

FIVE KEYS TO UNDERSTANDING THE BOOK OF REVELATION

The book of Revelation is an important book. God wants us to know this book. We should use this book. Many folks are afraid or confused because they do not understand the book. It helps knowing "*Five Keys to Understanding the book of Revelation.*"



Realize the Specific Audience. The book of Revelation was written to a specific group of people. The book was written to the seven churches of Asia (1:4,11; 22:16). Any interpretation that proves meaningless to the original audience must be questioned.



Realize the Specific Setting. There were unique circumstances which prompted God to write the book of Revelation. The Christians were being persecuted by Rome. Passages such as Rev. 2:10,13; 6:9; 13:17 identify this trouble. Statements like "war" and "tribulation" (7:14) refer to the great trials that the Christians were going through.



Realize the Specific Time Table. The book of Revelation is a prophecy about future events (1:19). The question is "how far in the future" is the prophecy? Passages such as Rev. 1:1,3; 22:10 identify that the time was short rather than long. In fact, the majority of this book has already taken place.



Realize the Specific Style of Writing.

The book of Revelation was written in symbols or figures (1:1 "*signified*"). It is a divine picture book. It should not be read as we read Acts or other books. Things are not to be taken literal, but are representative of other things. Thus the use of numbers (such as "7") or colors (such as "white," "red") are used to stand for other things. Therefore, a 1,000 year reign means something other than an actual 1,000 years. Finding 144,000 in heaven means something more than just 144,000 actual people.



Realize the Specific Purpose of the book.

The book of Revelation was written to Christians who were suffering because of their faith. Some had been killed. They were frightened and uncertain. The book is about the outcome. It shows Jesus on the throne. It shows the troublesome beasts destroyed. It shows the Devil defeated. It shows martyred Christians, alive and around the throne. One of the key words in Revelation is "overcome." It is used 11 times. The book was not written to confuse or scare brethren, but to give courage. The theme verse seems to be: "*These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful*" (Rev. 17:14). The book of Revelation is about faith. It is a book about victory. It is a great book of hope. It is a book of strength.

Using these 5 keys will help you to understand the message and keep from wild and untrue ideas about Revelation.

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