

The Revelation to John:-

A quote from the LifeBuilder Bible Study on the book of Revelation:- “Of the three Christian virtues – faith, hope and love - the one most needing our attention today is hope. Revelation touches us at the point of our despair, our world-weariness, our future shock, our fear of persecution, our collaboration with a sick (though friendly) society. It is quite possibly the most relevant book of the Bible for this moment in history.” When we are deprived of full Christian fellowship and our usual support, fellowship and friendship groups, we need to fall back on the One we can trust for the future.

Some background:-

According to the tradition of the early church, John left Israel to live in Ephesus which was then the capital of the Roman province of Asia. The book is believed to have been written between A.D. 90 – 95 during the reign of the emperor Domitian (A.D. 81 - 96) and his persecution of the Christian church. John was sent into exile on the small island of Patmos because of his witness to the Christian faith. The seven churches that are in Asia, written to in chapters 2 and 3, are all within 100 miles or so of Ephesus.

If you have time try to read the Book of Revelation right through in one sitting! It relates the conclusion of the salvation plan of the Lord God. Without it our New Testament would end with the uncertainty and problems related in the Epistles. In this closing book we have the triumph of good over evil! The wicked “beast” is overthrown and the Lamb of God conquers.

John’s introduction:-

Read chapter 1, verses 1 – 8. The book was written, like the epistles, to be read aloud to a gathered group of believers. Both the reader and the hearers will be blessed by the words of the prophecy. It is a blessing to us to be reminded who the Lord Jesus Christ is in verses 5 – 6.

- 1) He is “the faithful witness” - to the love of the Father for Him and for all who trust and believe in Him.
- 2) He is “the first-born of the dead” - God raised Him up and exalted Him to His right hand on high where He ever lives to make intercession for us.
- 3) He is “the ruler of kings on earth”. I have always liked the prayer Book version of Psalm 99 verse 1 - “The Lord is King, be the people never so impatient: he sitteth between the cherubims, be the earth never so unquiet.”
- 4) He “loves us”! - If in doubt read the Gospel of John chapter 14.
- 5) He “has freed us from our sins by His blood” “having borne our sins up to and onto the tree” (1 Peter 2 verse 24) .
- 6) He has “made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father”. Compare with 1 Peter 2 verses 9 – 10 echoing Exodus 19 verse 5 – 6.

Plenty there to ponder over and pray through until next week, when we will look at the vision of the risen, exalted Lord Jesus seen by John in exile.

Terry Brighton 13 / 5 / 2020

‘Millway group’ – the LifeBuilder booklet we used earlier might also be helpful as we look at Revelation