

The End and the Beginning
Message #1 – The Preparation
Revelation 20:7-15 (1/7/2018 AM)

The book of Revelation is the last inspired book to be written. The human author is John the Apostle (1:1-2). The word “revelation” is where we get our word apocalypse. Apocalypse has come to mean anything catastrophic. The original meaning is to unveil or to disclose. Revelation is primarily about the future. These events are imminent meaning they can happen at any time. The word for “shortly” is used in this sense throughout the New Testament. The revelation is centered upon the person of Jesus Christ as it reveals Him in His glory. The word “signified” means to make known by signs and symbols (1:3). The word for “time” is not *chronos*, clock time, but *kairos* meaning seasons or periods of time. The final era of human history is in view and by God’s standard it is near. The focus is the return of Jesus Christ to the earth (1:7). Christ’s return is vividly described in (19:11-16). Jesus came the first time in humility and obscurity. He will come the second time in flaming glory, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10.

❖ **When Jesus returns He will destroy the armies of the world and *establish* the kingdom in Israel.**

The Messianic Kingdom is the high point of Old Testament prophecy. God’s covenants with Abraham and David will begin to be fulfilled in a thousand year reign of Jesus over the earth (1-7). This event is called the Millennium. God will preserve a remnant of both Jews and Gentiles who will survive the Tribulation and populate the Millennium. The renewed environment of the earth and the perfect conditions will result in the birth of new generations of children. Those who will be born will come into the world with the same sin nature that all people have. They will need to come to personal faith in Christ for their salvation.

➤ The return of Jesus Christ is the *focus* of the New Testament.

About 1 out of every 25 verses in the New Testament refers to Christ’s return, Philippians 3:20 and Titus 2:13. As the Messianic Kingdom is the high point of Old Testament prophecy so the Eternal Kingdom is the high point of New Testament prophecy. The last two chapters of Revelation contain material not revealed in the Old Testament.

❖ **They reveal that the Messianic Kingdom will be *incorporated* into the Eternal Kingdom.**

There will be a final purging of evil and rebellion in preparation for the eternal kingdom.

➤ Christ will permit Satan to lead one *final rebellion* which He will crush dramatically (7-10).

This is God’s last test for mankind. God will show that man in a perfect environment with complete access to the truth is still totally depraved. Jesus Christ will be personally ruling over the nations yet many will reject Him. This should not surprise us as many rejected Him at His first advent.

Jesus spoke of this place as “the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels”, Matthew 25:41. The Bible clearly teaches eternal retribution. The Bible does not teach annihilation that demons or men merely cease to exist. It is possible that “the lake of fire” has already been prepared.

➤ Christ will administer one final judgment upon unbelievers (11-15).

John’s vision of God’s throne in (4:3) was encircled by an emerald rainbow, a symbol of mercy. This “white throne” symbolized God’s holiness. The Bible reveals that the One on the throne is Jesus Christ. John 5:22 and Romans 2:16.

▪ **The final judgment occurs at the same time as God’s *purging* of the earth.**

When Adam sinned all creation came under the curse. John reveals the fact of God’s purifying the earth while Peter reveals the means. 2 Peter 3:7 & 10.

▪ **Those summoned to appear are the *unsaved* of all the *ages*.**

The fact that they are standing indicates that some kind of resurrected body will be prepared for them (13). These people have rejected God’s only remedy for their sin, the Gospel of Christ. God’s holiness demands payment for every sin. Note the reference to “books...another book...the books”. The books appear to be the record of their sins. The issue here is not if they have enough good works to go to heaven (12).

▪ **Everyone who appears here is *lost for eternity*.** What is being decided is their degree of punishment. It will also prove that every person has not lived up to God’s perfect standard. It will be proved that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” Romans 3:23. Jesus Christ their Judge paid the penalty for their sins with His own blood. Since they have rejected the Gospel they must pay for their own sins. Sentence will be passed and immediate execution will follow. (14-15). The final proof is the absence of their name from the record of the redeemed. There are certain truths that are revealed here.

✚ **Death is not the end of *conscious* existence.**

Luke 16:22-23, “The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes...”

✦ **God’s justice demands eternal *judgement*.**

Matthew 25:46, “And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

✦ **Death is eternal *separation* between the saved and the unsaved.**

John 5:28-29, “Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth — those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.”

✦ **There is *no hope* for eternal life apart from faith in Jesus Christ.**

John 11:25-26, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”