

- 1) One more point of introduction (food for thought if you will) before we begin.
- 2) On the “MYSTERY” of this book. One commentator points out that some consider the book to be a mystery. He asks the question:

Why would God be clear and precise in his word to mankind from Genesis to Jude and then choose to be totally mysterious and incomprehensible in His revelation of the end of his redemptive story?

- 3) On that note, let us begin.

Rev 1:1-3 (NIV)

- 4) John begins in verse 1 by laying out the source, the destination, and the subject of the writing.
- 5) First, **the source** – the revised NIV clarifies this first sentence by simply changing the word of to from.
- 6) As we have discussed, this entire writing is the Reveling of Jesus Christ as the final ruler of the entire creation and the final conquer of all evil.
 - a) Revelation will reveal the infinite love, power, and justice of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - b) Image after image throughout the writing is one of majesty, power, and glory.
- 7) However, first and foremost this is God giving to Jesus, for us, the story of how it all ends.
- 8) It is the last chapter of God’s redemptive story.
 - a) It shows how time as we know it will end and the new heaven and new earth will be brought into being.
- 9) **Destination (To whom)** was it given – God’s servants
 - a) As we will see, it is first to the churches that John served, AND further, to all who will ever read these words and are true servants of the God most high.
 - b) That’s US! - All those that came before us! - All those that come after us until the words of this prophesy are fulfilled.
 - c) Verse 3 makes this clear – blessed are those who hear it
- 10) Finally – **the subject**
 - a) The phrase "what must soon take place" and in particular the word for soon, means imminence."
 - b) This may seem odd to us, today's readers because 2000 years have passed since the time this was proclaimed.
 - c) We must remember that in apocalyptic literature the future is imminent, without concern for intervening time.
 - d) The apostle Peter lays this concept out quite clearly in 2 Peter 3:8 ff.

2 Peter 3:8-10 (NIV)

- e) In God's eyes the future is just around the corner, even though it may seem far away to us.
 - f) No one knows when these events will happen, so believers should always live as though Christ will come in the next moment.
- 11) Of course, here again, John makes clear he is the writer, but the deliverer of the message is God's angel.
- 12) We finish these first verses with a few very important points that will hold true throughout the remainder of our study.
- 13) First, we are promised to be:
- a) Blessed as we read the words of this prophecy
 - b) Blessed as we hear it and take to heart
 - c) This is exactly what we will be doing over the next weeks / months.
- 14) The last point is that the time is near.
- 15) This phrase reiterates the truth taught in 1:1.
- 16) The events depicted in the book of Revelation are imminent – in God's time continuum.
- a) As we will see shortly, John describes God by that time continuum.
 - b) And God uses the same terms to describe himself.
- "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."
- 17) Time does not translate chronos, which refers to time on a clock or calendar, but kairos, which refers to seasons, epochs, or eras.
- 18) To properly keep this is perspective, we must adjust our thinking to get away from hours, minutes, seconds or even years, decades, centuries, or millennia.
- 19) God is timeless.
- 20) Universe – 14 billion plus years old.
- a) God created it THEREFORE he has been around before that and will continue to infinity!
- 21) John MacArthur states:
- “It simply means that the next great era of God's redemptive history is near. That the return of Christ is imminent, the next event on God's prophetic calendar, has always been the church's hope.”
- 22) And, to state the obvious, the events depicted here that we are about to study are the next events on God's prophetic calendar.