

The Jewish Final Solution to the World's Problem - An Introduction to the Book of Revelation

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[0 : 00] Turn to the last book of the Bible, the Revelation. And this morning, we'll be looking at Revelation chapter 1, verses 1 through 8.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him to show to His bondservants the things which must soon take place.

And He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bondservant 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.

John, to the seven churches that are in Asia, Grace to you and peace from Him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth, to Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood.

[1 : 54] And He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father. To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him, and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him.

So it is to be. Amen. I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

That is a truly awesome passage of Scripture, and it is going to be backed up by the content that will follow.

And I can assure you, we are in for some pretty exciting things that will be coming our way from the revelation that was given to John.

[3 : 04] And we need to be careful and understand that it is the revelation, singular. Even though the book contains multiple revelations, plural, about a lot of things, principally, it is about one.

And it is the revelation of Jesus Christ, which was given to John for the purpose of recording. So despite all the other things that are going to be revealed in this book, they all are secondary to the revelation of the one who matters most, and that, of course, is our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is probably one of the more controversial books in all of the Bible and its message in all of Christendom, because it talks about what most people erroneously think of and call the end of the world.

Well, there isn't going to be an end of the world. The world is not going to end. It is going to be purged. There's going to be a new heavens and a new earth, but it's still going to be the same planet.

It's going to be radically reworked during the millennial reign of Christ, and it is going to morph into the eternal state where believers will be gathered with one another and with the Lord throughout eternity, a concept which none of us can begin to get our minds around because we are so locked into time and space.

[4 : 36] This book is extremely controversial, so much so that many even refuse to engage it. Notice a scholar like Martin Luther, who left us behind volumes and volumes of his writings and commentaries was such that he would not even engage the revelation.

He considered it simply beyond being able to be understood. Yet, the book itself, in the very first chapter, promises a blessing to those who read the contents of the book.

And this is the only book in the whole Bible that promises such a blessing. Why do you suppose that promise would be included if there is really, in essence, no way of taking advantage of it? Because how can you be blessed by something that you can't understand? I don't think you can. The blessing comes from the comfort that is derived and the enlightenment that is given regarding the end times.

And everybody has a penchant for the future. We all want to know what's coming. This book is loaded with symbolism and it has some rather grotesque-sounding creatures in it that can be absolutely intimidating to a poor human reader like ourselves.

[6 : 03] So you read these things about these creatures that are called beasts with multiple heads and multiple wings and so on. We just cannot conceive of anything like this.

And some just reduce the whole book to fancy because it seems to be outside the parameters of our understanding. So they just dismiss the whole thing as the figment of somebody's imagination who lived a long, long time ago.

Revelation suffers from the same kind of rejection as does Genesis among many of the denominational institutions. And there is a kind of attitude afoot today that I associate with what we will call the drive for secularism, which is to exclude God from everything.

And part of the reasoning of the secularists and those who promote that agenda is that, you know, the Bible and all of that stuff that's in it, all of the religious gobbledygook and everything, that might have been okay for people of an earlier day, you know, like back a few hundred years.

But through science and technology, we have progressed to such a place today that we can safely dismiss all of those things. We have grown out.

[7 : 26] As humanity, we have grown out of the Bible. And that's the kind of superiority attitude that many have out there in the secular community, that the Bible is for, okay, if you're a country bumpkin and you get some comfort from it, go ahead and read it.

But those of us who have progressed enough in our culture and in our society and in our learned institutions, we just don't need that stuff anymore. We've grown out of that.

The Bible was for manhood in its infancy. And you'd be surprised how many people there are who believe that, particularly in our leading academic institutions.

And they are the same ones who would deride the Bible in saying, you know, it doesn't contain any of the update information or anything. Listen, the Bible was never intended to address purely temporal matters.

No, you don't find spaceships in the Bible. You don't find the splitting of the atom. You don't find man walking on the moon. These things are not in the Bible because the Bible does not intend to address man in his scientific endeavors of progress.

[8 : 37] The Bible intends to address man. Period. That's the thrust of the Bible. It isn't about man and his progress and his technology.

It is about man who is essentially unchanged from the earliest of mankind to the present. Man still has the same problems, the same fears, the same hangups, the same doubts, the same worries, the same kind of psyche.

Nothing has changed. The human creature has not changed. That is what the Bible addresses. It addresses the human condition. It doesn't intend to try to keep up with technology and the advances of science.

That was never the purpose of it. Actually, the Bible has a much higher aim. It addresses man and God's pursuit of man to embrace him so that man can be with this God creator throughout eternity. Revelation, this book that we'll be undertaking, and by the way, as is often the case, I have a number of propositions to share with you.

[9 : 48] I'll get through them as quickly as I can, and we'll try to have a few minutes for Q&A; at the end because it'll probably generate some questions. Genesis is closely connected with the Revelation.

The first three chapters of Genesis revealed the entrance of sin into God's original creation that he had pronounced as very good. The last three chapters of Revelation reveals the purging of sin from the redeemed creation wrought by Christ so that it is accurate to say Genesis constitutes the foundation and the Revelation constitutes the capstone.

I've never attended one of these, but I understand from people who build these skyscrapers that they do it on a regular basis. When they build a skyscraper, they, of course, spend a great deal of

time laying the foundation because for a building that's going to be so tall, it has to have really solid bedrock foundation under it.

So they put pylons down, and they go down several feet to lay that foundation. And then as the building is erected, all of the workers together, the steel workers and everyone who makes the building, what it's going to be, exterior and interior, they are all involved in this process.

And when the time comes to build the final floor, the top story of that building, they always have what they call a topping off party where everybody gets together who had any input in the building of that building, and they just throw a fantastic party for everybody.

[11 : 30] And it's called the topping off party. Well, the book of the Revelation is kind of like a topping off party. Much of it's going to be a very bloody party.

It's going to be the final assize. It's going to incorporate things like the Battle of Armageddon, with which everyone is essentially familiar, even our politicians are.

It's going to be a time of Jacob's trouble. It is described as it will be a time that will peculiarly feature the Jewish people. And there will be an effort to resume Hitler's activity during World War II.

Only this time, it will be with the intent of completely annihilating all of the Jewish people. That is going to be part and parcel of the Revelation as well when we get to it. And I think it will become rather clear.

We are going to investigate the book, fully expecting to understand its message, believing it was revealed and intended for human consumption.

[12 : 33] And here, of course, is where we would differ with a lot of those who would come to the book and attempt to understand it. Our position is, and we feel this way about the whole of the Bible, not just the book of the Revelation, that this book called the Bible is intended to communicate.

It is intended to be a document of revelation, not concealment. The Bible was never given to simply cause anyone to be puzzled or unable to understand it.

It was given for the express purpose of recipients hearing the message, being able to understand the message sufficiently so as to act on it.

There is a very logical purpose involved. It's not given to dazzle us. It's not given to confuse us. It is given for our enlightenment, for our instruction, for our blessing, for all scriptures given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, to the end that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished, equipped, outfitted for everything that he needs to do.

It is all incorporated in this book and we feel the same way about the Revelation. Of course, there are depths in it that we may not be able to plumb. There are passages in it that are still well over my head.

[13 : 59] You are going to hear me say as we go through the book of Revelation, I'll just have to have further light on that. I just don't know and I've still never been able to adequately identify the four and twenty elders in Revelation 4 or in Revelation 5.

I know there are some who are quite convinced as to their identity but I'm just not that sure. So, what we are sure of we will try to emphasize and what we are still unsure of we will try to be honest and let you know that we just don't know.

We're waiting for more light. And, during our Q&A;, it is entirely possible that somebody out there may have some answers that I don't have. because we are firm believers that the Bible is its own best interpreter.

That no mere human being, including this one, is actually competent to interpret the Bible. This is why God has revealed the Word in such a way that it is self-interpreting.

The Bible is its best interpreter. And you will see how that comes to play time and time again. And we will also see it happens in such significant cases.

[15 : 16] There is no way that it can be considered a coincidence. It is just impossible. If we are promised a blessing, the blessing has to be contingent upon our understanding because God does not want to bless us in our ignorance.

He wants to bless us in our understanding. In our being able to appropriate what He has given. Because, how can you derive any comfort or enlightenment from something you can't understand? That's nonsense. So, the whole value of the book is in being able to appropriate its message. And while I said there are things that I still don't have a handle on that we cannot understand fully, yet I

can promise you that we can understand enough of it to a significant way that we can be obedient and take comfort in what we learn.

Mankind has always been fascinated and overly interested in the future and all coming events. Why?

Well, the answer is very simple. If you know what's coming, you can take advantage of it. You can prepare for it. This is the dynamic that is behind the illegal insider trading that every now and then you read about some high-powered executive in Wall Street going to jail because of insider trading. [16:49] that means he had some inside information as to what a particular corporation or company was going to be doing buying or selling or bankrupt or whatever he knew in advance so he could go to the market and buy or sell whatever was demanded and make a killing just because he had advanced information.

They say you're not allowed to do that and you can go to jail for that. remember one of my favorite movies I don't know if you saw it or not but it was Paul Newman and Robert Redford in The Sting and they had this scam operation going whereby through a connected wire service in the Western Union they were able to plug into a horse race that had just been run in another state so that in an adjoining state maybe there was a time lapse or something like that and the difference of time but anyway they knew the horse that won the race and they telegraphed this message this information to another point and that gave this fellow time to run to the betting window and put down a lot of money on a horse that he knew had already won the race so anybody who purports to be able to tell the future just go buy yourself a lottery ticket get the right number

I remember reading an interesting article about this calling service this psychic was supposed to tell the future and it was some lady they gave her a fancy name I don't know what it was but anyway you could call this woman and they charge so much per minute on your phone bill and she would tell you your future and you ask her questions about your love life or about your future financial future and she would go on and go on and give you all this fanciful information that sounded good but it was all just a bunch of hogwash and then eventually there was an article in the paper that this organization that ran this this woman they filed for bankruptcy and the author of the article said you would have thought that they would have seen it coming but you know so everybody wants that little peek into the future that unfortunately we don't have but God has given us some information into the future now on exactly what basis do we have for putting any real stock in what is going to happen here in the future remember

Jean Dixon every year in December she would give a string of predictions of what was going to happen the following year and the national inquiry would print all of that stuff and it was who was going to marry who and who was going to do this and who was going to do that and what not but they never did print her track record as to how many of her predictions came true and it was something like 10% essentially but that did not destroy her credibility and you know what despite the fact that she was wrong nine times out of ten people would run out next year and buy that issue of the national inquiry to see what Gene Dixon had to predict sucker born every minute isn't it B.T. Barnum had it right so as we engage this book the revelation we are aware that it is an unveiling or an apocalypse which simply means to pull back or to open up or to uncover so you can look in and see what it is that is going to happen and there are three primary schools regarding the interpretation of the book of the revelation and I'll just briefly enumerate these first there is the preterist position that's spelled P-R-E-T-E-R-I-S-T the preterist which is just another word for past which means that the content of the revelation is already past and the contents that are found in it were applied to the persecution of the early church at the time of its writing that is beginning back in the first century the symbols were all a coded message preventing unbelievers from understanding the message and that's the purpose for all of the symbolism that is found in it the

[21:34] Roman Empire of course and its authorities were prevented from understanding what only believers could know because only believers in that first century had the key to interpret the symbols in the book of the revelation and it was like reading a coded message for the authorities they couldn't make sense of it so the Christians had a thing going among themselves that they alone could understand that's the preterist or the past position the historical position is all of the contents were descriptions of what was then future at its writing but is now mostly history that is it was future as the time it was written 2000 years ago but now 2000 years later most of it is history that all past world events including European wars like under Napoleon World War I World War II are all described in the revelation and they are leading to the final war of Armageddon now that

requires a very active imagination to be able to see

Napoleon in some of these passages but nonetheless there are those who do and by the way for the most part these are honorable people and they know and love the Lord and they're going to be in heaven and nobody is questioning their sincerity or their honesty and their attempts to interpret this book we're just suggesting that not everybody can be right about it and then there is the idealist position and this is the individual who pretty much throws up his hands to the whole book and says you know what the whole thing all of Genesis is about nothing but the triumph of good over evil and what is depicted in there in various scenes is just evil things happening good things happening but the good guys win in the end and that's all it is the whole book is just an allegory or a struggle or a picture of good triumphing over evil and all of the details that are given are inconsequential they just don't amount to anything all that you need to know is that the right people win in the end and then that's the idealist position and the last one is that one which we embrace and it is referred to as the futurist position and the futurist position simply insists that the book is future that it has not been fulfilled yet that it all awaits fulfillment and the best evidence that we have the best rationale we have for believing that it will be fulfilled is what has already been fulfilled fulfilled as you search through the Old

Testament you will find literally hundreds now that's no exaggeration you will find hundreds of prophecies that were given between Genesis and Malachi that have already been fulfilled in detail in unmistakable ways such as names and places and events and there are in excess of 50 of those in reference to Jesus Christ alone in his first advent to say nothing of his second and believe it or not the Bible speaks more about the second coming of Jesus Christ than it does about the first one reason that many reject the literalism of revelation is it often seems to defy literalism well you just can't take these things at face value and the reason we say things like that is because some of the things that are described is simply outside the purview of our experience we've just never seen anything like that therefore it can't be but let me remind you that we have experienced only what humanity has experienced up to this time is anyone prepared to say that all that we have experienced is all that there is of course not could they have said that a hundred years ago of course not because there is always more forthcoming so what is going to be revealed in the revelation is clearly outside our experience of understanding but that doesn't mean that it has no existence or can have no existence we're going to be introduced to some new kinds of creatures we're going to be introduced to some demonic activity the likes of which that has not flourished since probably since the time of

Christ in fact what we are going to see is a an ongoing illustration of intense physicality as opposed to spirituality now we've related earlier in some past sessions in our morning classes that the Old Testament and up through the Gospels provide a great deal of emphasis on man's physicality and the physical world that we are living in there is so much emphasis upon things physical including the miracles in the Old Testament the miracles that Christ performed these all had physical underpinnings and yet when you get to this parenthesis or the gap that we've described earlier which is the church the body of Christ there is a shift in emphasis and it is away from the physical with an emphasis on the spiritual not that the physical doesn't matter but the physical takes a distinct second place to the spiritual and the emphasis is on the spiritual as regards so many things that are made available to believers today of a spiritual nature that didn't exist in the Old Testament and we've already enumerated those and I won't belabor them now but during this parenthesis the church age the emphasis is on the spirit this is what Paul meant when he said we walk by faith not by sight prior to that Israel walked by sight God gave them things to look at physical things material things razzle dazzle right before your eyes God spoke face to face with Moses and with Abraham but today in this church age the emphasis is on the spiritual but what happens when the church leaves when the rapture occurs the physical returns and you will not find a book more physical than the revelation it is really dealing with physicality in a major way with very little emphasis on the spiritual so that which was earlier that was interrupted by the parenthesis with the parenthesis gone that which was earlier is going to resume and it will be back to the physical once again and we will see that in bold relief as we work our way through the revelation there are certain numbers and combinations of numbers that occur and reoccur in the revelation and they are simply too often to be dismissed as coincidental in the revelation we are going to find the usage of the number seven that seems to be established as early as

[29 : 38] Genesis chapter one that it is God's number seven is the number of completeness it is the number of days involved in creation with the seventh day of rest and forever from that time on the seven day week has been established all over the world it's never been changed it's a seven day week granted every day of the week is named after a pagan deity every name of the week Sunday Monday Tuesday all of them are named after pagan deities but the seven days concept established by God seems to be God's number it's almost as if he assigned it to himself and what did he assign to man six number six it's not coincidental that man was created on the sixth day and man falls short of

God seven so we find these sevens repeated in a way that is just undeniable in the revelation for instance there are seven churches seven spirits seven candlesticks seven stars seven lamps seven seals seven horns seven eyes seven angels seven trumpets seven thunders seven thousands seven heads again seven crowns seven angels mentioned again seven plagues seven vials seven mountains seven kings the number seven appears more times in the revelation than it does in all of the books of the new testament combined now some people I suppose can just shrug their shoulders and say so what but to me that's extremely significant I mean there is something borne out in that message this involves the activity of

God whose number is seven in ways that it is not involved in all of the other books there are seven beatitudes each beginning with a blessing there are seven years of judgments there is seven divisions of each of the seven letters to the seven churches there are seven I am of Christ there are seven doxologies in heaven and we cannot dismiss these as coincidental the number 666 which is highly controversial and many people want nothing to do with that I understand that there are in some of the high rise motels have hundreds of rooms in them you will not find a room that is marked room number 666 be a difficult thing to find somebody to be willing to stay in I suppose we'll see numbers like 144 thousand recurring there will be 12 gates there will be four horsemen there will be ten kings and there will be a thousand years all of these numbers are very germane and very critical as to the book of the revelation as we move through the revelation we will see frequent scene changes and this too will be a key we will attempt to show you this in our next session as we meander our way through the entire book of revelation in just a grand rapid moving overview and we will see how

John is cycling back and forth from the vision he sees on earth to the vision he sees on heaven and each time he does so he identifies it he lets us know where he is and what he is seeing and each time he is ordered to write the things which he has seen in a book or in a scroll and John is writing these events it will become apparent that he is trying to describe something he obviously never seen before so he is going to use terminology like like as you you are going to find those words repeated constantly he is going to say not his feet were burnished brass he will say his feet were like burnished brass and his hair was white like snow and on and on because

John is being introduced to things for which he has no frame of reference it is all going to be new to him as well he apparently under the spirit of God is going to be struggling for terminology to communicate to us because if it is new to him and yet he is able to see it how much more perplexing is that likely to be to us who just get the description of it without being able to see it like he is seeing it but make no mistake about it these things are incorporated in this final book of the Bible with the intent that they be understood and appreciated and it is our intent to do just that there is no reason to dispute the authorship of this book scholars for centuries have identified John the beloved apostle who also gave us the gospel of

[35 : 21] John first second and third John to him is assigned the responsibility of having written this book the revelation and he wrote it while he was in exile he had been exiled from the continent by the emperor at that time and he was on the island of Patmos which is just off the coast of Asia Minor and while he was there God revealed these visions to him and he was instructed to write these things down and he did as far as we can determine at this time John who was the brother of James the two of them were called the sons of thunder you remember this John was one who made up the inner circle of our Lord I guess we could say that the twelve apostles constituted the primary circle but out of the twelve there were three that we would say constituted the inmost circle and they were

Peter James and John and this John appeared to have been the youngest in age of all of the apostles as best we can determine he was the only one of the twelve that had survived and was at an old old age when he received this revelation at some date somewhere in the area of 90 to 95 AD

so that would put it approximately 60 years after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ probably 20 to 25 years after the death of the apostle Paul so this is the best information that we have so far as regards the constitution of the book circumstances under which it was written and the purpose for which it was written was that we might know these things because in knowing you can take preparation and you can prepare for what is coming so with that in mind we've got a few moments left for

Q&A; and you're welcome to ask any questions or make any comments that you would like to preferably about the subject matter this morning but if you've got an unrelated question anyone yes ma'am if he was writing the scroll how did he get from the island to the mainland is that what you're saying pardon me well you know they traveled back and forth from the island to the mainland I'm sure there were probably ferries that were running I'm sure they had transportation between the island and the mainland probably on a regular basis just like they do today so transporting the content that he had written would probably be no problem at all would be my guess and they would have written with a scroll the text refers to a book write the things in a book but of course they did not have books like we have today they did not have books that were bound in pages they wrote upon scrolls and the scroll was usually papyrus and it was generally 12 to 18 inches wide and it was all rolled up and as you wrote you would unroll the scroll and write a little more and unroll a little more and we'll see that when we come to the seven sealed scroll because the way the scroll was that that

John is to open and no one will be found worthy to open the seven sealed scroll and we know of course that it will be Jesus Christ who will open the scroll and it contains the title deed of the earth and it will be a scroll that is sealed with seven seals and that simply means that every when you unroll it there is another seal and you unroll a little more and how the thing was sealed up and it is quite fascinating because as each seal was opened a new revelation came forth and there are seven seals the seal judgments and then there will be the vials and the bowls and the trumpet judgments and all of these are very significant and they are given in order which they are going to occur I think chronologically someone else comment or question in the back I've always been confused when reading the revelation of the timeline because my understanding is it's not necessarily written in chronological order as things will happen and that sometimes what's written is like this is what's happening in heaven at this time this is happening on earth and then later it says like before that so is there a way that you can kind of make sure we can as best you know get it in kind of a chronological order or at least maybe have an outline or something so that we can look at that because that's always been confusing to

I have not heard my old messages I don't play back or listen to my messages because I figure I already know what I said but I suspect that there will be some changes from what I did many years ago I think it was in the 70s or 80s and we spent a long time in Revelation and we had some good Q&A;'s and I wouldn't be a bit surprised if I don't take some different positions this time through than what I did then and that is due to the fact that in the meanwhile you learn some additional things that you didn't know earlier and you are forced to change your position your intellectual integrity requires you to drop something that you held earlier and embrace something that you are now convinced that is true and I don't mind telling you everything you're teaching is just the gospel truth and that's what you intend when you're teaching it but because we are flawed in our understanding and in our grasping of some of these things it's very likely that we teach some things that just are not so we teach them in good faith but that doesn't make them true so as we find areas where we know we were wrong earlier we on

[42 : 30] TULIP a couple of years ago and the doctrine of election and predestination I had to reverse myself on that 180 and my ego was bruised and it still somewhat hurts from that that's just nature of human egos I guess other thoughts or comments anyone okay I will let you go five minutes early if you promise not to let the word get out would you stand please father we are so grateful for the preciousness of the word of God that you have provided for us and we recognize fully how inadequate is our comprehension and understanding how that we do not know so many things with the certainty that we would like to know but we want to know and we want hearts and minds yielded to each one here this morning for that which lies ahead we give the understanding and appreciation of it to you and we look to you for your direction and your wisdom for a wisdom that we know we do not possess in

Christ's name we pray amen