

The Heart of God in the Book of Revelation

STUDENT NOTES: 2012 INTENSIVE

Thanks to Mike Bickle, The Int'l House of Prayer, Kansas City, Paul Keith Davis, George Eldon Ladd, David Sliker

Eschatology literally means “the study of the last things.” Eschatology is made up of two Greek words: *eschaton* – meaning “end” and *-ology* - meaning “the study of something.” For the believer, eschatology means the study of the period in history before the second coming of Jesus Christ—what we call “The End of the Age.”

Theology is the study of the nature of God—who He is and how He thinks and acts. (we are all theologians!)

We all base our lives on what *we think* God is like. . . . how *we believe* he thinks and acts.
Theology matters because what we know about God shapes the way we think and live.
Theology matters, because if we get it wrong, then our whole life will be wrong!

Jesus talks about this in **Luke 6:47-49**.

This parable is about us. The “houses” are our lives. The houses represent our beliefs, our choices, our aspirations—our theology. And God calls not building on Him and His Truth as having No Foundation AND no ability to successfully weather storms!

A wise builder 1) comes to Jesus, 2) listens to his words, and then 3) diligently puts them into practice.
Revelation has a very similar contextual statement:

“Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy and who keep those things which are written in it...” Rev 1:3.

Revelation is an “unveiling”; that is what the word means, to pull back a curtain-see what you did not “see” before.

Obviously, John who probably knew Jesus best—didn’t “know” the Resurrected Christ” because –he fell like a dead man as recorded in Rev. 1.

A Question for you: **How do we go about studying the book of Revelation?**

To answer that question, let’s back up a little. Let’s take a look at what will be going on at the end of the age. There are two very shocking elements to the end time drama: 1) **the full-blown depravity of man expressed in unbelievable evil**. It is an absolute necessity that we understand the extremity of what is coming—SO THAT we can be prepared to follow God’s leadership through the end-times journey.

1st set of verses is in Romans chapter 1 & 2. Paul writes about the extreme sinfulness of mankind.

Romans 1, verses 16-18: *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, the just shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness...”*

Q: How does God define unrighteousness and ungodliness in this passage? A: **The suppression of Truth!**

The result? **Verse 25 states that men will exchange the truth for The Lie. (II Thessalonians 2:11 also).**

Here is the **progression**: a practice that becomes a deeply entrenched habit, then an approval of others with like thinking, then a drawing together to create a social structure, and consequently an enthroning of demons over that social structure and area. Psalms 94 talks about this in verse 20: **“*Shall the throne of iniquity which devises evil by LAW have fellowship with you?*”**

The Lie is described in verse 25: **“*They (mankind) worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator...*”** This delusion that will be embraced is humanistic in nature and its purpose is to exalt self.

In its essence, The Lie is the rejection of God’s leadership by the kings of the earth and the citizens of its nations because they have come to believe that God’s leadership is not only untrustworthy, but not beneficial to man.

At the end of the age, God has a king in mind—a king whose heart and lifestyle is to bless and redeem and restore. Man will, at the end of the age, gladly give themselves, their possessions, and their worship to a man of their own choosing, called the antichrist, the lawless one, the man of sin.

Psalms 2. **“*Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain (meaningless, empty) thing? The kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and His Anointed (Jesus),*”**

saying, *“Let us break their bonds in pieces and cast away their cords (standards of believing and living) from us.”*

II Thessalonians 2: 3-4 reiterates this. *“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, 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.”*

Jesus addressed the end of the age: He talks about new depths of human depravity because of new levels of demonic intrusion into the human arena that will result in frightening levels of human darkness.

In Matthew 24:, the disciples asked Jesus a question: *“Tell us...what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”*

Part of Jesus’ answer is found in **verses 37 – 39:**

“But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away; so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.”

Genesis 6:4: *“There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came into the daughters of men and they bore children to them.”* . A more complete rendering of the phrase “giants” is “Fallen Ones”. In other words, a hybrid, a spiritual being mingled with flesh.

II Peter 2:4-5:

“For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly...”

Jude refers to this in verse 6: *“And the angles who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; (and the next verse says, “as Sodom and Gomorrah in a similar manner gave themselves over to...strange flesh...”)* Strange flesh is any physical union not sanctioned by God

And what was the answer in Noah’s day?

Turn to Hebrews 11: 7: *“By faith, Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.”*

God is building an ark today. It is not natural, but supernatural. It is to be a place of safety for us for the days ahead, but it will only be built by revelation—not “natural” wisdom.

The 2nd shocking element of the end of the age will be the inexpressible enormity of God’s long arm of love extended to depraved, hateful, ice-hearted, vengeful human beings.

Here is the surprising element: *this outpouring will not primarily appear to the planet as good news!* What is in the hearts of man is primarily negative, especially in regards to what is in man’s heart toward God and His leadership of the earth. But here is the good news that we must remember: The Book of Revelation is primarily about the astonishing, ridiculous, preposterous, outrageous lengths that God goes to *in mercy* to save the nations and the individuals in those nations who are opposed to Him.

A point that must be touched...

The Book of Revelation is about judgment—God’s judgment. To properly understand God’s judgments, we must stay true to the character of God as revealed through out scripture.

The judgments released at the end of the age are PRIMARILY redemptive judgments, which is God’s implementation of pressure to bring lost and wayward humanity back to Himself. Mike Bickle says: God will use the least severe means to reach the most people at the deepest level of love without violating anyone’s free will. There is also non-redemptive judgment, which occurs when men are so consumed with darkness that redemption is no longer possible. The Great White Throne Judgment is a non-redemptive judgment.

To gain a proper understanding, we **MUST** look at what the church calls “The Rapture”

Misunderstanding what the Bible clearly states about this important event opens the door for disastrous results in the lives of believers.

I Thess 4: 16-17: *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we will always be with the Lord."*

I Corinthians 15:51-53: *Behold I tell you a mystery: we shall not all sleep (die), but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."*(In Matthew 24:30-31 Jesus uses this same terminology!)

In **Revelation 8:2**, we have the passage introducing the 7 trumpet judgments: "**And I saw the seven angels who stood before God and to them were given seven trumpets.**" Each of these seven judgments are introduced in scripture with this phrase: "The first angel sounded...the second angel sounded....the third angel sounded...so forth down to the last angel with a trumpet. The first 6 angels trumpet horrible sequences of judgments upon planet earth. But that changes with the seventh angel who blows the 7th trumpet.

Revelation 11:15: *"Then the 7th angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven saying: 'The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!'"* AT this point, the rapture occurs. The fallout of that fact will be seen upon the earth very shortly.

Truth: We are on planet earth during the great bulk of the 7-year period known as the tribulation.

Even if scripture did not reveal the time of the rapture, there is another reason to believe we are not removed from the planet before the great tribulation. That reason? Jesus is not coming back for a weak, anemic, impotent, fearful, hiding Bride.....God is returning for a spotless and wrinkle-free Bride...a Bride who knows her bridegroom well and is living her life out in love and selfless obedience to Him.

Why is this so important? Because the history of God's dealings with planet earth has been in partnership with mankind. God has not worked in a vacuum. Throughout the Bible, God calls us to Himself; He desires for His will to be done through us! God's purpose is and was to restore planet earth. His plan was for Adam and Eve to extend Eden's perimeters until it covered the earth. That is still God's plan, but now it is through a company of believers called The Bride

But there is more. Romans 8 informs us that all of creation is groaning, waiting eagerly for the manifestation of the Sons of God. This word for Son is *Huios*. It is the same word that is used when Jesus was baptized and the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus—and remained—and God said, "This is my beloved Son (*Huios*) in whom I am well pleased. "The word Son that is derived from the Greek word *Huios* means a mature son, a son with wisdom. There are other words for son in the NT. Possibly the most common is *Teknon* usually translated at "child."

Two things happened at Jesus' baptism—his father made the statement that Jesus was his mature son, the one who carried the same authority as His Father. The other important occurrence was the releasing of the Holy Spirit to completely occupy Jesus as a human being. Jesus was sold out to the Father and subsequently hosted the Holy Spirit without limitations.

Paul understood how to be filled constantly with the Holy Spirit:

Galatians 2:20: *"I am crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."*

There will be a generation of people who are lovesick and completely devoted to Jesus Christ (The Bride) and the same company of people who are faithful and mature Sons of God, who will stand strong in the face of the worst unleashing of evil in the history of the planet, and in the power of the Holy Spirit will exhibit the mature and magnificently beautiful character and nature of God.

There will be a generation who will sell out to God in undivided devotion and love at the end of the age who will usher in the greatest revival/awakening in the history of the world.

It will be a costly and sacrificial ride...but all who have gone before us will be cheering us on..

The only question left to answer it this...Do you want to be a part of that generation?