

“Apocalypse Now!”

(or, “A Whirlwind Tour of the Book of Revelation”)

- What is the message of this mysterious part of God’s Word?
 - What has it to say to me, today?

Ch.1	“Setting the Scene”	Who, What, Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Who gives this revelation? ❖ Is it 1 or many? ❖ Why is it given? ❖ What promise is given (v3) ❖ What is the general impression given of the person speaking from v12? Who is this? ❖ Compare v8 with v17 and ch. 22:12,13,16,20. What does this tell us about this person? ❖ How did John react? What did the Lord do? V17
Ch.2 & 3	“Strong Words to the Churches”	Letters to 7 churches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Read 2:1-11 ❖ In these 2 samples of the letters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ How does Jesus speak of Himself? ❖ What praise is given? ❖ What warnings are given? ❖ What promises are given? ❖ Some think these 7 mean 7 different ages of the church (& then the burning question becomes “which are we in?”). Do you see any evidence in the book for this idea? ❖ Others think they are meant for the church of all ages. Any evidence for this? If so then we all need to be confessing, repenting, hungering, serving, hoping and hanging on. Verse 10b.
Ch.4 & 5	“In the Control Room of the Universe”	Vision of the throne-room of Heaven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Read quickly through together. ❖ Look for 1 thing that really impresses you. ❖ Tell the rest of your group. ❖ Who is in focus in ch. 5? ❖ What name is he mostly called here? What does this tell us about the heart of this section (and indeed the whole book – this name is used of him 26 times.)? ❖ The last part is an awe-inspiring song of praise to this One. List all those who take part. ❖ What does 5:9 tell us about the motive and goal of worldwide missionary labour? See too chapter 7:9,10. ❖ Who is in control? What does this mean to you?
Ch.6 to 19	“A Short Pictorial History of the World – 0 BC to the End”	Overlapping and interlocking visions of the time between Christ’s 1 st and 2 nd comings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Cannot now read all of this ❖ Instead, look for repeating themes:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 8:1, 11:17. 19:1 ❖ 6:3, 8:13, 9:18, 14:15, 16:4 to 7, 20:11-13 ❖ 12:17, 13:7, 17:5&6 ❖ 6:16, 12:7&8, 18:19&20, 19:20, 20:10 ❖ 7:9 to 17, 14:13, 19:6 to 8
Ch.2 1 & 22:1-5	“Paradise Restored”	Genesis ch.3 put right.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Read quickly through ch.21:1-8, ch.21:22 to ch.22:5 ❖ What things are present here that were lost when man fell in Genesis 3? ❖ What things are missing here that were given to man after he fell?
Ch. 22:6-end	“The Doxology”	Last words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ What similarities can you see with chapter 1? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ V6 ❖ V7 ❖ V8 ❖ V12 & 13 ❖ Who is speaking here? ❖ Who is inside this restored Paradise? ❖ Who is left outside? ❖ Who is invited, and welcome to come in? Why then are some left out? ❖ Does your heart leap to join in with the “Come, Lord Jesus!”? <p>The it is a good sign of spiritual health – Psalm 73:25 (ESV) “Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. “</p>

A better title (really the key to the whole)

“There is a Redeemer, Jesus, God’s own son. Precious Lamb of God, Messiah, Holy One.”

Some notes that might be helpful:-

Ch.1	“Setting the Scene”	It is worthwhile to compare Rev. 1 with Daniel’s vision in Daniel 10.
Ch.2 & 3	“Strong Words to the Churches”	
Ch.4 & 5	“In the Control Room of the Universe”	“living creatures” – these are very much like those in Ezekiel chapter 1. They may also be the seraphim Isaiah saw in his 6 th chapter.
Ch.6 to 19	“A Short Pictorial History of the World – 0 BC to the End”	<p>Now, how are we to make sense of such prophecies? Here are rules for understanding apocalyptic (or any) Scripture. Many try wrong ways & end up confused.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • True, but not necessarily “literal” (for apocalyptic passages, think in terms of true history told in true imagery, in symbols) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • true history – A&E were real people – Jesus uses them as history Matthew 19:4 (ESV) He answered, “Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male & female”; • true poetry – eg, Isaiah 40:6 (ESV) A voice says, “Cry!” & I said, “What shall I cry?” All flesh is grass, & all its beauty is like the flower of the field. • true metaphor - Psalm 36:7 (ESV) “How precious is your steadfast love, O God! The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings.”; Does God, who is a Spirit, have wings? • true imagery – Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of great Statue & Stone not literal; Rev 12 “moon & stars” under woman’s feet not literal; Temple & mighty river Ez. 47:1-6 not literal • true parables – the main point, not the minute details, eg, 5+5 virgins; • true generalisations eg Prov. 26:4,5 “answer a fool...” – 2 seeming opposites given, both true generalisations. • true plain teaching (Law & Letters...); • true science – Ecc. 1:6,7 cycles of winds & water • Gospel is key (the Gospel is God’s scarlet thread running through all the Bible from Genesis 3:15 to Revelation 22:21). If we can see what a passage of Scripture says about Jesus the Saviour of ruined men, women & children, we have seen the main thing. • For apocalyptic Scripture, think of a collage picture, or a wall mural – we get the main point, but don’t try to connect all the bits (eg, diversity of city life, speed & noise of a car race, beauty of motherhood). Not detailed story-plot, or lawyer’s contract, or engineer’s specification. Ask “What symbol is being used here, and then what does it mean?” <p>We won’t get everything; Deut. 29:29 (ESV) “The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us & to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.” – one purpose is to make us holy – another is to keep us humble.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The woman in ch. 12 is the church, 12 apostles are the 12 stars in her crown. Note, her children are many, v17. If this were Mary and Jesus that would not make sense. ❖ Ch 13 & 17 – parallel to Daniel ch. 7 and 8. Note 17:9; John is almost certainly meaning the Roman Empire here, for Rome was known as the city of 7 hills. Rome was the crown conqueror of previous empires, and the mother of western powers up till now. ❖ 1000 years in ch. 20 – is a symbol, as all the rest. Many believe this is the time of Christ’s reign from His going back to heaven till His return; ie, we are living in this time. <p>An indication of the cyclic nature of these chapters and their visions can be found by looking at 6:12-17, 11:15-18, 14:14-20, 16:17-21, 18:21-24 and 20:11-15. All 6 passages display the return of Christ as visible King and Judge, that is, 6 x “THE END”!</p>
Ch.21 & 22	“Paradise Restored”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ “In Genesis I see the earth created; in Revelation I see it passing away. ❖ In Genesis Sun and Moon appear; in Revelation I read they have no need of Sun or Moon. ❖ In Genesis there is a garden, which is the home of man; in Revelation there is city, the home of nations. ❖ In Genesis there is the marriage of the first Adam; in Revelation there is the marriage of the second Adam. ❖ In Genesis there is the first grim appearance of that great enemy Satan; in Revelation there is his final doom. ❖ In Genesis there is the inauguration of sorrow and suffering, you hear the first sob, you see the first tear; in Revelation there is no more sorrow, and no more pain, and all tears are wiped away. ❖ In Genesis we hear the mutter of the curse, which falls because of sin; in Revelation we read ‘there is no more curse.’ ❖ In Genesis we see man driven out from the garden with the tree of life; in Revelation we see him welcomed back, with the tree of life at his disposal.” (from G. Brown, in “The Outlined Bible”, by Robert Lee - Pickering & Inglis)
Ch. 22:21, 22	“The Doxology”	

A Short History of the World, 0 B.C. to the End			
(Jesus' 1st coming to His 2nd coming)			
Chapter			
6		Begins with the Lamb and ends with the Last Judgement at His return ("THE END")	
7	7 Seals	An interlude, answering chapter 6's great question, "Who can stand?" - GRACE to all nations	
8	7 Trumpets	7 th Seal, Silence, Prayer & 4 Trumpets	
9		5 th & 6 th Trumpets	
10		The Mighty Angel & the Little Scroll	
11		2 Witnesses & 7 th Trumpet, & the Kingdom of Christ has come ("THE END")	
12	Note: no cycle	Lamb & Dragon	Jesus born from womb of O.T.; Satan furious & makes war on Jesus' church
13	of 7 in this		Satan's 2 Beasts
14	segment -->		The Redeemed, the Lost, & the Last Judgment again ("THE END")
15		6 judgments again	7 Bowls of Wrath
16	and the 7 th is the Last Judgment ("THE END")		
17		The Pride, Might & Wealth of Man	Fall of Great Babylon
18		Crashes into final ruin ("THE END")	
19		The Wedding Reception of the Lamb & His Church	Gospel, Glory & Great Judgement
20		& the final defeat of Satan & his followers at the Last Judgment ("THE END")	