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PUBLICATIONS

COME WITH ME THROUGH

# REVELATION



DAVID PAWSON

*Come with me through*  
**REVELATION**

David Pawson

True Potential Publishing, Inc  
<http://tppress.com>

## *Contents*

Preface	7
Introduction	9
The surprising Christ <i>Revelation 1</i>	37
His opinion of churches <i>Revelation 2-3</i>	55
Heaven unveiled <i>Revelation 4</i>	137
The lion was a ram <i>Revelation 5</i>	153
History's countdown begins <i>Revelation 6-8:5</i>	163
... and continues <i>Revelation 8. 6-9:21</i>	183
Angels and martyrs <i>Revelation 10-11</i>	197
The woman and the dragon <i>Revelation 12</i>	207
Beastly takeover <i>Revelation 13</i>	223
Harps and harvest <i>Revelation 14</i>	229
Grapes of wrath <i>Revelation 15-16</i>	247
Metropolitan prostitute <i>Revelation 17-18</i>	267
The bride wore white <i>Revelation 19</i>	281
Devil's dungeon <i>Revelation 20</i>	295
Home at last <i>Revelation 21-22</i>	317

## PREFACE

This book is based on a series of talks. Originating as it does from the spoken word, its style will be found by many readers to be somewhat different from my usual written style. It is hoped that this will not detract from the substance of the biblical teaching found here.

As always, I ask the reader to compare everything I say or write with what is written in the Bible and, if at any point a conflict is found, always to rely upon the clear teaching of scripture.

*David Pawson*

## INTRODUCTION

The opening verses of Revelation give you the flavor and the majesty of this amazing book. We must clear the ground first, and just as a new site is cleared by bulldozers before the new building goes up I want to prepare the site.

The book of Revelation is the strangest book in the Bible. There are some passages elsewhere that are rather like it - in Daniel, Ezekiel, Mark 13 or Matthew 24 - but this whole book is unique and it is very strange. It is a different book from any of the others, and it is a more difficult book than any of the others, so many people tend to leave it alone. It is one of the books of the Bible most neglected by churchgoers. Readers tend to be a little uneasy with it; they do not feel at home in these rather strange pages. Opinions have varied tremendously about this book from very low opinions to very high opinions.

Here is a selection.

## INTRODUCTION

Here are some of the low opinions among human beings. 'As many riddles as there are words', says one person. Another says, 'a farrago of baseless fantasies'. Another calls it 'a haphazard accumulation of weird symbols'. Another said, 'It either finds a man mad or leaves him mad', and even Martin Luther said that, 'it is a pity it ever got into the New Testament', proving that he was no more infallible than the Pope whose infallibility he questioned.

On the high side, here are some other opinions by those who have studied this book. 'The only masterpiece of pure art in the New Testament'. William Barclay's opinion was this: 'It is infinitely worthwhile to wrestle with until it gives its blessing and opens its riches.' Another wrote that it is 'beautiful beyond description'. Who is right in such a mixture of opinions?

Let me now move outside human opinion, from the very lowest opinion of this book to the very highest. The lowest belongs to the devil and the highest belongs to God. Satan has the lowest opinion of anyone in this book and he loathes it. He will try to stop you reading two books in the Bible if he possibly can: Genesis and Revelation. These are the two books about him which tell us what terrible evil he has done and what his doom and destiny are, and he hates you to know that; he hates you to know that one day he will be cast into a bottomless pit. He wants you to give him respect, to

## INTRODUCTION

honor him, and therefore he will keep you out of this book if he can, and he has a very low opinion of it. No wonder that the result of so many scholars' work has been to put the simple believer off reading Genesis and Revelation, and I am sure the devil was thrilled.

The highest opinion of this book is God's opinion. Do you know what God said about this book, that he says about no other in the whole Bible? First of all he said, *Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy*. At the beginning there is a beatitude pronounced on those who read it aloud in a congregation, so I am going to get a blessing for reading it to my congregation; you will get a blessing if you hear it and take to heart what is written in it.

Then, at the end of the book, God pronounces a curse on anyone who takes a little bit away from this book or adds a little bit to it. It is unique in the annals of scripture for God to have blessed those who read it as it stands, and cursed those who tamper with it, and this should make us read this book with very real interest.

Interpretations vary tremendously - from what I have called the grossly literal to the grotesquely allegorical. It is quite extraordinary how many weird and strange ideas people have got out of this book. Many have therefore got the idea that it is a sealed book, a hidden book, a book for those in the rarefied atmosphere of deep scholarship not a book for the ordinary man in the street. They could not make a

## INTRODUCTION

bigger mistake; this book is not a sealed book but a book that is open; it is not a book to hide things from you, it is a book to show things to you; it is not a book that is deliberately obscure, trying to make it difficult for you to see, it is a book that is there to help you to see, and therefore I can only say that I am going to give you my own interpretation, which you must not take as infallible.

The little rhyme that I would urge you to bear in mind constantly as you read is, 'Don't take it from me, but search and see.' And I am only hoping that what I write will encourage you to read it for yourself and not say, 'David Pawson says....' I am no more infallible than Martin Luther, and you must not take my word as the last word. But I will give you what seems to me the straightforward, simple, clear interpretation of this book if there is such a thing.

The crucial question is: what sort of a book is it? There are six main answers that have been given to this and I have given them various titles. First of all, there are those who say it is an APOCALYPTIC book.

Now what do we mean by this word 'apocalyptic'? It describes a certain kind of exciting literature that is usually written in times of terrible trouble. It is often written in symbolic form, so that only those who have got the key to it will understand and therefore there will be no danger attached to reading it. But it is nevertheless meant to help people to see that, however

## INTRODUCTION

deep the present troubles may be, God is on the throne, right will triumph, and wrong will be conquered; it is an encouraging kind of literature. But the word 'apocalyptic' which is, incidentally, the very first word in this book, translated in English 'revelation' - or the word 'apocalypse' means a peep behind the scenes. Now that is a lovely word, to go backstage, to see who is pulling the strings, to see who is in charge, to see what is really happening.

I am quite sure that the last time you read the Sunday papers you were depressed. Every week it is churned out - the filth and the hatred and the war and the cruelty of men, and people get troubled by what is happening on the stage of life. This book says come around behind the scenes. Literally, the word means to draw back the curtains, to show you what is happening behind the scenes, to show you who is in control, and therefore apocalyptic literature is very encouraging in dark and dangerous and difficult times, such as we are now living in, because behind the scenes God is on the throne. But it is not just an unveiling of God - a peep behind the scenes at God - it is a revelation of Jesus. In other words, behind the stage of human history, Jesus is in charge. All authority in heaven and on earth is in his hands, and therefore we are going to catch a glimpse of Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Now there are three things that Jesus is. He is our Prophet, he is our Priest and he is our King. If you study

## INTRODUCTION

the Gospels you will discover the truth that he is Prophet; if you study the epistles you discover the truth that he is Priest, but it is when you get to this book that you discover that he is King. I have a famous picture that I was given a long time ago Charles Butler's masterpiece: *King of kings*. In the center is King Jesus with a luminous robe depicted in a way that is unlike any other artistic representation. There he is, King of kings, in his simplicity, with a crown of thorns. Behind him, the devil cowers - the defeated prince of this world. Gathered around him are 159 royal people of history, kings and queens, all adopting in the picture the attitude they adopted to Jesus in their lives. Here is Edward the Confessor, holding out his crown to Jesus; here is Napoleon Bonaparte, standing aloof from this King of kings; but all of them are looking at this King. What a picture! Now that is the artist capturing the book of Revelation. It is a revelation of Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords. This is the thrill of reading it.

There are four things that are revealed about Jesus uniquely in this book. First of all, that when he comes back he will come to judge the quick and the dead. He will come to bring *retribution*. There is coming the greatest day of human history, and this book depicts the wrath of God in that time. We have never seen Jesus like this. Once, when he cleaned out the temple, people caught just a glimpse of the wrath of Jesus, but there is a day coming when everybody will see, and those who

## INTRODUCTION

have been cruel and those who have been unkind, and those who have been jealous and those who have been bad-tempered, will see his anger against all that men have done. It is said of F W Robertson of Brighton that once, while walking along Brighton seafront, he saw a young man who had blasted the purity of a girl in his church, and he was so angry with that young man that he bit his lip until it bled. One day, Jesus will show his wrath for all that has been done to the children of God. Retribution - this is a peep behind the scenes.

Secondly, we see here a Lord Jesus who is not only coming to bring retribution but also to bring reward. Time and again in this book there are promises that those who have overcome will be given a crown of life - Jesus coming to reward those who have served him on earth, those who may never have been noticed by human, beings; quietly, in their own way they have served God, they have even died for the faith, and maybe no-one knew that they had died. There are people dying for the faith today, in China and elsewhere, who we do not know about. One day Jesus will be seen rewarding such people. That is another glimpse we have here of Jesus.

Thirdly, here is a glimpse of Jesus *recreating* or renovating the entire universe, making a new heaven and a new earth, putting everything right, starting all over again, and re-making all that went wrong.

## INTRODUCTION

Fourthly, most important, we have' here a glimpse of Jesus *reigning* for ever and ever. One day he will wear not a crown of thorns but many crowns of royalty. We have never seen that; nobody has ever seen that, except the man who wrote this book, and he saw it in a vision of the future, but one day we shall sing 'crown him with many crowns' because we will be able to see it before our very eyes.

We can sum up the theme of Revelation in 17:14 thus: *They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings - and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers.*

Now that is why we call it an apocalyptic book, an unveiling of the future.

To purchase, [Come With Me Through Revelation](#) and other great books by David Pawson, visit <http://Pawsonbooks.com>.