

The New Inductive Study Series

BEHOLD, JESUS IS COMING!

by Kay Arthur

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Introduction to the Book of Revelation

Of all the books of the Bible, none has sparked more interest, curiosity, or disagreement than the book of Revelation. Of the 66 books comprising the Word of God, this is the one that promises a special blessing to the one who reads it and to those who hear and heed its words.

But how can we heed something we don't know or understand? Isn't the book of Revelation unknowable? Some people would say so. Others would advise you to stay away from it. After all, if the scholars cannot agree, how could ordinary laypeople expect to crack its mysteries!

We believe that behind all the mystery and controversy you will find one common foe—the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan. After all, he holds the title of the “prince of this world.” What a fool he would be not to do everything he could to discourage you from studying the book that so clearly shows the demise of his kingdom and the ultimate triumph of the One he so unjustly accused. What was lost—and has remained lost down through the millennia of the ages—when Adam and Eve listened to his lie is restored in the book of the Revelation. Revelation is the rest of the story!

The words of Revelation are faithful and true and, thus, worthy of our study, of our understanding. And understand you will if you exercise your spiritual senses to discern what the Lord says about the things which must shortly take place.

This inductive survey course will enable you to lay a solid and critical foundation. A foundation you can build on. A foundation that will stand and will hold you in the earthquakes and storms

caused by every wind of doctrine and cunning craftiness of man. A foundation that will give you confidence in the face of controversy because you see for yourself “thus saith the Lord” about the things which must take place.

To really appreciate Revelation (and it is possible!), you should first study the book of Daniel in The New Inductive Study Series, *God’s Blueprint for Bible Prophecy*. Daniel gives the big picture of prophecy, the general blueprint. Revelation fills in the details. So, consider working through Daniel first.

WEEK ONE

UNVEILING THE FUTURE

As you work through this book we urge you to put aside all you have heard regarding the explanation of the book of Revelation. Come to this book with an innocent approach—no preconceived ideas. Simply see what the text is saying. Let the Word speak for itself. You will benefit greatly from the blessings that will come as you study Revelation inductively.

DAY ONE

Read through Revelation 1. As you read, look for who wrote the book and to whom it was written. You will find that time phrases are extremely important in the book of Revelation. We suggest that you mark every time phrase with the clock symbol as recommended in the “How to Get Started” section in this book. (You may also want to review the samples of time phrases listed for you in that section.) Or, of course, you could develop your own coding system. Refreshing your memory may help you as you begin so that you don’t miss important phrases since they are so key to understanding!

Record your insights on who wrote Revelation and to whom it was written on the REVELATION AT A GLANCE chart (page 137).

What did you see about those who read the book of Revelation? Are they blessed if they simply read the book? Read Revelation 22:7 also. Record your insights in your notebook.

DAY TWO

Read Revelation 1 again. You need to read this chapter several times because it contains much truth you’ll want to absorb.

Now read Revelation 1:1,2 and think through how the author receives this revelation. What is it a revelation of? Watch your answer carefully. You are not looking for who gave the revelation but for what is going to be revealed. By the way, English transliteration for the Greek word for

Revelation is *apokalupsis* which means “an unveiling.” According to Revelation 1:1,2, what is going to be unveiled?

Now, in your notebook, draw a diagram/sketch which represents how this book came about. Think about the process and draw it—even if it is a rough sketch! You may feel like you aren’t much of an artist, and we understand! But believe us, sketching the process will help tremendously—even if you use stick figures!

In this first chapter the author was told to write three things. List these in your notebook and note the verse where you find each one beside it. As you work through the book, you’ll be making numerous lists of pertinent information. We suggest that you always note the chapter and verse where you find your insights beside each one as you list them for future references! When you go back to review your list, having the “address” of the insight will be most helpful! Also, since we suggest you list various insights in your notebook, you may want to think about how you’ll organize your notes. One good way is to simply make notes by chapters—so you might want to divide your notebook into 22 sections and title each segment by chapter. Remember though, you’ll have several lists that you’ll maintain throughout the entire book, so leave a large section for such work.

DAY THREE

Before you begin today’s work, make a bookmark on which you will record the key words and /or phrases that you will be asked to mark in chapters 1–3. Later you will make another bookmark to use in your study of chapters 4–22. Some of the words from the bookmark you make today will be transferred onto the bookmark for chapters 4–22 also, but most of the words will be concentrated in chapters 1–3. If you aren’t sure how to make the book-mark, refer to the “How to Get Started” section at the beginning of this book.

Today we want to see what Revelation 1 says about Jesus Christ. Therefore, read the chapter and mark every reference to Him. Since you will also mark every reference to the Father and to the Spirit on days 4 and 5, if you do not have a particular way to mark the Father, Son, and Spirit, let us make a suggestion. Since all three are one in character and attributes, and since each is God, you might want to indicate their unity by using a triangle.

You could mark God the Father with a triangle like this: **God**, God the Son like this: **Jesus**, and God the Spirit like this: **Spirit**. So list these key words on your bookmark and color them there as you plan to mark them in your Bible.

Now, read the chapter and mark or color every reference to Jesus Christ. Don’t miss any pronouns or synonyms which refer to Him. Remember, a synonym is a word or phrase that has the same meaning as another word and is used in the place of that word. For example, *son of man* is a synonym for Jesus. If you didn’t read how to mark key words in the section “How to Get Started,” stop now and read it so you understand how to best mark key words.

Mark any reference to the coming of Jesus Christ in another distinctive way. Make sure the references you mark are references to His return. As you study other books of the Bible, you will want to mark any references to His second coming in this same way so that you can always spot these at a glance. (Because these references are so varied, we can't give you all the specific phrases, but you'll see them!)

Read through Revelation 1 again carefully. This time examine the text in the light of the 5 W's and an H. Ask questions like: What do you learn about Jesus Christ? Who is He? How is He described? Where is He? What is He doing?

DAY FOUR

Read through Revelation 1 and mark every reference to God. Then in your notebook make a chart with three headings: JESUS CHRIST, GOD, and the HOLY SPIRIT. List everything you learn about God from this chapter. Be sure to leave several pages for the chart since you will add to your list throughout the study. Remember to note the chapter and verse beside each insight you record.

Now, add to your list all you learned from marking references to Jesus on Day Three.

DAY FIVE

Read Revelation 1 again, and this time mark every reference to the Spirit. Mark the reference to *seven Spirits* in the same way you mark *Spirit*. Add this phrase to your bookmark. When you finish, note all you learn about the Spirit on your chart.

As you study Revelation and observe anything in the text about any member of the Godhead, record it on your chart.

DAY SIX

What would you say is the theme of Revelation 1? (The theme is the subject that is dealt with the most in the chapter.) Record this theme on your REVELATION AT A GLANCE chart (page 137).

Go back and read Revelation 1:19 where you'll see that John is told to write three things:

1. "the things which you have seen"
2. "the things which are"
3. "the things which will take place after these things"

Now read Revelation 4:1. What do you see in this verse that relates to Revelation 1:19? Let's reason together. From what you observed, how would you divide the book of Revelation (by

chapters) into the three parts listed above? Where does Revelation 1 fit? Where does Revelation 4:1 fit? Can you conclude where Revelation 2 and 3 fit in the structure of the book of Revelation? Record your insights next to the three phrases noting which chapter(s) correspond to each. This breakdown gives you the outline of the book of Revelation.

Now quickly read through Revelation 2 and 3 so you can see what these chapters are about.

DAY SEVEN

Store in your heart: Revelation 1:1-3,19. Read and discuss: Revelation 1:1-3,9-20.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR INDIVIDUAL STUDY

- From what you have learned just in Revelation 1, what is this book about?
- Who is the book of Revelation for? Where is it to be sent? Give the details as to how the book of Revelation is given to the seven churches in Asia. As you discuss this, have the group share how they sketched the progression in Revelation 1:1,2.
- How does the book of Revelation break down (or segment)? Or, to put it another way, what is John to write and how do the chapters of this book cover these three things?
- What promise is connected with this book? On what basis? Do you think this promise applies to today, or did it only pertain to John's time? Why?
- What do you learn about Jesus Christ from this chapter? Have the group refer to the chart in their notebooks.
- Did you learn anything new about Jesus Christ? If so, what?
- What do you learn about Jesus that might make a difference in:
 - a. What you believe about Him?
 - b. How you live now that you know what you do about Him?
 - c. How you should pray?
 - d. How you worship Him?

- What is the mystery of the seven golden lampstands and the seven stars? How do you know?
- Do you think we should study prophecy? Or is the study of prophecy just for scholars to debate? What is the benefit of prophecy? Look up and discuss Revelation 19:10.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Amos 3:7 says, "Surely the Lord GOD does nothing unless He reveals His secret counsel to His servants the prophets." God does not want to keep you in the dark regarding the future, beloved child of God. The future can be very scary if you don't know what is coming and who is in

control. Thus, He has given you the Word of God, and you will find in it the whole counsel of God, not only in regard to what you are to believe and how you are to live, but also in respect to what the future holds.

It's all there in the Bible for you to know. Regardless of who you are or the degree of your education, if you are a true child of God you are indwelt by the Holy Spirit who is there to lead you and guide you into all truth. That He will do, if you will do your part. And what is your part? It is to read and heed the Word of God.

You are off to a good start, friend. Press on. Don't let anyone keep you from knowing and understanding the unveiling of the "things which must shortly take place" (Revelation 1:1). They are laid out for you in the book of Revelation. In chapter 1, John records the things that he saw as Jesus stood in His magnificence among the seven lampstands. Then, in chapters 2 and 3, John records Jesus' messages to the seven churches existing in Asia at the time of his writing. Finally, from Revelation 4–22, John records for us what will take place after these things.

Study well, and you won't be in the dark regarding the future and the things which must shortly take place!

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