

## 27.1 The Book of Revelation, discussion

### Cautionary note

There is a lack of consensus about many aspects of the book [there is no consensus on how to interpret the book as a whole (4 distinct ways), how to follow the progress of things through the book (two different conceptions), and on how to view the 1000 years of chapter 20 (three competing views)].

### Lesson

We need to concentrate on the large themes on which there is general agreement to profit in our reading of this portion of Scripture. Blessing is promised to those who read: **The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, <sup>2</sup> who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. <sup>3</sup> Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near (1.1-3).**

### Discussion Qs

1) How are the contents of the book described in 1.1-3?

*The contents are revelation of Christ, word of God, testimony of Jesus Christ, and prophecy.*

2) How does the description of the contents of the book guide our reading?

*We are to read looking for what the book tells us about the Lord Jesus.*

3) From 1.3, what other important truth do we learn about the book of Revelation and what does this add as guidance for our reading (not...but)?

*The book is not mere prediction of coming events (it is definitely not prewritten history to satisfy our curiosity). We are not to read it as if it were a crystal ball, but we are to read it as moral instruction; we are to read to learn about Jesus and to obey Him by obeying the things written in this difficult book.*

4) How is this reading guidance enhanced by the repetition of beatitude throughout the book (with 1.3, cf. 14.13; 16.15; 19.9; 20.6; 22.7; 22.14)?

*These verses make for some profitable reflection.*

*They raise the bar of duty and add encouragement to read. Some of these beatitudes speak directly to the reader, but they all speak to the reader indirectly by giving different details about the promise of blessing for those who come to know Christ better and better and obey Him in the challenges of life in a sinful world.*

5) In this connection, consider the purpose of parables that brings blessing to those who see and hear (Mat. 13.11-16). Accordingly, how does the purpose of parables fill out our approach to, and attitude toward, the difficulties we confront in the book of Revelation?

*The analogy with parables shows us that the “confusing”, hidden, obscure, and challenging things of the book call for a seeking faith, and they promise good things to those who seek to know and obey the Lord Jesus in this way.*