

# REVELATION: A TOPICAL SURVEY

## HELPFUL SCRIPTURES

## SERMON NOTES

Rev. 1:1-3

### **I. How God Views His People (Revelation 21)**

#### **A. God sees His people as His bride & His Holy City, (vs. 1-8)**

1. (v. 1) *“Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth for the 1<sup>st</sup> heaven & earth had past away....”*

Isaiah 57:20

Revelation 13:1

2. (v. 2), *“I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready....”*

Hebrews 12:22-23

Ephesians 5:30-31

3. (v. 3), *“Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, & He will dwell with them....”*

Matthew 1:23; 28:20

4. (vs. 4-6), *“God will wipe away every tear from their eyes... “Behold, I make all things new... it is done!”*

Ephesians 1:3

5. (vs. 7-8), *“He who overcomes shall inherit all things ... But for the cowardly and unbelieving....”*

**B. The Bride/Holy City Seen in Its Glory, (vs. 9-14)**

1. (vs. 9-11), *“Angel said, ‘Come here, I shall show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb’ ....”*
2. (v. 12), *“It had a great & high wall, w/12 gates & at the gates 12 angels; names written on them....”*
3. (vs. 13-14), *“There are 3 gates on the east & 3 on the north, and 3 on the south and 3 on the west...”*

**C. The Measurements and Precious Materials, (vs. 15-21)**

1. (vs. 16), *“The city was laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width . . .”*
2. (v. 17), *“He measured the wall, 72 yards according to human measurements....”*
3. (vs. 18-21), *“...the foundation stones of the city were adorned w/every kind of precious stone....”*

**D. No Temple, No Sun, No Night, (vs. 22-27)**

1. (v. 22), *“And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its temple.”*

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

1 John 1:5

John 9:5

Matthew 5:14; 28:19

Mark 16:15-16

## REVELATION: A TOPICAL SURVEY

Lesson #2: How god views those who are not his people

primary texts:

revelation 13; 14:9-11; 17-18

supplemental texts: revelation 3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 12:9; 13:8; 16:1-21; 19:19-21; 20:11-15; 16:15-16:21:8

main idea

revelation portrays those outside of god's people as earthbound, deceived, rebellious, marked by allegiance to the beastly system, and destined for judgment unless they repent.

major groups to study

1. those who dwell on the earth

this phrase is one of revelation's important moral categories.

- revelation 3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 13:8, 14; 17:2, 8
- it usually refers not simply to people living on earth geographically, but to those whose identity and loyalty are rooted in the world in opposition to god.

point:

these are people who are settled in a rebellious world-order and have no longing for heaven or loyalty to god.

application:

a christian may live on earth, but he must never be one of "those who dwell on the earth" in spirit or allegiance.

2. Those who receive the mark of the beast

- Revelation 13:16-18; 14:9-11; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4
- The mark symbolizes ownership, loyalty, identification, and participation in the beast's anti-God system.
- Just as God's servants are sealed, the wicked are marked by their allegiance.

Point:

There is no moral neutrality in Revelation. Every person bears an identity of belonging.

Application:

People today still show spiritual allegiance by whom they trust, obey, imitate, and worship.

### 3. The beast from the sea

- Revelation 13:1-10
- This beast appears as persecuting, blasphemous, violent worldly power.
- In the first-century setting, this would strongly point to oppressive imperial power, especially Rome as a manifestation of beastly dominion.

Point:

God views persecuting political power that exalts itself against Him as beastly, not glorious.

### 4. The beast from the earth / false prophet

- Revelation 13:11-18; 16:13; 19:20; 20:10
- This figure promotes false worship and deception.
- It uses persuasion, signs, propaganda, and religious-looking power to direct people toward the first beast.

Point:

God sees false religion and deceptive ideology as part of Satan's machinery.

Application:

Not all spirituality is holy. Some religion exists to make rebellion look respectable.

### 5. Babylon / the great harlot

- Revelation 17-18
- Babylon represents arrogant, luxurious, idolatrous civilization in opposition to God.
- She is seductive, corrupting, persecuting, and doomed.

Point:

God sees worldly seduction as ugly beneath its glamorous surface.

Application:

The world may package sin attractively, but Revelation tears away the disguise.

Key Themes

- Earthbound identity
- Deception
- False worship
- Rebellion
- Judgment
- Temporary glory but certain downfall

Possible Outline

1. The Earth-Dwellers
2. The Marked Followers of the Beast
3. Beastly Political Power
4. Deceptive Religious Power
5. Babylon the Seductress and Her Fall

Central Lesson

God does not view rebellion as freedom, but as deception, corruption, and eventual ruin.

# REVELATION: A TOPICAL SURVEY

## Lesson #3

### How God Reveals Himself in Revelation

#### Primary Texts:

Revelation 1; 4-5; 19:11-16; 22:12-16

Supplemental texts: Revelation 2-3; 7:9-17

#### Main Idea

Revelation reveals God and Christ through rich images that communicate majesty, authority, sacrifice, kingship, judgment, tenderness, and eternal glory.

#### Major Images to Explore

##### 1. One like the Son of Man

- Revelation 1:12-18
- Draws from Daniel 7
- This image emphasizes authority, glory, priestly presence, and divine majesty.
- He walks among the lampstands, showing intimate knowledge of His churches.

#### Meaning:

Christ is exalted, present, and fully aware of His people's condition.

##### 2. The Lion of the tribe of Judah

- Revelation 5:5
- Symbol of royalty, strength, conquest, and messianic victory.
- He is the promised ruler who prevails.

##### 3. The Lamb as though slain

- Revelation 5:6
- This is one of Revelation's great paradoxes.
- The conquering Lion is revealed as a slain Lamb.

- Jesus conquers not merely by force, but by sacrifice.

Key point:

God reveals power through redemptive suffering.

#### 4. The Alpha and the Omega

- Revelation 1:8; 21:6; 22:13
- God is the beginning and the end.
- He stands outside and above history.
- Revelation is not about chaos winning, but about God's sovereign completeness.

#### 5. The One on the throne

- Revelation 4
- The throne is the central image of Revelation.
- No matter what happens on earth, heaven is not in panic.
- God reigns.

#### 6. The Faithful and True / Word of God

- Revelation 19:11-16
- Christ as righteous judge and victorious king.
- He makes war in righteousness.
- His word is powerful and final.

#### 7. The Lamb who shepherds

- Revelation 7:17
- Astonishing image: the Lamb becomes Shepherd.
- The sacrificed one tenderly leads, nourishes, and comforts His people.

Possible Outline

1. Christ Among the Lampstands
2. The Lion and the Lamb

3. The One on the Throne
4. Alpha and Omega
5. The Faithful and True King
6. The Lamb Who Shepherds His People

#### Central Lesson

Revelation does not merely tell us facts about God; it shows us His character through images of majesty, sacrifice, sovereignty, and nearness.

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# REVELATION: A TOPICAL SURVEY

## Lesson #4

### The Meaning of Major Symbols in Revelation

#### Primary Texts:

Revelation 5-6; 8-11; 15-16; 17-18

Supplemental texts: Revelation 1:20; 12; 20-22

#### Main Idea

The symbols in Revelation are not random puzzles; they are theological pictures communicating truth about judgment, warning, spiritual conflict, worldly corruption, and ultimate victory.

#### Major Symbols to Explain

##### 1. The Seals

- Revelation 6; 8:1
- The seals unfold the consequences of living in a fallen world and the outworking of God's judicial purposes in history.
- Conquest, war, famine, death, martyrdom, cosmic disturbance
- The sealed scroll belongs to God's plan, and only the Lamb can open it.

#### Emphasis:

History is not out of control. The Lamb governs what unfolds.

##### 2. The Trumpets

- Revelation 8-11
- Trumpets often function as warnings.
- These judgments are partial, calling people to repentance.
- They echo Old Testament plagues and divine alarms.

#### Emphasis:

God warns before final judgment.

##### 3. The Bowls

- Revelation 15-16
- Bowls represent the outpouring of God's wrath in fuller measure.
- Unlike the trumpets, these emphasize the finality and severity of judgment.

Emphasis:

There comes a point when warning gives way to punishment.

#### 4. The Harlot

- Revelation 17
- She represents seduction, unfaithfulness, corruption, and anti-God culture in attractive form.
- She is intoxicated with immorality and violence.

Emphasis:

Evil is not only brutal; it is seductive.

#### 5. Babylon

- Revelation 17-18
- Babylon is the great worldly city/system opposed to God.
- It includes pride, idolatry, luxury, economic arrogance, persecution, and moral decay.
- In first-century terms, it would evoke Rome while also transcending Rome as a type of every anti-God world order.

Emphasis:

Every civilization built in defiance of God will fall.

#### 6. The Dragon

- Revelation 12
- Explicitly identified as Satan.
- He is the driving spiritual force behind persecution and deception.

#### 7. Numbers and symbolic imagery

You may want a section on recurring numbers:

- 7 = completeness
- 12 = the people of God
- 10 = fullness/completeness in a limited sense
- 3½ = a broken or limited period of suffering
- 1000 = fullness/completeness, often symbolic of a complete divinely determined span

## Possible Outline

1. How Revelation Uses Symbols
2. The Seals: God's Purposes Unfolding
3. The Trumpets: Warnings of Judgment
4. The Bowls: Full Wrath Poured Out
5. The Harlot and Babylon: Seductive Worldliness
6. The Dragon and the Spiritual War
7. How to Read Symbolism Responsibly

## Central Lesson

The symbols of Revelation are meant to reveal truth, not conceal it from faithful readers.

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## Suggested Introduction for the Whole Series

You could open the series like this:

“Many Christians approach Revelation as though it were mainly a codebook for predicting modern events. But Revelation was written first to strengthen suffering saints by showing them how God sees reality. This series will study Revelation topically so we can understand how God sees His people, how He sees the wicked, how He reveals Himself, and what the great symbols of the book mean.”

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## Suggested Closing Aim for the Series

By the end of the series, your class should see:

- God's people are precious and victorious.
  - The wicked world system is deceptive and doomed.
  - Christ is both sovereign Lion and sacrificial Lamb.
  - Revelation's symbols are meaningful and faith-strengthening, not merely mysterious.
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### Recommendation for Order

Your order is very good. I would keep it as:

1. How God Views His People
2. How God Views Those Who Are Not His People
3. How God Reveals Himself
4. Meaning of Various Symbols

That order works well because it moves from:

- the identity of the redeemed,
  - to the identity of the wicked,
  - to the character of God,
  - to the interpretive tools needed to understand the book's imagery.
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### Possible Expanded Series Titles

If you want a stronger title, here are a few options:

- A Topical Survey of Revelation
- Seeing Revelation as God Sees It
- Unveiling Revelation
- The Great Themes of Revelation
- Revelation: God, His People, and the World

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My suggestion

Lesson #1 on Revelation 21 is especially strong because it starts the series with hope and beauty rather than controversy. That gives the class confidence and keeps the series devotional as well as instructional.

I can next turn this into a full teaching outline for Lesson #1 with introduction, section-by-section exposition, cross references, and application questions.

