

**How The World Ends
The Book of Revelation**

**How Did We Get Here?
And Where Are We Going
Revelation 1:1-3**

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INTERNATIONALLY.

Philippians 3:20–21

“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.” (NASB95)

Doing Life As Exiles

We are exiles here on planet earth.

As believers in Jesus Christ, this is not our home and we should not get comfortable about being here; it is not where our true home is.

Jesus Himself is preparing a place for us (John 14:2) and as such, we find that we are currently exiled here.

Just as the nation of Israel was exiled to Babylon, with Daniel and Ezekiel showing the way how to live while in exile.

Matthew 24:42

“Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming.” (NASB95)

Being on the alert requires us to be aware of what is going on in the environment around us. We find ourselves in a strange place not only historically but Biblically as well.

...now health researchers are wielding a new tool they hope will let them determine the true causes of chronic disease. And it comes through a surprise route: genetics. Researchers say that by employing innate genetic differences between people—an inborn susceptibility to alcohol, say, or to higher cholesterol levels in the arteries—they can now mimic, at much less effort and expense, the kinds of large trials that would be necessary to determine if an HDL-lowering medicine is really beneficial. The new technique, called Mendelian randomization, is already being used by drug companies to make billion-dollar decisions about which drugs to pursue. (Taubes 2018)

The Dark Side of Technology

There is now the promise of super soldiers, and AI enhanced drones and robots who will augment or even replace the need to place soldiers on the battlefield.

There is a race for genetic based transformations that can be made to a soldier, as well as mechanically based enhancements, the use of artificial intelligence or deep learning (AI,) add to that robotics, and the emerging world of cyber warfare.

General Selva

In fact, implicit in the Third Offset thinking is the partnership between humans and machines, and in that space, machine-to-machine defense of cyber networks is actually an absolute requirement. It is not an implied task. It is an explicit task. If we cannot defend our networks at machine speed, we are giving our opponents maneuvering space in that domain to defeat us in detail. (US Senate Committee on Armed Services 2017)

For example, “China has publicly declared its intention to become the global leader in artificial intelligence by 2030 and is increasing its research and recruiting top talent from around the globe. China’s model of military-civil fusion also means that AI research will readily flow from tech firms into the military without the kind of barriers that some Google employees aim to erect in the United States. China has already begun to lay the foundations for an AI-empowered techno-surveillance state.” (Knight 2018)

The DoD Directive 3000.09 , Autonomy in Weapons Systems , establishes requirements and parameters for development and use of autonomous weapons systems (AWS) . In short , Directive 3000.09 seeks to

minimize the risk of unintended lethal engagements by requiring positive human interface for all semi-autonomous and AWS, and prohibiting autonomous lethal force against human targets. While this caution is understandable, the policy is out of step with the evolving battlefield. (United States Army War College 2017, Kindle location 198-202)

The level of risk and probability of unexpected or errant behavior (collateral damage or the inability to control the AWS once enabled) is perhaps the greatest concern. If an AWS engages and kills civilians, then who is responsible? What role does the military perform in making ethical decisions if machines and algorithms are executing them? Autonomous agents in close proximity to adversarial agents could quickly escalate a conflict without a human involved in the decision. The current debate within the DoD is the "Terminator Conundrum" and given the potential risks of AWS, the DoD should not develop them. However, U.S. adversaries do not have the same hesitations with AWS and could achieve a decisive advantage in the future. Therefore, the debate does not necessarily lie with whether or not to develop AWS as much as deciding what aspects of warfare to automate and those to leave in control by humans. (United States Army War College 2017, Kindle location 1258-1265)

We shall see, as we move forward in our study of the book of Revelation, that there appears to be evidence of the use of autonomous weapon systems not to mention the usage of chemical, biological and nuclear weapon systems as well.

Geopolitically, it has never looked worse.

Zechariah 12:3

"It will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it." (NASB95)

Monetarily, we are one world crisis away from a single form of monetary exchange.

The bottom line, everything seems to be counting down, everything is pointing to a major tipping point in the very near future, and the one thing that seems to be falling into serious disrepair, is the role of the Bible in all of this.

The rebellion of Babylon has carried on throughout history. The people of those days sacrificed their children to pagan gods; we sacrifice our unborn children on the altar of convenience. We do not bow down before stone idols; we give wholehearted allegiance to the gods of money, power, and sex. Too often our devotion to God is an "add on," something done in church once a week. Christians are a minority in an increasingly hostile culture. We are exiles, not geographically, but morally and spiritually. (Lutzer 2018, 31)

A careful study of Americans' core beliefs reveals a nation in transition, moving from a predominantly Judeo-Christian point of view to a mostly postmodern, secular worldview. (Barna 2016, Kindle location 284-285)

...the term "Christianophobia" best illustrates the characteristics exhibited by the respondents. This term refers to an unreasonable hatred toward and fear of conservative Christians. (Yancey and Williamson 2015, Kindle location 219-220)

Matthew 24:6-12

"You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes. But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs. Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many. Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold." (NASB95)

Wars and rumors of wars, per Jesus, is a normal state for a fallen world and has been something we have seen quite frequently during the church age

To understand what the idiom “nation against nation, and kingdom against kingdom” means, it is necessary to return to the Jewish origin of these statements. This expression is a Hebrew idiom for a world war. Yeshua’s statement here is that when a world war occurs, rather than merely a local war, that world war would signal that the end of the age had begun. (Fruchtenbaum 1983, 7)

A worldwide conflict was to only be the beginning of birth pangs.
So, has this taken place?

The War to End All Wars did not end all wars, but it was a marker starting the clock of the time that Jesus talked about.

Even by the most conservative of the official tabulations—one made by the U.S. War Department six years later—more than 8.5 million soldiers were killed on all fronts. Most other counts are higher, usually by about a million. (Hochschild 2011, 347)

The Russian empire collapsed, and the Russian revolution resulted with the rise of the Soviet Union
The Ottoman Turk Empire collapsed opening up the door for what would later become Israel
The Austrian-Hungarian Empire collapsed
The German Empire collapsed
The United States began to rise

Adolf Hitler showed the way genocide is done as he tried to kill every Jew on the planet and succeeded in destroying 1/3 of them, 5.29 to 6.2 million, in the gas ovens of his “final solution.”

We witnessed the miracle of Israel being born as prophesied in Ezekiel 36 and 37.
Israel is back in the land, the singular super sign of the end of the age.

The very land itself, in its perpetual refusal to give peaceful and secure home to any of the Gentiles who have overrun it, throughout all its sad desolations, gives out its complaints and prayers that Jehovah would not forget his covenant with the house of Israel, and utters from every hill and valley, shore and sea, the prophecy of some future of hope and blessing which cannot be delayed forever. (Seiss 1901, 426)

We are in the period of time Jesus discussed in Matthew 24 and 25, this is the period immediately, in my opinion, leading up to the beginning of the 70th 7 spoken of by Daniel in chapter 9

Daniel 9:27

“And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.” (NASB95)

There is a detailed description of what we can expect during these last days, in fact, the book takes us all the way from the beginning of the Church Age to today, and then onward into the future.

This detailed description is incredibly easy to understand.

And John provided us an outline.

Revelation 1:19

“Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things.” (NASB95)

Outline

1. Introduction 1:1 – 3
2. Salutation 1:4 – 8
3. The things you have seen
 - a. Jesus glorified 1: 9 – 16
 - b. What it means 1:17 – 20
4. The things which are
 - a. Ephesus 2:1 – 7
 - b. Smyrna 2: 8 – 11
 - c. Pergamum 2: 12 – 17
 - d. Thyatira 2:18 – 29
 - e. Sardis 3:1 – 6
 - f. Philadelphia 3: 7 – 13
 - g. Laodicea 3: 14 – 22
5. The things which will take place after these things
 - a. The divine council and Jesus
 - i. The throne room 4:1 – 11
 - ii. The property deal of all eternity 5:1 – 14
 - b. The 70th 7 of Daniel
 - i. The first 3 ½ years
 1. The seal judgements 6:1 – 17
 2. The 144,000 7:1 – 8
 3. Tribulation saints 7:2 – 17
 4. The seventh seal = the trumpet judgements 8:1 – 9:21
 - ii. Halftime
 1. The little book 10:1 – 11
 2. The tribulation temple 11:1 – 2
 3. The two witnesses 11:3 – 14
 4. The seventh trumpet 11:15 – 19
 5. Israel, the birth of Jesus, and war 12:1 – 17
 6. The monster from the sea 13:1 – 10
 7. The monster from the earth 13:11 – 18
 8. A word or two from our sponsor 14:1 – 20
 - iii. The last 3 ½ years
 1. The warm up 15:1 – 8
 2. The bowl judgements 16:1 – 21
 - iv. The two Babylons
 1. Religious Babylon (1st half) 17:1 – 18
 2. Political Babylon (2nd half) 18:1 – 24
 - c. The Second Coming, mopping up and consolidating
 - i. Setting the stage 19:1 – 10
 - ii. The Second Coming of Christ 19:11 – 18
 - iii. Armageddon 19:19
 - iv. Finally (the anti-Christ and the False Prophet get theirs) 19:20
 - v. The gentile armies 19:21
 - vi. Satan in chains 20:1 – 3
 - d. The Kingdom of Messiah
 - i. Messiah on the throne 20:4
 - ii. The first resurrection 20:5 – 6
 - e. At the end of the millennium
 - i. The final revolt 20:7 – 10
 - ii. The Great White Throne Judgement 20:11 – 15
 - f. All things are new
 - i. The new, new world order 21:1 – 8
 - ii. New Jerusalem 21:9 – 22:5
6. Wrapping it all up

- a. Authentication 22:6 – 9
- b. A final word 22:10 – 16
- c. One more invitation 22:17
- d. A warning 22:18 – 19
- e. One more affirmation 22:20
- f. Benediction 22:21

Revelation 1:1

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John,” (NASB95)

“Αποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἣν ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ ὁ θεὸς δεῖξαι τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι ἐν τάχει, καὶ ἐσήμανεν ἀποστείλας διὰ τοῦ ἀγγέλου αὐτοῦ τῷ δούλῳ αὐτοῦ Ἰωάννῃ,” (Revelation 1:1, NA28)

The very first word of the book tells us that the content of this book should not be hard to get at all. The Greek word used is ἀποκάλυψις.

It means “making fully known, revelation, disclosure.” (Arndt, Gingrich and Danker 2000, 112)

This tells us, right at the very beginning, that the intent is to reveal the contents to us. Jesus obviously wants us to understand what it is that has been revealed to Him by the Father, that which He is revealing through an angel to John and ultimately, to us.

Amos 3:7

“Surely the Lord GOD does nothing Unless He reveals His secret counsel To His servants the prophets.” (NASB95)

In the Old Testament, whenever God chose someone to speak for Him, there was usually an interview, a meeting.

Genesis 5:21–22

“Enoch lived sixty-five years, and became the father of Methuselah. Then Enoch walked with God three hundred years after he became the father of Methuselah, and he had other sons and daughters.” (NASB95)

The idea of walking with God conveys the idea of getting to know Him, it is all about relationship. As we see in Jude 14 – 15, Enoch was considered a prophet of God.

Enoch 12:1–2

“Before these words were spoken Enoch was taken, and nobody knew where he was taken and where he is now and what happened to him. His works were with the watchmen and his days were with the holy ones.” (LES)

The book of 1 Enoch, written between the closing of the Old Testament and the New Testament, connects Enoch with the Divine Council and that God interviewed him.

Isaiah 6:1–5

“In the year of King Uzziah’s death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called out to another and said, “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory.” And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke. Then I said, “Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.”” (NASB95)

There is an obvious calling of Isaiah and a divine meeting is connected with that. So why all of this about the revealing or revelation that Jesus is providing and why the connection to Amos 3:7, it is quite simple. As new testament believers, you and I are called.

Ephesians 1:18

“—since the eyes of your heart have been enlightened—so that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what is the wealth of his glorious inheritance in the saints,” (NET)

1 Peter 2:9–10

“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own, so that you may proclaim the virtues of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. You once were not a people, but now you are God’s people. You were shown no mercy, but now you have received mercy.” (NET)

Ephesians 1:1–12

“From: Paul, an apostle of the Messiah Jesus by God’s will. To: His holy and faithful people in Ephesus who are in union with the Messiah Jesus. May grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, be yours! Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus, the Messiah! He has blessed us in the Messiah with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realm, just as he chose us in the Messiah before the creation of the universe to be holy and blameless in his presence. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself through Jesus the Messiah, according to the pleasure of his will, so that we would praise his glorious grace that he gave us in the Beloved One. In union with him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our offenses, according to the riches of God’s grace that he lavished on us, along with all wisdom and understanding, when he made known to us the secret of his will. This was according to his plan that he set forth in the Messiah to usher in the fullness of the times and to bring together in the Messiah all things in heaven and on earth. In the Messiah we were also chosen when we were predestined according to the purpose of the one who does everything that he wills to do, so that we who had already fixed our hope on the Messiah might live for his praise and glory.” (ISV)

As new testament believers, we are called, we are adopted and positionally already in the heavenlies. From an information security perspective, we fall into the category of “need to know,” just as the prophets had a need to know based on what it says in Amos 3:7

Amos 3:7

“Surely the Lord GOD does nothing Unless He reveals His secret counsel To His servants the prophets.” (NASB95)

It is also interesting to note that there is no article in the Greek prior to the word apokalypsis. This is “a” revelation, not “the” revelation.

Dr. Stephen Smalley points out that “John’s revelation, expressed in this generic form, is being handed on to a particular community at a special moment in history; but it is perhaps understood as part of God’s ongoing self-disclosure: a revelation, one of a number, the origin of which is to be found in God Himself, rather than the definitive vision, which is never repeated.” (Smalley 2005, 27)

As the text says in verse one, this is a revealing, an apocalypse of Jesus Christ and He wants you and I to know what is in this book.

The word apokalypsis (“apocalypse”) is part of an allusion to Dan. 2, since the whole of 1:1 is patterned after the broad structure of Dan. 2:28–30, 45–47 (cf. Θ), where apokalyptō (“reveal”) appears five times (cf. also 2:19, 22), ha dei genesthai (“what must come to pass”) three times, and sēmainō (“signify”) twice (cf. also 2:23 LXX). The words en tachei (“quickly”) are a conscious substitution for Daniel’s “in the latter days” (e.g., Dan. 2:28) and connote the definite, imminent time of fulfillment. But whereas Daniel expected this fulfillment to occur in the distant future, the “latter days,” John expects it to begin in his own generation. Indeed, it has already started to happen, as the references to beginning fulfillment of OT prophecy in chapter 1 bear out (cf. 1:5, 7, 13, 16). (Beale and McDonough 2007, 1088)

The Revelation of Jesus Christ—This implies not just “to” and “from” Him, but actually “of” Him. This book is about the manifestation “of” Jesus Christ. (Creamer 2010, 1)

Simply put, we would not naturally know anything about the material in the book of Revelation or even Daniel for that matter without it being revealed to us. Revelation is an expansion of what was previously shown to us in Isaiah 24 – 27 as well as in Daniel.

Jesus wants us to know and desires our obedience to what we will study

He is relying on us to tell the world about Him before it is too late, as the time is indeed short. We are having revealed to us the imminent future.

The visions of this book are presented as an “uncovering of hidden truths,” namely the hidden reality of God’s sovereign control of the future, of how he is going to bring an end to the seeming success of the forces of evil in the present age. (Osborne 2002, 53)

Matthew 28:19–20

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (NASB95)

A little more on apokalypsis

In the NT the word group occurs 44 times (verb, 26; noun, 18), nearly always with the basic thrust “to uncover what has formerly been hidden” and, unlike secular Greek, with a strong religious and eschatological force. (Osborne 2002, 52)

Moving on in the text, we see that the revealing, the unveiling of and about Jesus is to “show to His bond servants.”

The word for show is δείκνυμι (deiknumi) - to exhibit something that can be apprehended by one or more of the senses, point out, show, make known, to prove or make clear by evidence or reasoning, explain, prove. (Arndt, Gingrich and Danker 2000, 214-215)

Jesus wants to show, prove and make clear to His bond servants, His δούλους (doulos) what must soon take place. A doulos is a bond slave, for a Jew, they would immediately think back to Deuteronomy 15:16.

Deuteronomy 15:16–17

“It shall come about if he says to you, ‘I will not go out from you,’ because he loves you and your household, since he fares well with you; then you shall take an awl and pierce it through his ear into the door, and he shall be your servant forever. Also you shall do likewise to your maidservant.” (NASB95)

The phrase τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ (“to his servants”) refers to the community of faith, which has a general prophetic vocation, rather than to a limited group of prophets. (Beale, The Book of Revelation: A commentary on the Greek Text, New International Greek Testament Commentary 1999, 183)

The picture is one used throughout the new testament, as believers, we have willingly become bond slaves to our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. We love the Master and we have pledged our service to Him as a bond slave. Paul used this image continuously. Jesus referred to it and also showed that there is a natural progression that takes place by being faithful.

John 15:15

“No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.” (NASB95)

Paul gloried in calling himself Christ's δουλος [doulos] (bond-slave). Servants (δουλους [doulous]). Bond-servants, slaves. I have called you friends (ὑμας εἰρηκα φίλους [humas eirēka philous]). Perfect active indicative, permanent state of new dignity. They will prove worthy of it by continued obedience to Christ as Lord, by being good δουλοι [doulou]. Abraham was called the Friend of God (James 2:23). Are we friends of Christ? (Robertson 1933, Jn 15:15)

1 Thessalonians 5:1–10

“Now you do not need to have anything written to you about times and dates, brothers, for you yourselves know very well that the Day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When people say, “There is peace and security,” destruction will strike them as suddenly as labor pains come to a pregnant woman, and they will not be able to escape. However, brothers, you are not in the darkness, in order that the Day of the Lord might surprise you like a thief. For all of you are children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to darkness. Therefore, let's not fall asleep like others do, but let's stay awake and be sober. For people who go to sleep, go to sleep at night; and people who get drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let's be sober. We must put on the breastplate of faith and love, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. For God has not destined us to receive wrath but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus, the Messiah, who died for us in order that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him.” (ISV)

There is something about this message which is being communicated that also provides a sense of urgency about it. The things in this message “must” take place very soon.

δεῖ - day - to be under necessity of happening, it is necessary, one must, one has to, denoting compulsion of any kind. Of that which takes place because of circumstances or inner necessity, with the context determining the cause, of the compulsion of law or custom, of an inner necessity growing out of a given situation, of compulsion caused by the necessity of attaining a certain result. (Arndt, Gingrich and Danker 2000, 213-214)

Scholars see the choice of this specific word, which shows up in the new testament continuously, as a way for God to show us the necessity of all He is doing.

The word δεῖ expresses the necessity of the eschatological event, and is thus an eschatological term in the NT. It is well adapted for this role, since the eschatological event is one which is hidden from man, which can be known only by special revelation, and which sets man before an inconceivable necessity of historical occurrence grounded in the divine will. The tension which results when δεῖ is linked with the biblical doctrine of God applies also to this δεῖ which stands over the great eschatological drama. It is the δεῖ of the mysterious God who pursues His plans for the world in the eschatological event. Not a blind belief in destiny, but faith in God's eternal plans formulates this δεῖ. The δεῖ denotes that God is in Himself committed to these plans. It thus expresses a necessity which lies in the very nature of God and which issues in the execution of His plans in the eschatological event. (Grundmann 1964, 23)

We only know about the contents of this book because God, in His love, chose to communicate the truths in it to Jesus so that Jesus could let us know.

Amos 3:7

“Surely the Lord GOD does nothing Unless He reveals His secret counsel To His servants the prophets.” (NASB95)

The “must” we now understand, as the events in the future being signified to John “must” take place. That we now clearly see, and the events “must” take place “soon.”

“Soon,” in the Greek, is the word τάχος – tachos. We get the word tachometer from this. ...a very brief period of time, with focus on speed of an activity or event, speed, quickness, swiftness, haste. (Arndt, Gingrich and Danker 2000, 992)

If there is a need, a “must” because the events are taking place soon, in a very brief period of time swiftly coming up on us, why are we still here?

Since John wrote this around 90 AD, during the rule of Emperor Domitian, why the rush?

We will not, however, incur the risk of pronouncing positively as to the name of Antichrist; for if it were necessary that his name should be distinctly revealed in this present time, it would have been announced by him who beheld the apocalyptic vision. For that was seen no very long time since, but almost in our day, towards the end of Domitian’s reign. (Lyons 1885, 559-560)

Domitian generally enforced emperor worship. Upon their refusal to participate, he accused Christians of treason. He martyred some, dispossessed others of their property, and banished others. (Vos 1999, 603)

Getting to the issue of the urgency, it is a simple fact that we will see as we move forward in the book, some aspects of the prophecy were already in the process of being fulfilled. There is an urgency to get the word out quickly so that the new testament prophets, of which we are, will know what is happening. We have a need to know.

The focus of “quickness” and “nearness” in vv 1–3 is primarily on inauguration of prophetic fulfillment and its ongoing aspect, not on nearness of consummated fulfillment, though the latter is secondarily in mind as leading from the former. (Beale, The Book of Revelation: A commentary on the Greek Text, New International Greek Testament Commentary 1999, 182)

So we see in the text that this is an unveiling, a revealing of and about Jesus Christ specifically to His new testament prophets, His body, so that we can know what “must” happen soon “and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John.”

Jesus sent, the word is ἀποστείλας (aposteilas)

...send forth, send out; in relation to a sender send with a commission, send with authority, send for a purpose. (Friberg, Friberg and Miller 2000, 71)

Jesus commissioned and sent with authority

The Greek verb (sēmainō) carries the idea of figurative representation. Strictly speaking, it means to make known by some sort of sign. Thus it is admirably suited to the symbolic character of the book. This should warn the reader not to expect a literal presentation of future history, but a symbolic portrayal of that which must yet take place. It is important for an adequate understanding of Revelation to remember that God is communicating his message by means of visions that are symbolic rather than literal. What they portray exists in actuality, but the vision itself is simply the medium used by God to transmit that reality. (Mounce 1997, 42)

So, what we see here in verse one is that we have the unveiling or revealing of and about Jesus Christ that which was given to Him by God the Father, to be able to show to His new testament prophets, His body, His servants, what will soon be taking place. And based on what we have seen elsewhere in the scriptures, soon is much sooner than when this was given to John. John and those of his day were to anticipate the soon coming of Jesus, much more for us today.

This information, given to Jesus, was commissioned and sent with authority, He will personally be involved with the message as will His messenger, His angel and the information will be sent in a medium, since it involves the future and technology will John has never seen before much less be able to explain, in signs. The message will involve John traveling through time, he will obtain views of the unseen realm, he will personally see the future divine council after it is reconstituted by Jesus once the church is with Him. John will see some of the same things Daniel, Isaiah and Ezekiel saw. I wonder if they saw each other since they were observing the same event?

John will tell us, throughout the book, “I saw.”

He relates this 39 times in the English text of the New American Standard Bible; he is an eye witness.

Revelation 1:1–3

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John, who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.” (NASB95)

John is an eye-witness. He will see all of the events and report on what it is that he sees. He will also report on all that he hears, except for thing, where he is told not to relay the information about thunder in Revelation 10:4. John will testify to the word of God, he will also testify to all that Jesus gives him, but again, he is also an eye witness who will apparently be transported through time and space. He will view and report on events from the future in the physical realm as well as in the unseen realm.

This book is unique, yes, we are blessed as we study the word, because the more understand what it is that God says in His word, the more we become like Him. That in itself is a blessing, but this book carries a special blessing on top of that.

Translating verse 3a, blessed is the one who reads, the one who reads aloud and those who listen to and hear the words of the prophecy. That is not all of the requirements for the special blessing, there is another requirement in verse 3, and keeps or observes conforming to the words the prophecy for the season is near. Hearing is not enough for us, the scriptures are consistent in that we must take action on the truth that we hear.

As we go through this book, there will be opportunities for us to act, repent, and redouble our efforts to let those who are around us know that they can escape the events described in this book.

The theme throughout this book is echoed in the final phrase of verse 3, the time is near. When looking at the word John used for near, we pick up nuances of what this means.

ἐγγύς - eggus - pertaining to being in close proximity spatially, near, close to. Pertaining to being close in point of time, near. Pertaining to being close as experience or event, close. (Arndt, Gingrich and Danker 2000, 271)

Luke 21:28

“But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.” (NASB95)

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The Book of Revelation is written in a symbolically way, it is not literal and you need to have a good command of history. From John's time (96AD) the writing of Revelation was divided into three sections: the past Ch 1-5; the present Ch 6-11 and the future Ch 12-22. All the symbology has the same meaning throughout the bible, eg the 'seas' roaring are people in a state of agitation, 'heavenly places' are persons in places of political power. Nothing in the book of Revelation suggests that its sequence of symbols and visions are to be plotted along a chronological timeline, all related strictly to the very end of human history. Christians in the first few generations saw the descriptions of persecution against God's people as exactly what they were experiencing, for instance, at the end of the first century during the reign of Roman Emperor Domitian. The end of the story is an astonishing description of a new creation, including symbols of a new city, a new temple, and a new people. The message is this: God will prevail. Get the whole book version of How to Understand the Bible here. Not yet signed up to receive "How to Understand the Bible" via email? Revelation 1. Prologue (Daniel 12:1-13). 1 This is the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants what must soon come to pass. And I will never blot out his name from the Book of Life, but I will confess his name before My Father and His angels. 6 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the Church in Philadelphia. 10 Because you have kept My command to persevere, I will also keep you from the hour of testing that is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. 11 I am coming soon. Hold fast to what you have, so that no one will take your crown. 12 The one who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will never again leave it. The Book of Revelation (also called the Apocalypse of John, Revelation to John or Revelation from Jesus Christ) is the final book of the New Testament, and consequently is also the final book of the Christian Bible. Its title is derived from the first word of the Koine Greek text: apokalypsis, meaning "unveiling" or "revelation." The Book of Revelation is the only apocalyptic book in the New Testament canon. Thus, it occupies a central place in Christian eschatology.