

THE BOOK OF REVELATION — ALLEN HOOD

REV. 1:3 — BLESSED IS HE WHO READS, HEARS, AND KEEPS THE WORDS OF THIS PROPHECY

I. THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants -- things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, (Rev. 1:1)

- A. The Glory of Jesus Christ in His Second Coming. The main theme of the Book of Revelation is to reveal the personality, power, and action plan of Jesus in preparing His Church to participate with Him in releasing God's glory in all the nations.

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, As the waters cover the sea. (Hab. 2:14)

Is. 2:1-4

... the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea. 10 "And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; For the Gentiles shall seek Him, And His resting place shall be glorious." (Is. 11:9-10)

The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see it together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken." (Is. 40:5)

Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" (Rev. 11:15)

- B. At the outset of the book we see the Father has commissioned Jesus to reveal more of His majesty to His Church. Jesus revealed Himself as the Bridegroom King who judges all that hinders love as He takes over the earth.

¹ The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants... (Rev. 1:1)

And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them." (John 17:26)

1. Jesus is a passionate Bridegroom who is filled with tender yet jealous love. Jesus will come only in context to a prepared Bride who lives in unity with Him and the Spirit.

⁷ The marriage of the Lamb has come...His wife has made herself ready. (Rev. 19:7)

2. Jesus is a King who will intervene to save the earth by taking over the government of every nation for the glory of God and the good of His people forever. Jesus will replace all the unrighteous governments on earth with righteousness leaders and laws.

¹⁵ The seventh angel sounded...voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord...and He shall reign forever!" (Rev. 11:15)

3. Jesus is a righteous and wise Judge, who works redemptively to confront the hatred of God and truth in order to establish love across the whole earth (Rev. 16:5-7; 19:1-5).

³ Great and marvelous are Your (**Jesus**) works...just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints! 4...For Your judgments have been manifested. (Rev. 15:3-4)
4. The Second Coming events will display the various tensions of God's love that will forever change the course of human history and ushers us into the next age. It is the hour when God's nature of love will be fully manifest and clarified before the whole world. In the person of Christ the world will watch God declare His name in terms of mercy, compassion, deliverance, protection, righteousness, justice, and wrath. Jesus will declare His Father's name again as He delivers the saints, protects and saves Israel, destroys the wicked, and binds Satan in the bottomless pit, all through the partnership of a praying, purified Bride. All His manifold glory will be displayed as He vindicates His loving nature, as He saves and removes wickedness from the earth.
5. The generation in which the Lord returns will witness the full opposition of God against the world, the flesh, and the devil. This generation will see the Lord in the fullness of His zealous, compassionate love as He prepares His Church to partner with Him in the releasing of God's glory in the nations. The earth will meet Jesus, the Bridegroom, King, and Judge in all of His passion and all of His fury. Passion towards those who are His. Fury towards those who have scorned His love, refused His tender affections, and embraced the ugly, the perverted, and the wicked.

C. The Glory of Jesus in His Church - The End Time Book of Acts.

1. Both Daniel and the Book of Revelation reveal the Church as purified and made ready in full agreement and partnership with the Lord.

Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits. (Dan. 11:32) . . . And some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time. (Dan. 11:35)

⁷ The marriage of the Lamb has come...His wife has made herself ready. (Rev. 19:7)

And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" (Rev. 22:17)

2. The Book of Revelation is the Acts of the End Time Apostles. As the Book of Acts describes the power of the Holy Spirit that was released through the early Church so the Book of Revelation describes the power of the Holy Spirit that will be released through the End-Time Church.

3. Canonized Prayer Manual for the Church

- a. The Book of Revelation is a **“*canonized prayer manual*”** that equips the Church to partner with Jesus in confronting Satan’s authority. Jesus is coming back only after the Church is prepared in love, wisdom, and faith to release the Tribulation through prayer against the Antichrist’s empire. Jesus is waiting on the Church to grow up into agreement with His character and End-Time plan.
- b. As Jesus’ judgments progressively unfold according to their numbered sequence, the Church will become greatly unified and focused in prayer. The momentum will build as the Church sees the Seals and Trumpets unfold in numerical order. Nothing like this has ever happened in history where 100s of millions were unified with an **“*infallible prayer guide*”** revealing Jesus’ action plan including the coming glory and pressures. What the resurrection was to the early apostles, the sequential temporal judgments will be to end time apostles.

And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all. (Acts 4:33)

- c. As Moses released God’s judgments on Pharaoh by prayer (Exod 7-12), so the Church will release the Great Tribulation judgments on the Antichrist by prayer. The miracles and judgments in Exodus and Acts will be multiplied and released worldwide through prayer. The greatest demonstrations of power in history will be openly manifest by Jesus and Satan (Rev. 12:9; 13:2).

¹⁸ I will build My Church, and the gates of Hades (authority of hell) shall not prevail against it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. (Mt. 16:18-19)

- d. The End-Time prayer movement under Jesus’ leadership will bind and release His redemptive judgments according to the will of God (Rev. 5:8; 6:9-11; 8:3-5; 9:13; 10:6; 14:1-5, 18; 15:1-8; 16:7; 19:2).

⁴ The prayers of the saints, ascended before God...5 Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth... (Rev. 8:4-5)

- D. The Glory of Jesus, His Bride, His Father, and the New Jerusalem in the Millennial Reign and Eternal Age – Rev. 20:1-22:5.

II. HASTENING THE DAY OF THE LORD

looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? (2 Pet. 3:12)

- A. Peter commends us to both look for and hasten the coming day of God. He commends us to do more than wait for it. He exhorts us to hasten it, that is to speed it up. Our choices in faith and for righteousness really do affect the timing of the coming of the Lord. We have the capacity to either partner with the Lord for the speeding up of the coming of the Lord or through compromise to slow down His return.
- B. The Body of Christ is presently in tune with what I call a quantitative hastening of the Lord. The missions' movement within the Church is aware of the Matthew 24:14 promise. "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come." Presently, the missions' world is rallying for the last great thrust of the gospel among the nations. Mark Anderson and the Call2All gatherings are laboring for just this last great witness before Jesus returns. At the first Call2All in Orlando Steve Douglas, the president of Campus Crusade for Christ declared that the Great Commission could be realized within the next ten years. Wow! What an amazing time we are living in! What an honor that you are part of the leadership on the earth which can hasten the Day of the Lord.
- C. However, hastening the Day of the Lord is not merely a numbers game. There is a qualitative dimension to it. Eph. 4:13 informs us that we will come "to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Rev. 19:7 tells us that the Bride has made herself ready, dressed in the white linen of righteous deeds. Rev. 5:8-10 and Rev. 22:17 reveal the Church in a bridal identity functioning as a House of Prayer in full agreement with God's Spirit for Jesus to open the scroll and loose its seals.
- D. One of the major points of revealing Jesus' majesty and glory in this prophecy is to create desire in the hearts of His believers for His return. Jesus will only return to a people from every nation who cries out for Him to come. In His first coming Jesus revealed Himself in such a way that created a longing for Him above all earthly pleasures and ambitions. They considered the honor and delight of loving Him and knowing Him to be above all earthly honors and joys. They labored only to bring Him back to the earth, for it would be better if He were there. Such was the power of His revelation and their witness that the first two centuries of the Church longed for His appearing.
- E. Peter appealed to Jerusalem to repent. If they repented, the times of refreshing would come, and God would send Jesus back (Acts 3:19-20). We were made for the presence of Jesus, specifically designed for intimate communion with the God-Man; when He's not here, we feel it. Jesus' leadership development strategy was to addict them to His presence so that they would do anything to get Him back.

Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said to the fathers, “The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you.” (Acts 3:19–22)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. (1 Peter 1:3–9)

- F. Paul called the second coming of the Lord Jesus the Church’s blessed hope, and at the close of his life, promised the crown of righteousness to all who longed for and loved the Lord’s appearing.

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works. (Titus 2:11–14)

For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. 24 Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you. 25 And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith, (Phil 1:21-25)

All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. 21 The salutation with my own hand -- Paul's. 22 If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come! 23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. 24 My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen. (1 Cor 16:20-24)

To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. (Colossians 1:27–28)

Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began, but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior. (Titus 1:1–3)

For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. (Galatians 5:5)

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing. (2 Timothy 4:7-8)

- G. Wayne Grudem states in his book, *Systematic Theology*, “The more Christians are caught up in enjoying the good things of this life, and the more they neglect genuine Christian fellowship and their personal relationship with Christ, the less they will long for his return. . . . To some extent, then, the degree to which we actually long for Christ’s return is a measure of the spiritual condition of our own lives at the moment. It also gives some measure of the degree to which we see the world as it really is, as God sees it, in bondage to sin and rebellion against God, and in the power of the evil one (1 John 5:19).”¹
- H. The book contains within it the necessary revelation of Jesus to overcome the greatest obstacle to Jesus’ return – the lack of desire by His Church for Him to come. The propensity of fallen human beings is to want God out of our immediate proximity so that we can enjoy our temporary lives and our temporary stuff. John warns us against this natural love for the things of this world.
- Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world -- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life -- is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. (1 Jn. 2:15-17)
- I. Many times while growing up, I hoped Jesus would not come back before certain things would happen: receiving my driver’s license, getting married, or having children. The return of Jesus was merely a doctrine. It was not personal for me. The second coming of Jesus was highly personal for the disciples and soon will be for the church worldwide. Revelation 22:17 speaks of a time when the Spirit and the Bride will be in complete unity in their desire for Jesus to return and rule on the earth. At the end of the age, the heart cry of believers will be one of longing for their King and their God. God will release revelation about His Son that will produce the highest expressions of longing and love from the Church. John closed Revelation with this divine dialogue. Jesus gives the revelation of His coming with the specific battle plan to establish the kingdom of God among the nations; John receives the revelation and responds back with the cry of yearning, the heart given to love: “Come, Jesus! I miss you!”

¹ Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994. p. 1093.

He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming quickly.” Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!” (Revelation 22:20)

III. THE BLESSING AND INVITATION – REV. 1:3

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near. (Rev. 1:3)

- A. The Book of Revelation contains seven beatitudes or blessings (1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7, 14). The other five encourage faithfulness in the face of fear, persecution, and deception in order to receive the blessings of the marriage supper of the Lamb, the millennial reign, and the New Jerusalem. Two of these, Rev. 1:3 and Rev. 22:7, deal specifically with the blessing that comes to the person who keeps the words of the prophecy. They bookend the prophecy as an encouragement to believers to take the prophecy serious, to receive the revelation of Jesus’ majestic personality and plan, and to engage the content of the book in active partnership.
- B. This verse contains a threefold path for eating the scroll, for digesting the message at a level which brings change and produces the faith necessary to live out and bring forth the content of the book.
 - 1. He who reads – most commentators point out the public reading aspect of this verse. The charge to read the book publicly was a statement about the book’s rightful place of being in the center of the community. The content of the book is vital for godliness and the formation of genuine Christian community. The Church must read, study, and meditate upon this wonderful gift given to the Body of Christ.

Christian community is severely hindered by the loss of this prophecy.

- a. The Church’s view of Jesus diminishes. Jesus as the Word of God and Lord of lords is replaced with an unusual spiritual man who gave a unique but not supreme revelation of God.
- b. As the sovereignty and supremacy of Jesus fades to more sensible modern notions, singing from an overflowing heart gives way to intellectualism and stale religion.
- c. Jesus’ return becomes an abstract concept not a concrete plan to hasten His coming through dynamic partnership.
- d. An eternal perspective gives way to the increase of temporal pleasures.
- e. The centrality of prayer/worship and its governmental role is exchanged for leaders with natural talent and gifting. Marketing, rather than intercession, becomes the tool for church growth.

- f. The fear of the Lord and His judgments are forgotten and the scandal of sin is replaced with sociological and psychological reasoning. The blush factor disappears as the Church becomes emboldened in perversion, greed, and compromise.
 - g. Perseverance is no longer necessary as evangelism gives way to syncretistic notions of all religious ideas and expressions are equal.
- 2. He who hears – This is the reception of divine insight by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation. Hearing takes place when the spiritual senses of the person are awakened to the truths contained in the book and suddenly the content shifts from the realm of principles to be pondered to the place of living understanding that demands a response.
 - a. Is. 50:4-5 – Jesus is described in this servant song as having an awakened ear. The awakening enables Him to hear as the learned. Immediately, the verse connects the listening ear with right response. What you hear and how you hear will always display itself in behavior. Why? Rom. 10:17 tells us that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.

"The Lord GOD has given Me The tongue of the learned, That I should know how to speak A word in season to him who is weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear To hear as the learned. 5 The Lord GOD has opened My ear; And I was not rebellious, Nor did I turn away. (Is. 50:4-5)
 - b. Mark 4:24 points to the importance of what you hear.

Then He said to them, "Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given. 25 For whoever has, to him more will be given; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him." (Mk. 4:24-25)
 - c. Luke 8:18 points to the importance of how you hear.

Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him." (Luke 8:18)
 - d. Seven times in the gospels (Mt. 11:15; 13:9, 43; Mk. 4:9, 23; 7:16; Lk. 8:8; 14:35) and once in Rev. 13:9 Jesus exhorts, "If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!" Eight times in the Book of Revelation Jesus exhorts, "If anyone has an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches."

- e. Along with the parable of the sower, Jesus quotes Is. 6:9-10. Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. (Mt. 13:13). Jesus sets forth the value of God's Word. Have you considered the infinite value of the revelation of God? It is to be cherished, pursued, and sought after like hidden treasure. Those who attain through hunger will always receive more and those who do not treasure what they have received; even what they have will be taken away.
- f. God gives more to the hungry. To those who scorn His wisdom and His Word, even what they have will be taken away from them. Wisdom is given to the wise, not the foolish who scorn the treasure of God's counsel. Remember Dan. 2:20-22

Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, For wisdom and might are His. 21 And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; **He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding. 22 He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, And light dwells with Him.** (Dan. 2:20-22)

- 3. He who keeps. God's word is not simply meant to be understood; it is to be kept. The Greek word means "to guard" from loss. Blessed is the one who guards the content of the book in a way which takes the details seriously. The content of God's word is to be activated in the life of the believer.

Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. 24 **He who does not love Me does not keep My words;** and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me. (Jn. 14:23-24)

- a. Blessed is the one who hears and keeps the word of God. Blessed is the one who takes the details seriously, who searches enough to understand in a way that impacts behavior.

And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!" 28 But He said, "**More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!**" (Lk. 11:27-28)

- b. The keeping in this passage is not associated with a general obedience to the general commands of God. A general keeping of the God's commandments is quite clearly stated in Rev. 22:14, but this keeping is specifically related to the words of the prophecy.

Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. (Rev. 22:14)

- c. This prophecy is an invitation for hastening the day of the Lord through active participation. Which generation will read, hear, and then keep the prophecy. Which generation will come into the revelation of Christ that produces the faith to keep the prophecy?
- d. Thus, Jesus reiterates the invitation in Rev. 22:7. Who will come into agreement concerning the time is at hand and will embrace the Lord's desire to come establish justice on the earth? One generation will come into faith concerning the person and work of Jesus presented in this prophecy.

"Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." (Rev. 22:7)

IV. THE INVITATION RESTATED AND A SEVERE WARNING GIVEN – REV. 22:7 & 22:18-19

"Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." (Rev. 22:7)

For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. (Rev. 22:18-19)

- A. Jesus reiterates His quick return, and invites a generation to believe the prophecy and keep its content. When John falls down to worship the angel in the next verse, the angel stops him and announces that he is John's fellow servant, and of his brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. He then commands the book not to be sealed. The book remains unsealed. The understanding is available, yet who will read, hear, and activate the end time plan through prayer and obedience.
- B. John ends the Revelation with a sober warning concerning the content of the book. He warns of two types of corruption to the book.
 - 1. He warns against those who would add to the content of the prophecy, either changing the revelation of Jesus or making the book too complex for the common person to understand.
 - 2. He warns against those who would take away or diminish the content of the prophecy, thus relegating to basic good versus evil principles while neglecting the specifics which may have eternal consequences.

3. Jesus warned us that many false christs and prophets would come to try to deceive the saints. Paul warned us of even angels of light who would come and try to pervert the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. 5 For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. (Mt. 24:4-5)

For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 25 See, I have told you beforehand. (Mt. 24:24-25)

I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, 7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. (Gal. 1:6-8)

For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. 3 But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. 4 For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted -- you may well put up with it! . . . 13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. (2 Cor. 11:2-4, 13-14)

- C. Why is the warning so severe? Two Reasons.

1. Doing so will leave the Body of Christ unprepared for its greatest threat and most intense persecution.

Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, 2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. 3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. 5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? . . . 9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. (2 Thess. 2:1-10)

2. In Revelation 1-5 seventy-nine nuances of Christ, His person and work are set forth. The book is rightly titled the Revelation of Christ. The book contains within it the necessary revelation of Jesus to overcome the greatest obstacle to Jesus' return – the lack of desire by His Church for Him to come. Very few persons in the Body of Christ want Him to come back and make all things new. Presently, the Body of Christ is so inundated and inebriated by the spirit of this age that they have no desire for His return. This is only because they have not received a revelation of Christ and His glory. This is going to change and the place of prayer and worship is going to escort us into this bright revelation of Christ and His glory.

- D. If the Church does not read, hear, and get a vision to keep the content of this prophecy, it will continue to be malnourished on the very revelation of Jesus which creates the longing for Him to come and will leave portions of the Church vulnerable to the deceptive schemes of the enemy.

V. THE PRAYING CHURCH HASTENS THE DAY OF THE LORD AND KEEPS HIS WORD – REV. 5:8-10

Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, 10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." (Rev. 5:8-10)

- A. The prayer and worship movement is springing up all over the earth precisely because the end is near. The Lord's Prayer for His Father's kingdom and will to be done "on earth as it is in heaven" is coming forth. Heaven has both unceasing prayer and adoration in the context of unending enjoyment of Jesus. As the veil thins between this age and the next, the earth finds itself in transition. Rev. 5 gives us a glance at this transition.
- B. Rev. 4-5 gives us a view into the government of God and how His rule is released. This passage gives John and us a picture of how God will administrate His government in closing out this age and ushering in the next.
- C. Rev. 4-5, part 3 of the Book of Revelation, displays the heavenly throne room as Jesus takes the Scroll from His Father. The scene begins with a view into the One who sits on the throne, the Father of glory and ends with the worship of the Holy, Holy, Holy and the proclamation of the worth of the Father in creating all things for His pleasure. Five begins the question of who is worthy to open the scroll and loose its seals. Who is worthy to administrate the Father's plan to liberty the earth and release the judgments necessary to do so? Just as the Father is worthy of all glory and honor in creating and sustaining all things, so too the Son will be seen as worthy to recreate and restore all things.

D. The Lion of the tribe of Judah prevails, and as a Lamb with seven horns and seven eyes who is in the midst of the throne, Jesus takes the scroll and prepares to administrate the Father's plan. This Lamb has seven horns and seven eyes. He is perfect power and perfect wisdom, yet before He opens the scrolls and looses its seals, something on earth must be in place. Something must be offered up to heaven from the saints on the earth. Rev. 5:8-10 gives us insight into what is necessary to come forth from the Church before the Lamb transitions the ages.

1. Identity of the Church as a House of Prayer. The 24 Elders and 4 Living Creatures offer to the Lamb harps and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. The Church has come into her identity as a House of Worship and Prayer.

Worthy Is the Lamb Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. (Rev. 5:8)

- a. The highest identity of the redeemed throughout all eternity is to walk as a House of Prayer or in "intimacy based intercession" as sons of God and as the Bride of Christ ruling with Jesus. Worship and prayer are eternal realities. Intercession is the primary means that God has chosen to release His government both in His relationship with Jesus within the fellowship of the Trinity and with His people now and forever. The majesty and mystery of intercession is seen first and most in Jesus' relationship with the Father.

Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. (Ps. 2:8)

²⁵ Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. (Heb. 7:25)

"Also the sons of the foreigner Who join themselves to the LORD, to serve Him, And to love the name of the LORD, to be His servants -- Everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, And holds fast My covenant -- 7 Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices Will be accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations." 8 The Lord GOD, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, says, "Yet I will gather to him Others besides those who are gathered to him." (Is. 56:6-8)

- b. God is waiting for our persistence in prayer before Him. Isaiah taught that He longs to release His grace and power, but actually waits until He hears the cry of His people in intercession.

¹⁸ The LORD longs to be gracious to you, and therefore He waits on High to have compassion on you....¹⁹ He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you. (Isa 30:18-19, NAS)

- c. God is going to take prayer meetings out of the Church and put within it a prayer culture. Currently, Islam has a prayer culture and we have occasional prayer meetings. The really radical ones have a prayer event. The Spirit is producing a great hunger in the Body of Christ for intimate fellowship and ruling effectiveness through prayer and worship.
- 2. The Church will sing a new song and come into an intercessory cry of the worth of Jesus to administrate the close of this present age and usher in the new age as set forth in Eph. 1:9-10.

having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, 10 that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth -- in Him. (Eph. 1:9-10)

- 3. The Church will come into a revelation of Christ's worth specifically concerning His need to return and loose the judgments necessary to fulfill the Father's plan for world redemption. One generation will read, hear, and keep the words of this prophecy. One generation will read and hear Jesus saying, "Behold, I am coming quickly!" and have the revelation of Him necessary to engage the content of the book and activate the battle plan of our Lord as set forth in the prophecy.
- 4. May it be said of my generation that we hastened the day of the Lord and joined the chorus of Peter, Paul, and John, "Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus! Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come! 23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. 24 My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen. (1 Cor. 16:22-24)