, are the seven spirits of God. (Remember that number seven. In the Bible it [7] serves symbolically to represent holy perfection or divine completion. Series of sevens show up throughout this book, including seven seals, seven angels, seven trumpets, seven bowls, etc.) Above the throne fly four six-winged creatures; one is likened to a lion, one an ox, one a human, and one an eagle. Day and night they sing praises to the holy God described in their song as the one "who was and is and is to come."

Such dramatic sights and sounds can easily provoke sensory overload. But again, let us not be distracted. Where in the scene is Jesus?

The Lion of Judah and the Lamb of God

John the seer discovers Jesus for the first time on his heavenly journey at a critical juncture in the vision. God holds in his hand a scroll closed up with seven seals. There's that number seven again, indicating that this scroll is sacred and holy. The seer yearns to know what wonders the scroll contains and is inconsolable when, at first, no one is found worthy to open the sacred text. But then one of the elders comforts him by declaring, "*See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.*" He means, of course, Jesus. Born of the tribe of Judah and the lineage of David—both of which are traditional characteristics of the Messiah (see Gen. 49:9-10; Isa. 11:1, 10; Matthew 1:2, 6)—it is Jesus who has conquered death through his resurrection.

Yet, as the seer turns to see this Lion he is surprised to discover a Lamb that looks like it has been slaughtered but yet is alive, boldly walking up to God to receive the scroll. As he takes the scroll, the elders and four living creatures bow in worship and direct hymns of praise to him. (The lyrics of those hymns should remind you of the liturgical hymn of praise, "Worthy is Christ.")

Opening the seals

Chapter six reports Jesus in the guise of the Lamb of God opening the seals. As he breaks each seal in order something dramatic happens. Opening the first four seals generates riders on colorful horses—white, red, black, and pallid green—representing conquest, war, famine, and death (6:1-8). Breaching the fifth seal discloses the souls of the martyrs, those who have died for the faith. They long for vindication, crying out, "*How long before you avenge us?*" They receive white robes, marking their heavenly destiny, and are told to wait just a while longer (6:9-11).

Let us linger at the breaking of the sixth seal (6:12-17). No plainer evidence need be presented for demonstrating the error of reading the Revelation literally. Cracking this seal unleashes a cosmic catastrophe that includes the sun turning black, the moon turning red, and the stars falling to the earth. Ponder that for a moment. Were the sun to cease providing warmth for the planet, the earth would in minutes reach absolute zero where nothing could survive. Or, if even one star fell toward the earth, our world would be vaporized long before the two collided. Yet, two verses later, we are told that myriad rich and powerful military and political leaders flee to hide among the boulders and caves of the mountains in order to escape this catastrophe. But what caves? What mountains? What humans would survive the sun going out? If the stars fell earthward the planet itself would cease to be. Obviously, then, opening the sixth seal is not providing readers some literal description of the end of the world. This imagery is meant not to narrate events but to evoke emotions.

Before unlocking the final seal, chapter seven provides a brief interlude. Here we find angels marking the foreheads of 144,000 servants of God. Some have interpreted this to indicate that this is the full sum of those mortals who will dwell in heaven with God through eternity. But this is a misreading of the text. After clarifying that the 144,000 are

comprised of 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel (7:5-8), the seer declares, *“After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne, robed in white....”* (7:9). Nothing unclear here. There is room aplenty in God’s kingdom for all. Even those different from us. Even those we do not expect to find there.

No wonder then that at the breaking of the seventh seal there commences a time of silence. Heaven itself stands in awe at what is unfolding, at what Jesus is up to. Perhaps we should do the same.

Questions for Discussion

1. *What insights or images stand out for you from this lesson? What is your “take away” from this session?*
2. *How did this lesson inform your understanding of how to read the Revelation? Why is a literal reading of this book problematic?*
3. *What have you heard previously about the 144,000? How does this lesson inform what you heard?*
4. *Did anything in this session speak to you personally about your own faith journey or about the work of the people of God?*

Session 4: Happily Ever After

Theme

We recognize the distinctions between prophecy and apocalypses and that the Revelation concludes with a happy ending akin to that of a fairy tale.

Text

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; ⁴ he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." ⁵ And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." ⁶ Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. ⁷ Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children. (Rev. 21:1-7 NRSV)

One More Word about Genre

By now it is evident how important it is to recognize the literary form of the Revelation and read it as what it is: an apocalypse. To further understand what that means it may prove helpful to distinguish *prophetic* writings from *apocalyptic* literature. It may surprise readers to discover that both prophecy and apocalypses are concerned with proclamation, not prediction. To the extent they address the future, it is the near and relevant future they care about, not some distant centuries to come.

What distinguishes them is how they experience and address their current circumstances. Prophets may best be described as "covenant advocates," serving like committed attorneys as God's spokespersons applying God's law and covenant to the crises and issues of their day. When they speak of judgment they are not reading the stars but announcing the consequences of human behavior. Prophets address those for whom it is not too late. They are like the coach at halftime talking to the team that is behind; it is still not too late if they/we reverse ourselves (repent) and do what they/we have practiced (obey).

Not so for apocalyptic writers. For them the game is over and the enemy has won. Whatever disaster could have been avoided has now taken place. For John's readers, the Romans have conquered, destroyed the temple, and dominate their fragile lives. There is no behavioral change that can save the day. There is nothing else to be done, at least not by mortals. Only God can save them/us now. And therein lies hope.

1. *Did the definitions and distinctions between prophecy and apocalyptic surprise you, puzzle you, or provide you insight? How so?*
2. *To what extent in our day do we people of faith need a prophetic word (repent and obey)? An apocalyptic word (hope)?*

A Fairy Tale Ending

G. K. Chesterton is credited with declaring, *“Fairy tales are more than true, not because they tell us that dragons exist, but because they tell us that dragons can be beaten.”* To the extent that he is right about fairy tales his maxim could well apply to the ending of the Revelation.

Beginning with chapter 16, the great and final battle of good versus evil [Armageddon] has begun (16:16). From this point the book races toward its grand finale. From his panoramic perch, the seer witnesses the fall of Babylon [a code name for Rome] (18:1-24); the masses, elders and living creatures cheering God’s imminent victory (19:1-10); and the appearance of—you guessed it—Jesus. Here he rides in like a prince on a white horse. He is called Faithful and True, his eyes are like fire, from his mouth issues a sword, his name is the Word of God, and on his robe is inscribed “King of kings and Lord of lords” (19:11-16). Under his leadership the battle is punctuated with victory over the dragon (20:1-3, 7-10). Thus Chesterton’s dragon is slain. Divine judgment ensues and even Death is destroyed in a lake of fire (20:11-15).

Which brings us to the “happily ever after” ending. The seer beholds a new heaven and a new earth with a new Jerusalem coming down from heaven *“prepared as a bride adorned for her husband”* (21:1-2). And what does this urban bride look like? It is where God dwells among mortals. No more tears or mourning or crying or pain do you find there. Not even death (21:3-4). We also learn that there is no temple in the city because one no longer needs a priestly mediatory or go-between between God and God’s people; everyone can approach God directly. Nor is there need for sun or moon, for God provides the only light that is needed. The city gates are never shut by day—and there is no night there (21:22-25). Talk about 24/7 access!

Here at the end, for the first time, the enthroned God Godself speaks.

“See, I am making all things new...Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true...It is done! I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give the water of life...I will be their God and they will be my children...” (21:5).

Can you say “Happily Ever After?” Sounds like a fairy tale ending to me. And thus we find good news in the scariest book of the Bible.

Questions for Discussion

3. *Does G. K. Chesterton's description of fairy tale or thinking of the ending of the Revelation as "happily ever after" speak to you as a relevant message for us who live in the real world? If so, how so? If not, why not?*
4. *Did anything in this session speak to you personally about your own faith journey or about the work of the people of God?*

Youth Options for this Course Created by Deborah Poole

READING REVELATION FINDING THE GOOD NEWS IN THE SCARIEST BOOK OF THE BIBLE

Many people associate it with fear and uncertainty, but we're going to discover that it's all about hope and God's ultimate plan for humanity.

As teenagers, you are at a stage in life where you start to ask big questions about the future, purpose, and what's happening in the world. The Book of Revelation provides answers and hope in the midst of these questions:

1. **Hope in Uncertainty:** Life can be unpredictable, and you might face challenges that leave you wondering about the future. Revelation reminds us that God is in control, and there's a glorious future awaiting those who follow Him.
2. **Understanding the Bigger Picture:** It's essential to grasp how your faith fits into the grand narrative of God's plan for humanity. Revelation reveals the culmination of God's story, showing that our choices today have eternal consequences.
3. **Living with Purpose:** Knowing that Christ will return one day encourages us to live with purpose and faithfulness, making a positive impact on the world around us.

SESSION 1

The revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

Revelation 1:1-3 (NIV)

I would like to start out by pointing out that the book we are going to be going over, Revelation, is singular. It is Revelation, not the book of Revelations. It is filled with smaller Revelations but is one large Revelation.

What does Revelation mean? Literally translated, it means revealing. A revelation is something that God reveals to us.

The Book of Revelation is a revelation from Jesus Christ about future events. It's a blessing to read and understand its message because it prepares us for what's to come.

1. **Who wrote it?** *John (yes, that John, the apostle). There is some debate that it was another John, but so far John the Apostle has been the most reliable author.*

2. Where was it written? *While John was on the Island of Patmos, exiled there by the Roman government.*
3. How did the author decide to write the book? *God gave John a vision to share with the churches. That vision is the book of Revelation.*
4. Why was it written? *As a letter of comfort to the early church.*
5. Why is it described as a blessing to read and understand the Book of Revelation?

There are at least two different styles of writing found in Revelation. Why is this important to know? Did you even know that there are different writing styles in Scripture? This is important to know because how things are written determines how they are read and, ultimately, understood and translated. The two main types found in Revelation are Epistle and Jewish Apocalyptic.

Let's start with Epistle.

What is an Epistle? A letter to a person or a church that has been included in the canon of Scripture. It's a letter that an apostle wrote to a church in the first century in other words.

Give me some examples of Epistles. (Any of the New Testament books from Romans through Jude will be acceptable).

There are a few separate, yet unified Epistles in Revelation. Chapters 2 and 3 are both written to seven different churches that were in existence at the time of this book being written. Epistles are usually filled with reminders and teaching that would instruct the readers in how to remain in the Spirit of God, and possibly encouragements or condemnation for how they were doing to this point.

Jewish Apocalyptic on the other hand, is a little bit tougher to get a handle on. First let's define Apocalypse since that is the fuller word at play here. What does Apocalypse mean?

From Webster's: A Great Disaster OR one of the Jewish and Christian writings of 200BC to AD 150 marked by pseudonymity, symbolic imagery, and the expectation of an imminent cosmic cataclysm in which God destroys the ruling powers of evil and raises the righteous to life in a messianic Kingdom.

In short, Jewish Apocalyptic literature would center around a lot of imagery that was easy to picture, but not always easy to understand unless you knew what you were looking for. The original recipients of these types of letters knew what to look for. In fact, if you look through Revelation you will see a lot of images that took place in Daniel and other Old Testament books as well. It could be considered a sort of code should someone in power who did not know how to read it get hold of the letter as it was being circulated.

Jewish Apocalyptic literature has not been used in well over 1,500 years. It would be like destroying all copies of the Spider-Man trilogy except for a couple of the DVD's, burying them in a crate, and exhuming them 1,000 years later. They are hard to understand in our context.

The beauty of Revelation is that no matter how you interpret it, it is not a Salvation issue. God will not condemn you to hell just for getting it wrong. But remember not to make too much of an issue of it. Don't major on the minors here. Every method of interpreting Revelation ultimately says Jesus comes back and fixes everything, which is Scriptural. Over the next weeks we will be diving in and looking at several key passages in Revelation. We will attempt to make some sense of it all.

Fun Revelation words:
Eschaton – The Last Things
Eschatology – The study of The Last Thing

Activity: Finding Jesus in Revelation

It's a little like the "Where's Waldo?" books. Think of Revelation as a "Where's Jesus?" book. Divide into groups and look for all the different ways Jesus shows up.

Examples: Son of Man wearing a white robe and a golden sash with eye like flame of fire. (1:12-18)

SESSION 2

In these letters, Jesus addresses the strengths and weaknesses of the seven churches. The message to Ephesus emphasizes the importance of maintaining our love and passion for Christ.

"To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands. I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not and have found them false. You have persevered, and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary. Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first. Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first." Revelation 2:1-7 (NIV)

All of these churches were near to Patmos. They were conveniently located on a circular trade route which made it easier for the letters to be circulated and then dispersed throughout the province. These are literal churches which existed in that period in history.

It was normal in that time for churches to pass letters around so that each could benefit from the messages. And from the passage, it is clear that this is what was intended with these letters. Each letter has the phrase "let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." This indicates that all of the churches would read all of the letters.

So although these were letters to literal, specific churches, the issues (good and bad) present in those churches, exist throughout the church age. Solomon once said that there was nothing new under the sun. As a whole, the 7 letters can be taken to represent the message of Jesus to the whole church. The number 7 indicates

completeness. So although these are written to specific, real churches, the lessons and principles within are timeless and universal. We can find many similarities to those churches and our situations today.

As we read study these letters, we must realize that Jesus is writing to us as well as members of His church. We must consider how they apply to us and our situation. There are seven letters. This is the first of four series of sevens. The number seven represents completeness. Could this indicate that the letters are also symbolic in nature?

These seven churches were not all the most famous or influential churches in that region. For example, the church of Thyatira was smaller and less well-known than the church of Colossae, which was also nearby. So it may be that these seven churches were chosen specifically because they symbolized something more about what the church was going to be like moving forward in history.

There is a clear progression in the churches that seems to fit with what we know of church history.

Ephesus is the first church written to. And in this first letter, is the only one of the seven that mentions people claiming to be apostles (2:2), which was a problem especially early in the New Testament period. In addition, the main focus is on losing their first love. This was especially fitting for the end of the apostolic age, which was nearing an end when John wrote.

Smyrna – After the apostolic age, the church entered a time of persecution, which is reflected in this second letter.

Pergammum – They started to display some syncretic leanings (describing things influenced by two or more styles or traditions.)

Thyatira – The longest letter could symbolize the longest age of the church, the Middle Ages. They also struggled with syncretism, which was so common in the Middle Ages. And Jesus said the victor would rule over the nations, as we see the church in this time period which much political influence. In addition, Jesus said that their latter works are greater than their first, which could be a reference to the Reformation.

Sardis – By this time the revival of the reformation was waning and nearing death, much the like the church mentioned here.

Philadelphia – This church is described in a very positive light and could represent the “Golden Age of the church.” In this period of time after the Reformation the church was strong and faithful.

Laodicea – We can see a clear similarity between the materialism and self-sufficiency of this church and the culture now which has seeped into the church. Love of money and entertainment are widespread problems. It is blind and naked. Yet Jesus stands at the door, showing how close He is to returning and “eat with him and he with me” could be a reference to the near Marriage Supper of the Lamb. Taken this way, there could also be some overlap between the remnant church of Philadelphia and the “fake” church of Laodicea.

Each of the seven letters follows a basic structure: an address, identification of the author, greeting, message and closing.

Let’s look at the Letter to the Church of Ephesus. It begins with

The angel of the church in Ephesus – As mentioned in Revelation 1, the word for angel means “messenger” in Greek. This is then a reference to the leader in the church of Ephesus who would receive this letter and pass it on to the church.

Jesus gave John the exact words to write in this letter. It is a letter directly from him to the church of Ephesus. It is a priceless treasure that we have this record of messages directly from Jesus to the churches, and by extension to us.

If Jesus wrote to our church, what would he say?” While that answer is unclear, we can get a pretty good idea by compiling these seven letters and comparing those churches to our own today.

Generally, the Lord’s commendation for Ephesus can fit into two categories, endurance and discernment. Jesus says that he knows their “toil.” The word literally means a “cut” or a “beating.” It is often translated as “labor. The point is that they worked hard for the gospel. They served the Lord faithfully even in the face of difficulty.

Jesus then mentions “patient endurance” twice. When they encountered obstacles, they didn’t give up. There was no quit in them. They did not “grow weary.” The believers were stable and committed.

And what is more, they did these things with the right motives. Jesus says that they bore up “for His name’s sake.” So there was a lot to commend about the church of Ephesus.

The second area of commendation for Ephesus was in regard to their discernment. They “cannot bear those who are evil” and they “tested those who call themselves apostles and are not and found them to be false.”

At Ephesus, the believers were obeying this instruction as well. Because the church did not tolerate evil living or false teaching, they held to a pure form of belief and practice.

Jesus had some choice words of criticism for this church. They had lost their first love. It may be the most famous line of criticism given to any of the seven churches.

When we compare the criticism and the commendations a very odd picture emerges. We see a church that is doing the right things. But they lack a love for God. The church of Ephesus was doing the right actions. They toiled for God. They persevered. They did not grow weary. And they did not tolerate evil. But Jesus says they lost their first love. That fervent love for Christ which they had before was being replaced by something else, a paint-by-the-numbers, mechanical approach to their faith. While they loved God’s Word and faithfully served Him, their personal relationship with Jesus was lacking.

Real love is not either action or emotion. It is both. It is not cold-hearted, rote, or external. It is warm. The action is motivated by a heart of love. Let us not approach our faith as a “tick the boxes” exercise. But let us have a lively, personal relationship with Jesus that overflows into all parts of our lives as we naturally live it out.

Jesus’ counsel is three-fold: remember, repent, do.

- A. Remember – Firstly the Ephesians were instructed to remember how they were at first. Remember their love, excitement, and passion when they first came to Christ. This in turn would motivate them to be renewed to that again.

- B. Repent – It is not enough to remember. We must do more than to say, “that was nice, but it is long gone.” Jesus tells us to repent. If we want to be restored to where we were, we need to confess the problem. Admit the sins that have caused it (business, selfishness, apathy, complacency, materialism, etc.). Ask for forgiveness. Petition Him to fill us with that heart of love and passion again.
- C. Do the works that you did at first – Here we are reminded that although their toiling, their works were not the same as what they had done before they lost their first love. Therefore, a heart of love will make a difference in your actions. It may be possible to simulate love for a time. A car can run on fumes for a little while; a believer can do the right action without the heart for a while. But he will run out of fuel. And those same actions will lack the enthusiasm and warmth which should represent our service to Him.

Questions

1. What was Jesus unhappy with about the church of Ephesus?
2. What counsel does Jesus give this church?
3. Why is it crucial to “repent and do the things you did at first”?
4. If the church was already working and toiling (verse 2), then what does Jesus mean to “do the works you did at first?” What works might these be?
5. Are there works you used to do for Christ that you don’t do anymore? Why?
6. What can you personally do to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit’s leading and conviction while studying these letters?

Activity: Revelation Relay

- Divide into teams and create a relay race.
- Each team has to solve a puzzle or riddle related to the Book of Revelation at different stations.
- The first team to complete all the stations and reach the destination wins a prize.

SESSION 3

The scroll represents God’s plan for the world. Only Jesus, the Lamb of God, is worthy to open it. This passage reminds us that Jesus’ sacrifice has a global impact.

”Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, ‘Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?’ But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. Then one of the elders said to me, ‘Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.’ [...] And they sang a new song, saying: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals,

because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation.” Revelation 5:1-5, 9-10 (NIV)

The scroll – Then I saw... a scroll – The focus shifts. The scroll in the hand of God draws the attention of everyone in heaven. If this were a scene in a movie, the camera would focus in on the scroll and slowly zoom in. The curiosity of John (and all the audience) is pricked.

- What is this scroll?
What is the message?
Why is it so important?
What will the contents show?

The importance of this scroll is clear. Whatever the message within, it is critical. All those present desire to understand it.

The seven seals – A seal was used for several purposes.

- A. To show the authority of the one issuing the decree – Every emperor of the ancient world would have a royal seal, often a ring. He would use this on official correspondence or laws to signify that his authority stood behind whatever was written.
- B. A seal would also keep something closed and private until the right time to open it – Wax seals were designed to clearly show when the seal had been broken. The item, often a letter, could not be opened without breaking the seal. Therefore, no one was allowed to tamper with it or get a sneak peek before the intended recipient.

These seals show us God’s authority behind the content of the scrolls. It is his royal decree about what is going to take place. They also show us that the contents were secret and unknown until the proper time for its opening arrived. Not even the angels knew the contents of this scroll. And that explains why everyone gives such rapt attention to the scroll. They all want to know what it contains, and the contents have been secret until this point in time. John was authorized to share the content of his vision in order to prepare the church and the world for what is to come.

The number seven shows the completeness of the judgments within. Each separate seal unlocks a specific portion of the contents.

The seals remind us that the judgments contained within are established by God and will only happen according to his perfect timing after everything else in his plan for the world has already been fulfilled.

A mighty angel asks who is worthy to open the scroll – This mighty angel is not named. But evidently, s/he is something of a heavenly messenger or herald to make announcements to the heavenly host. He shouts out asking “who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?” No one was found who was worthy.

As the search was going on, there was a period of time before Jesus stepped up. That heightened the desire of the audience to see the scroll opened and also served as a clear contrast, showing more publicly that Jesus alone was worthy.

During this time, we can see the desire to know the contents of the scroll increasing. John is moved to tears because of his great sorrow that no one could open the scroll.

From this we see an important characteristic of John. He has a great desire to learn and know more about God and his plan. There is an intense hunger to know the things of God. When that hunger is not satisfied, it affects him on an emotional level.

One of the elders said to me – From this short exchange we can get a bit of insight into heaven. Here are a few things we learn from this:

- Conversations occur between people. You will be able to talk and communicate with others. It is not only singing and playing harps all the time.
- The elder knew more about the situation than John did. This would indicate that when you are in heaven, you are always learning. You know more than those who just arrived.
- The elder is teaching John. This would indicate that there will still be a role for people teaching other people as all believers continually learn and grow together into a better understanding of our Lord.

A lion is fierce. You would be afraid to meet one in the wild. God compares His judgments to a lion.

Jesus is the Lion of Judah. The first time he came as a Lamb. He was meek and humble. He was a servant. He was our perfect and spotless sacrifice. But in opening the seals, he reveals Himself to be a lion. Jesus will not always be the meek and long-suffering lamb. He is going to judge the world for its sin. And that is a scary thing for those who have scoffed and ridiculed Him.

Think about that for a moment. Imagine a cruel person who picks on a lamb. The lamb is silent and takes it for a while. This encourages the person to be even more cruel. So he mocks and tortures the lamb. Then in an instant the lamb transforms into a huge lion. The scoffing, bully would rightly fear for his life.

The root is something which comes before the tree. The root comes first and then the trunk and then the branches. So although Jesus was descended from David, He also preceded David. This is a Messianic title, which highlights Jesus' divinity.

I saw a Lamb standing as though it had been slain – We see Jesus, so all three members of the Trinity are present. Even in heaven, Jesus appears as a Lamb that was slain, forever reminding everyone of his loving sacrifice. It wasn't just something he did in the past. Rather, it will always be an essential part of his identity as well as the reason for his exaltation.

Seven horns – Just as Jesus is not literally a lamb (or a lion or a root), so these horns should not be taken literally. Rather they represent certain qualities that Jesus possesses. Horns are something in the Bible which generally represent power and authority. The fact that Jesus appears with seven horns here shows us that the Lamb (the meek sacrifice) has complete power and authority over all.

Seven eyes which are the seven spirits – These symbols indicate Jesus' omniscience. He is fully aware of everything that goes on at all times everywhere. Not a speck of dust or an atom moves without His knowledge.

As we have seen in previous passages, the seven spirits seem to refer to the Holy Spirit. Jesus' ministry is closely connected with the Holy Spirit. They are not independent of each other.

Questions

1. Who held this scroll?
2. What are your observations about the scroll?
3. What can you see about the importance of this scroll based on the focus it receives in heaven?
4. Why was nobody worthy to open the scroll (the angels in heaven for example have no sin)?
5. Why was John so disappointed?
6. What does this teach us about the importance of studying and learning?
7. Who told John who would be able to open the scroll?
8. What does this show us about the knowledge level of the elders around the throne?
9. Who is the Lion of the tribe of Judah? Why is he called that?
10. Why is he called the Root of David?
11. Why is he worthy?
12. What are your observations about the Lamb?
13. What does the fact that he is worshiped (and receives that worship) show us about him?

SESSION 4

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.” Luke 21:33

“Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children.”
Revelation 21:1-7 NIV

This earth will not last forever. This heaven and earth will be destroyed. The heaven referred to here is the seen universe, not necessarily the throne room where God’s presence dwells. What it means is that the entire universe that we experience now will be destroyed. The earth, the planets, the sun, the stars, and the galaxies will be dissolved. God is going to create something entirely new.

It is fitting that in the last two chapters of the Bible we see God again creating heaven and earth.

In Revelation 21-22, we see that chapter will be closed. God will flip the pages and bring His people into a new chapter. It will be a time of new beginnings. And the new beginnings will mean that the old is gone and the new has come.

On the new earth, will be a new city. It will be called the “New Jerusalem.” In some ways, it will fulfill what the first Jerusalem was supposed to do. That city was supposed to be a light of the nations, a place where God’s glory resided, a place where people were reminded of God’s goodness and worshiped Him. But the nation of Israel did not live up to its end of the covenant. Jerusalem at times experienced the curse of God’s anger against them and their idolatry, rather than the blessing they could have had. One day all will be made right. New Jerusalem will be a place where God’s people can meet him and worship him face to face.

John saw the New Jerusalem “coming down out of heaven.” It will be located on the new earth. Many people think that saints will live in heaven forever. Some depictions show people floating around in heaven with harps. Those ideas are not accurate. God designed people to live on earth. He gave us two legs to walk on the earth, hands to pick things up off the earth, a nose to smell the fragrances on earth, ears to hear the sounds of wind rustling or birds tweeting, and eyes to see the beautiful colors He made for us to enjoy. Though the new earth will surely be quite different from what we have now, it will still be an earth. You will not have wings. You will not float around in outer space as some detached entity, vaguely aware of the infinite space around you. God’s people will live on a new earth, specially prepared by our loving Father for us to enjoy.

Modern cities have city planners. But not all modern cities are attractive. Some are chaotic. Buildings are erected wherever, almost stacked upon each other. This causes some to be completely surrounded and get no sunlight. Alleyways are narrow and winding and it is hard to find your way. Transportation can be a mess because of poor planning. And the city itself may look dirty and unkempt.

But God is the city planner and the architect of the New Jerusalem. It is his gift for His children. Great thought and care are put into making the city just right. It will come from God’s own mind. Every aspect will reflect his perfect design. Each detail will be planned out to satisfy every need we will have. Functionally, it will be matchless. Aesthetically, it will be faultless. The transportation will be convenient. The gardens will be beautiful. It will be easy to get around in and have everything we need. Surely, we will react with unbridled joy.

There is no place like home. And that is where will be, finally. It will be our forever home sweet home.

If you have ever gone on a long and arduous trip, you have probably experienced the joy and comfort of returning home to your own bed. When we are presented with our own room in this holy city, we will likely have the same feeling, but magnified many times over.

Of all of the promises ever given verse, 3 is probably the best. God will dwell with humanity. We have never experienced anything like it. Adam and Eve had visits from God for a while. Then after the fall, those became less frequent.

We will have direct access to him. This fact also teaches us about God’s character. He is willing to lower himself to our level to dwell with us. Can you imagine an emperor

moving out of his castle to a hut to live with a beggar? Can you imagine a genius like Albert Einstein wanting to hang out with high school dropouts?

God is so much higher than we are that we cannot even comprehend it. And yet he desires a relationship with us, even to the extent that one day he himself will make his home with us.

Revelation 21:4 – He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away. Most of the description here is about what will NOT be on the new earth. There will not be:

- Tears
- Death
- Mourning
- Crying
- Pain

Note that God will wipe away every tear. That could mean that at the beginning there might be some tears. Perhaps there will be tears for those who are lost and won't be there. Or perhaps there will be tears of regret. However, God is going to wipe away those tears. There may be a moment in time when God makes everything right, and helps us to deal with those feelings, process them, and move forward in complete joy. It is not clear how this will work out, but it is clear that God is the one who will bring about this change. He will kindly bring us into this new chapter and help us put all regrets and sadness behind us.

The former things will all pass away. All of the wounds from your life on old earth will be healed. Every abuse, depressing thought, worry, scar, and hurt will be fixed. Everything will be made new, including you.

These promises should bring us comfort in times of sadness. Jesus said that “in the world you will have trouble.” We do experience all kinds of troubles now. But Jesus overcame the world. Memorize this verse and recite it to yourself when you are hurting. And use it to encourage others who struggle to see hope.

God is not just going to upgrade what we have now. It is not so much Earth 2.0 as it is a totally new system. That doesn't mean that everything is going to be unrecognizable. There will still be water, trees, gold, silver, jewels, fruit, food, people, and many other things we are familiar with. It won't be totally different, but it will be better. Included in the “all things new” is you. Just as the current “you” is designed for this world, so the future “you” will be designed for that world.

This world is flawed in so many ways. Family, government, religion, environment, and everything else has the stink of sin on it. What we experience now is a “not good” version of what God made “very good” in Genesis 1. The things in this world are being used up. Even the laws of nature tell us that this world is descending into chaos.

The laws that govern the new earth will be different. It will be a new system with new natural laws for a new you.

God is the giver of life. And not just physical life, but our spiritual life is from him. But he is also the end. He created the world, but after that, he didn't just leave it to itself. He has the final say.

In the beginning, he was there, and started it. In the end, he will be there and end it (for the old earth and heaven). And he will still be there at this new beginning. He is the great “I AM.”

The fact that He is the end is not only true in a general sense, but also in a very personal sense. No one will be able to enter this new earth without his express permission. The one constant in the midst of this cataclysmic change, that sees a new universe formed, is God.

The most important thing we can do is make sure we have a relationship with the Alpha and Omega! We will be made holy. And God will offer the living water to us. We will have eternal life.

Can you say, “Happily Ever After?” and there is the good news in the scariest book of the Bible.

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think “heaven” includes in this verse?
2. What will happen to the first heaven and the first earth?
3. Whose voice was this?
4. What will our relationship with God be like? How will it be different from now?
5. Why can we not dwell with God now? What does the new reality show us about sin?
6. Which of the promises in verse 4 are the most comforting to you and why?
7. How do these promises give you hope and help you persevere now?
8. How can you use these promises to comfort someone who is struggling?
9. What does it mean that He is making all things new? What are some of the things you look forward to Him making new?
10. What does the name “Alpha and Omega” mean?
11. What does this name teach you about God’s character?
12. How do we take what we’ve learned and apply it to our lives today?

Activities:

Write down one thing you need to do based on what you have learned in this passage.

Make Something New – Gather scrap materials (tubes, boxes, cloth, paper, etc.), Get creative and make something new out of the junk.

Additional Activities

Videos (Can be used at any time)

The Bible Project

[Book of Revelation Summary: A Complete Animated Overview \(Part 1\)](#)

[Book of Revelation Summary: A Complete Animated Overview \(Part 2\)](#)

ShareFaith Kids

[Revelation for Kids: The Seven Churches of Revelation | Bible Story for Kids \(Sharefaithkids.com\)](#)

Bible Scavenger Hunt

- How many chapters are in Revelation?
- In chapter 21, shape does it say the city is?
- What is the last word in Revelation?
- How many witnesses are there in chapter 11?
- How many were sealed from the tribe of Levi in chapter 7?
- How many lampstands did John see in chapter 1?
- Who opened the first seal in chapter 6?
- What chapter talks about the seventh seal?