

## The Book of Revelation: A Prophetic Overview

In all of Scripture, the Book of Revelation is one of the most important, but maybe the least understood by the multitudes of YHWH's people. The Title in both Greek and English means "the Unveiling" or "the Revealing," so we get the idea from the title that something "hidden" will be "revealed" in the text.

The first three verses of the opening chapter tell us what the "message" of Revelation is: It is the message YHWH gave to Yahushua Messiah, in order that Yahushua might show to His Servants those things which will shortly come to pass.

### The Two-part Message of Revelation

The entire message of Revelation can be seen as a two-part message. The first part consists of detailed warnings given to the Believers, wherein Yahushua reveals various major shortcomings in the doctrines and practices of the New Testament Believers, along with the remedies.

These shortcomings are not minor in nature, but as we can see by the language used, these are serious issues, and appear to have eternal consequences. The warnings addressed to the *called-out* people in the 7 cities in Revelation, appear to parallel the warnings given in the Parable of the Ten Virgins. Both sets of warnings deal with issues of deciding who will be among the Bride, and who will not; and both address what one's *inheritance* will consist of.

These warnings are given in a prophetic perspective, and they apply to the last days of preparation of the Bride, immediately prior to any judgments. Thus the warnings serve as an aid to preparation for the Bride, and can serve as a "checklist" for the Bride's assessment of her "readiness."

The second part of the message can be seen as a prophetic panorama of "things to come," seen as one great panorama of future events, with various time periods depicted as separate scenes within the panorama.

Many today are in disagreement as to whether the events seen in Revelation are to be taken "literally," or taken spiritually or "metaphorically." This disagreement and time wasting over this issue is not necessary. In the proper time, Yahushua will reveal which of those things are to be taken literally, and which ones are to be taken spiritually or symbolically. Our primary task today is to prepare ourselves, and to pay close attention to the warnings given.

### The Prophetic Purpose of Revelation

Notice in the opening passages the following verse:

**Blessed is ... he that readeth ... they that hear ... and keep those things which are written therein (Revelation 1:3a)**

Here we see that some are singled out by saying they are "Blessed" – language used by Yahushua to speak of those closest to His heart. These are the ones to whom the message is addressed, that it might become "profitable" to them.

Thus the messages to the 7 churches are to be taken in a "prophetic" way – applying the "now" meaning to each and every message, regardless of which of the seven "churches" it

appears to be addressed to.

It likewise in the opening passages of Revelation that we see part of the prophetic purpose of the Book of Revelation. In the verse above, we see "they that hear" are Blessed. In many other passages in Revelation, we are told that the Bride is to develop "ears to hear." We also see above that the Bride is to prepare herself by "keeping those things that are written" in the messages.

We conclude that the warnings in Revelation are to be heard very carefully, and obeyed or carried out to the last detail.

Now let's notice one other passage:

**"...If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee."** (Revelation 3:3b)

In this passage, we see one other part of the prophetic purpose of the messages – that of encouraging the Bride to "watch" for the Bridegroom to return.

The entire Book of Revelation is presented as a prophetic picture of future events, presented in a panoramic view spanning some time period. This panoramic view is given specifically for the Bride, so that she might understand, and be about the business of watching at the proper time, so as to help her to be aware of the timing of the Bridegroom's appearing.

Revelation is further intended to be a part of the vision the Bridegroom is giving to the Bride, with the intent of drawing her ever closer, and for the purpose of giving her hope in the midst of great despair that will occur just prior to the time of the King's bringing in of the Kingdom.

Thus we see that the Book of Revelation is to be viewed in a prophetic way, whereby everything written in all the messages is for all of YHWH's people, regardless of location, or in which century they lived.

We have mentioned the purpose of the Book of Revelation. Now let's confirm the intended recipient of these messages.

## **Who Is Revelation Written To?**

### **What Men Say**

Many Bible Teachers today have created various views of who the message of Revelation is addressed to, and various "camps" have sprung up around these views. Some say the Book of Revelation was written to 7 churches in 7 geographical locations. The plain context agrees with this idea, but we must not limit ourselves because of geography. Scripture contains within itself many levels of fulfillment.

Others have said these 7 churches represent 7 church "epochs" or ages within the last 2,000 years. Consequently these teachers focus on only the last message to the seven churches, while ignoring the previous six messages. In this view, each era was to be "represented" by one of the messages, with the result that the testimony from the other six messages was ignored, or considered irrelevant, at any given time. Now let us see what the Book of Revelation says.

## What Scripture Says

The clear and easy-to-understand language of Scripture can be seen in the verses of Revelation, revealing exactly who the Book of Revelation is written to. Let's begin by noticing that in each of the messages to the seven churches, there is an identical pair of statements, repeated for each message. Notice this pair of statements in the message to Ephesus:

**"Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write..." (Revelation 2:1a)**

**"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches..." (Revelation 2:7a)**

Here we see in the first statement the writing is addressed to the "angel" or "messenger" of the Ephesus church in Rev 2:1a.

Near the end of the message, in the second statement, we are told that this same message to Ephesus is the "Spirit saying unto the churches" – plural! Thus we see the Spirit's "saying" is not limited to those of Ephesus, but is for "the churches," or *all* of those that are *called-out* people (all the 'Born-Again' Believers) in *every* place and for all time.

Next, note the message is specifically directed to "they that hear and keep" those things which are written therein. This phrase is the equivalent of the Hebrew word '*Shema'* or *hearken*, which means to "hear and obey. The phrase "ears to hear" is a prophetic hallmark of the Bride, used throughout Scripture, but implies not all will have ears to 'hear' with obedience.

This same pair of statements is repeated, in identical fashion, for the following six churches:

**Smyrna** - (Revelation 2:8a & 2:11a)

**Pergamos** - (Revelation 2:12a & 2:17a)

**Thyatira** - (Revelation 2:18a) & 2:29a

**Sardis** - (Revelation 3:1a & 3:6a)

**Philadelphia** - (Revelation 3:7a & 3:13a)

**Laodiceans** - (Revelation 3:14a & 3:22a)

Every one of these messages to the seven churches is directed to "He that hath an ear," so that these all become part of the Bride's preparation checklist. Now let us note a few more passages that detail the intended recipients of these messages.

**The Revelation of Yahushua Messiah , which Elohim gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: (Revelation 1:1)**

Here we see the "Revelation" (hidden things revealed) are to be shown "unto His Servants," further identifying the Bride. Now let's notice another:

**I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. (Revelation 22:16)**

Here, we see "these things" are to be testified "unto you in the churches." Thus we conclude that all of YHWH's Word is for "all" of His People. The idea that ALL of Scripture is for ALL of Yah's people is seen throughout Scripture. Note a few of these passages:

Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart. (Psalms 119:111)

All scripture is given by inspiration of Elohim, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of Elohim may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

For as much as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Messiah ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living Elohim; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. (2 Corinthians 3:3)

Notice this last passage reveals the New Covenant Promise: YHWH promised to write the Torah (Law) on the heart of His people, by the Spirit He would give them as part of this promise:

31 Behold, the days come, saith YHWH, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith YHWH: 33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith YHWH, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their Elohim, and they shall be my people. (Jeremiah 31:31-33)

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Yahushua Messiah for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Set-apart. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as YHWH our Elohim shall call. (Acts 2:38-39)

So the promise of "all Scripture" is ours for a heritage, and this Scripture is to be written on our heart that we would have the desire to walk in obedience to what is written on our heart.

Who was Revelation written to? It was written to all the Believing ones, and specifically to "they that hear ... and keep those things which are written therein."

## Conclusion

The Book of Revelation is a collection of messages giving detailed warnings of how the Bride is to develop ears to hear, and how she is to prepare herself by keeping those things written in the messages.

Revelation is likewise a prophetic picture of future events, presented in a panoramic view spanning some time period, written for the Bride, that she might be about the business of "watching" at the proper time, so as to know the time of the Bridegroom's appearing.

Lastly, the Book of Revelation is part of the vision the Bridegroom is giving to the Bride, with the intent of drawing her closer, and of giving her hope in the midst of great despair that will occur just prior to the time of the King's bringing in of the Kingdom.