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"Introduction to Revelation" Part 1

Truth Matters Church, Inc.

2 **Overview of today's study**

☞DISCLAIMER:

- ☞Advanced study
- ☞Lay groundwork
- ☞Rules of Engagement

☞In our introductory study we'll answer the following questions:

- ☞Q1: What is the book of Revelation about?
- ☞Q2: Who wrote it, when, and to whom was it written to?
- ☞Q3: What was its intended purpose?
- ☞Q4: How is it to be interpreted?
- ☞Q5: What do I need to know to understand it?

☞

3 **Rules of Engagement**

- ☞Must use/interpret Scripture with Scripture
 - ☞Must be able to defend Revelation interpretation with both OT/NT
 - ☞Christ is Cornerstone of both OT/NT
- ☞Must use consistent hermeneutics, taking into account:
 - ☞Genre (Revelation is highly figurative and symbolic)
 - ☞Use Scripture as key to "decode" if-you-will what is being described
 - ☞Grammar
 - ☞Historical context
- ☞Must always be interpreted with a literal fulfillment in the physical
 - ☞All prophecies are literally fulfilled with perfect precision

4 **Rules of Engagement**

- ☞Resist imposing personal bias, presuppositions
- ☞Resist passing down a theological system and graphs
- ☞Resist sensationalizing it
- ☞Resist speculating on it
- ☞Resist resisting what the Spirit says to the churches
 - ☞Be ready to aside any pre-suppositions
 - ☞Be open-minded to Scripture
 - ☞Be ready to submit to whatever Scripture reveals
- ☞Last but not least, do not ADD or TAKE AWAY from the prophecy

5 **Q1: What is the book of Revelation about?**

- ☞ The title of the book tells us
- ☞ The book is about the Revelation of Jesus Christ
- ☞ 'Revelation' is 'apokalupsis' which means to unveil, uncover, reveal
 - ☞ English word apocalypse
- ☞ Thus, Revelation is an end times prophecy describing events leading up to the return of Jesus and the eternal state

6 **Q1: What is the book of Revelation about?**

- ☞ Genesis is the book of origins, beginnings
- ☞ Revelation is the book of destiny, completion, conclusion, ending
 - ☞ Centered around the glorious return of Messiah, before/after
 - ☞ Fulfillment of all OT/NT prophecies

7 **Q1: What is the book of Revelation about?**

- ☞ Currently:
 - ☞ Jesus is veiled to the world
 - ☞ Except by faith in hearts of believers
 - ☞ Evil is winning
- ☞ In the end times:
 - ☞ Jesus will be revealed to all mankind!
 - ☞ "to render to every man according to what he has done" – Rev 22:12
 - ☞ Evil doers will be punished
 - ☞ Those who do good and persevere will be rewarded
 - ☞ Good will prevail

8 **Q1: What is the book of Revelation about?**

- ☞ Gives us graphic details of what's in store for:
 - ☞ The church in the end times (Christians/Messianic Jews)
 - ☞ The people of Israel (Jews)
 - ☞ The Land of Israel (Promised Land)
 - ☞ The World (Antichrist, false prophet, final world power, non believers)

9 **Q1: What is the book of Revelation about?**

- ☞ Also gives us details concerning:
 - ☞ The apostasy of the church
 - ☞ The Great Tribulation
 - ☞ Wrath judgments
 - ☞ Resurrections (including our redemption, the Rapture)
 - ☞ Establishment of the millennial kingdom (Davidic kingdom)
 - ☞ Judgments (Millennial (Sheep/Goats), Great White Throne)
 - ☞ Eternal state (uncreation, the New Jerusalem)

☞

10 **Q2: Who wrote it, when, and to whom was it written to?**

- ☞ The apostle John wrote it while exiled on the island of Patmos

☞ John was exiled for preaching the gospel, Christianity (Rev 1:9)

11 ☐ **Q2: Who wrote it, when, and to whom was it written to?**

When was Revelation written?:

☞ Irenaeus (Greek Bishop, south of France, born early 2nd century) attributes the date of the writing of Revelation towards the end of reign of Domitian

☞ Domitian's reign AD 81-96

☞ Thus, Revelation was written towards the end of the 1st century (95-96 AD)

☞ 25+ years AFTER destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70!

12 ☐ **Quick Side Notes of AD 70**

☞ First Jewish Revolt lasted 4 years (66-70AD)

☞ Jews weren't happy being under Roman rule, oppression, taxation, etc.

☞ Romans began to strategize against their threat in 66AD

☞ Roman Emperors:

☞ Nero (54-68 AD)

☞ Vespasian (69-79 AD)

☞ General at time First Jewish Revolt began

☞ Titus Vespasian (79-81 AD)

☞ Son of Vespasian

☞ General at time of siege of Jerusalem in 70AD

13 ☐ **Quick Side Notes of AD 70**

☞ Passover 70 AD (around April), the Romans allowed pilgrims to enter Jerusalem

☞ Vespasian was Emperor

☞ Titus was General

☞ Jews not permitted to leave Jerusalem

☞ Romans encircled city walls

☞ Depleted food/water resources (starvation)

☞ By August 70 AD, Romans breached final defenses and massacred much of the remaining population and destroyed 2nd Temple

☞ Historian Josephus estimates 1.1MM Jews massacred 97K taken captive

☞ If not killed by sword, were killed by a plague, famine, wild beasts

14 ☐ **Quick Side Notes of AD 70**

☞ To commemorate the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 the Arch of Titus was erected and dedicated to Titus shortly after his death in AD 81, it still stands in Rome to this day:

15 ☐ **Quick Side Notes of AD 70**

☞ Arch of Titus inscription read: *"The Senate and the Roman people dedicate this monument to the deified Titus Vespasian Augustus, son of the deified Vespasian."*

16 ☐ **Quick Side Notes of AD 70**

☞ The Arch of Titus depicts a number of scenes, including a triumphal procession of Roman soldiers proudly parading their spoils from the capture of Jerusalem. These include the vessels from the Temple, most notably, the golden menorah:

17 **Quick Side Notes of AD 70**

☞ One last note, after the war, Josephus makes mention of what Titus did after he honored, promoted and rewarded his army for being valiant and winning the war:

☞ *"So when they [Titus's army] had all these honours bestowed on them [by Titus], according to his own appointment made to every one, and he [Titus] had wished all sorts of happiness to the whole army, he [Titus] came down, among the great acclamations which were made to him [Titus]: and [Titus] then betook himself to offer thank-offerings [to the gods], and at once sacrificed a vast number of oxen, that stood ready at the altars; and distributed them among the army to feast on." -The Jewish War Book 7, Josephus*

18 **Quick Side Notes of AD 70**

☞ Why did I give us a brief history of the besiege of Jerusalem in 70AD?

☞ Because there are many teachings out there that includes the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD in some shape or form when teaching Revelation

☞ This is impossible!

☞ For starters, Revelation was written 25+ years after 70AD

I'd like to share two examples of errors in trying to make 70AD fit into Revelation...

19 **Quick Side Notes of AD 70**

Example #1:

☞ Some incorrectly attribute the erection of the Arch of Titus to the "ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION":

Matthew 24:15 (Jesus speaking)

15 "Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand)..."

☞ The Arch of Titus and the abomination of desolation can't be the same thing because

☞ Jesus gave us the location of the abomination of desolation

☞ "standing in the holy place [in the temple]"

☞ The Arch of Titus is standing in ancient Rome

☞ The Arch of Titus was constructed 10+ years AFTER the war (81 AD)

☞

20 **Quick Side Notes of AD 70**

Example #2:

☞ Josephus tells us that Titus sacrificed oxen on the altar in the Temple

☞ Some believe he also sacrificed sheep and pig

☞ Because of this some bible teachers incorrectly attribute these sacrifices to the "ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION":

☞ Again this can't be true because

☞ Jesus said the location of the abomination of desolation is "standing in the holy place [temple]"

☞ Paul tells us that the man of lawlessness (Antichrist) will take his seat in the Temple claiming to be God:

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4

3 Let no one in any way deceive you, for it [the Day of the Lord] will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.

☞ Titus did NOT do that; in fact, he didn't become Caesar until 79 AD

21 **Quick Side Notes of AD 70**

☞ All this is to say: Making the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 fit into Revelation, is not possible, gross mishandling of history and Scripture, adding confusion to an already difficult study, and an example of what NOT to do

22 **Q2: Who wrote it, when, and to whom was it written to?**

Back to our main question:

☞ Who wrote it?:

☞ The apostle John wrote it while exiled on the island of Patmos for preaching the gospel, Christianity (Rev 1:9)

☞ When was it written?

☞ Revelation was written towards the end of the 1st century (95-96 AD)

☞ So the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 is OUT OF SCOPE

☞ And now... to whom was it written to?

23 **Q2: Who wrote it, when, and to whom was it written to?**

☞ It was written to the 7 churches!

Revelation 1:4

4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia [Minor]

☞ It was written to 7 literal churches in John's day:

☞ Ephesus

- ☞ Smyrna
- ☞ Pergamum
- ☞ Thyatira
- ☞ Sardis
- ☞ Philadelphia
- ☞ Laodicea

☞ Here is a brief map of where the 7 churches are geographically located...

24 **Q2: Who wrote it, when, and to whom was it written to?**

25 **Q3: What was its intended purpose?**

☞ To bless us!

Revelation 1:3

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.

☞ To give the church insight into the end times (which is near in a prophetic sense)

Revelation 22:16 (Jesus speaking)

16 "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star."

26 **Q3: What was its intended purpose?**

☞ To give the church the entire redemption story!

☞ The church accepts both the OT/NT

☞ Therefore, the church has the entire redemption story!

☞ God gave us (the church) the beginning (creation account) in Genesis

☞ God gave us (the church) the middle (God's redemption will and plan) between Gen-Rev

☞ God gave us (the church) the ending (uncreation account) in Revelation

☞ Final redemption and judgments

☞ To unseal what Daniel was asked to seal [more on this in our next study]

☞

27 **Q4: How is it to be interpreted?**

☞ There are 4 commonly held schools of thought:

☞ Historicism

☞ Futurism

☞ Historical Premillennialism

☞ Dispensational Premillennialism

☞ Preterism

☞ Partial

☞ Full

☞ Idealism

☞

☞

28 **Q4: How is it to be interpreted?**

Historicism understands the literary order of the visions, especially in 4:1-20:6, to *symbolize* the chronological order of successive historical events that span the entire era from the apostolic church to the return of Christ and the new heaven and earth (no Tribulation period):

29 **Q4: How is it to be interpreted?**

Futurism treats the order of the visions as reflecting the order of particular historical events (with some exceptions). Futurists, however, typically view the visions of chapters 4-22 as representing events still future to twenty-first-century readers, thus in a distant future from the standpoint of John and the churches of Asia.

30 **Q4: How is it to be interpreted?**

Partial preterism (from Latin *praeteritum*, "the thing that is past")

Some think that the fulfillment of most of Revelation's visions already occurred in the past, most of Revelation's visions occurred in the early years of the Christian church (emphasize "soon take place" to apply to John and the churches of Asia).

Some interpret the order of the visions as repeats of one another (7 seals, 7 trumpets, 7 seals are repeats of the same historical event).

Full preterism—insists that every prophecy and promise in the NT was fulfilled by A.D. 70—which we covered is not a legitimate option (Scriptural suicide)

31 **Q4: How is it to be interpreted?**

Idealism agrees with historicism that Revelation's visions *symbolize* the conflict between Christ and his church on the one hand, and Satan and his evil conspirators on the other, from the apostolic age to Christ's second coming (no Tribulation period, millennium is spiritual):

32 **Q4: How is it to be interpreted?**

☞ So which view is correct?

☞

☞

33 **Q4: How is it to be interpreted?**

☞ So which view is correct?

☞ Trick question!

☞

☞

34 **Q4: How is it to be interpreted?**

☞ Remember one of our Rules of Engagement

☞ "Resist passing down theological system and graphs"

☞ We're going with Scripture! So let's call it:

☞ *Scripturism*

☞ Which wasn't on the list, but we're going to use Scripture as our guide!

☞

☞

35 Q4: How is it to be interpreted?

How does John tell us to interpret it?

☞ John called this letter "the prophecy" at beginning of this letter:

Revelation 1:3

3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.

☞

☞

36 Q4: How is it to be interpreted?

How does Jesus tell us how to interpret it?

☞ Jesus too called this letter "the prophecy" at end of this letter:

Revelation 22:7 (Jesus speaking)

7 "And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book."

☞ IMPORTANT NOTE: Jesus's bodily return is connected with the prophecy of this book

☞

37 Q4: How is it to be interpreted?

☞ So the entire book of Revelation is to be considered prophecy

☞ Thus, we can eliminate 70 AD considerations for that was "history" [25 years earlier] and John and Jesus calls this book "the prophecy" looking forward [post 95-96 AD]

☞

38 Q4: How is it to be interpreted?

Furthermore:

☞ John wrote:

Revelation 1:19

19 Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things .

☞ Which means the prophecy (Revelation) is concerning the 7 churches in John's day, but also, what "will take" place to the churches in the end times!

☞ Since Jesus's bodily return is connected with this prophecy and John wrote this prophecy in 95-96 AD, we can conclude then that Revelation covers 95/96 AD thru the return of Messiah and eternal state which can be depicted like this...

☞

☞

39 **Q4: How is it to be interpreted?**

40 **Q4: How is it to be interpreted?**

☞ Thus, Revelation is to be interpreted looking forward from 95-96 AD to bodily return of Jesus and eternal state

☞ This foundation is Scriptural (*Scripturism*)

☞

41 **Q4: How is it to be interpreted?**

☞ Also, Revelation is to be understood as we understand all other Scripture... literally!

☞ Example Genesis (creation account)

☞ "and there was evening and morning – the first day"... etc.

☞ 6 literal days (creation)

☞ 7th day (God rested)

☞ Evening and morning, 1 day, 24 hour period

☞

42 **Q4: How is it to be interpreted?**

☞ Thus, whenever Revelation gives us a time marker, that time period is to be interpreted literally (just like the Genesis creation account, all of Scripture.)

☞ "in one hour", "1/2 hr", "in one day", "3 1/2 days", "42 months", "1,000 years", etc.

☞ This basis is Scriptural (*Scripturism*)

☞

43 **Q4: How is it to be interpreted?**

☞ Revelation is to be interpreted sequentially

☞ Just as we don't jumble the 6 day creation account

☞ Don't jumble the seals/trumpets/bowls

☞ 7 seals in sequence, when the 7th seal is open

☞ 7 trumpets in sequence, when the 7th trumpet is blown

☞ 7 bowls in sequence

44 **Q4: How is it to be interpreted?**

☞ Lastly, Revelation is to be interpreted chronologically

☞ Revelation 1-22 covers 95-96AD to the return of Jesus, in the order it was given (chapter 2 does not come before chapter 1, chapter 3 does not happen until chapter 2 concludes, etc.)

☞ This removes subjectivity and keeps us from adding/removing from the prophecy!

☞ Note: we will see that much of the events described in John's vision are towards the end of

human history!

☞

45 **Q5: What do I need to know to understand?**

☞ Some familiarity of OT prophecies and promises, such as:

☞ The two distinct "seed" in Genesis 3:15

(after the Fall, God prophesied to Satan in the midst of judgment)

15 And I will put enmity

Between you and the woman,

And between *your seed* and *her seed*;

He shall bruise you on the head,

And you shall bruise him on the heel."

46 **Q5: What do I need to know to understand?**

☞ Allow me to insert the subject of this prophecy when considering rest of Scripture:

Genesis 3:

15 And I [God] will put enmity

Between you [Satan] and the woman [Israel],

And between your seed [Antichrist] and her seed [Israel's Messiah];

He [Israel's Messiah] shall bruise you [Antichrist] on the head,

And you [Satan] shall bruise him [Israel's Messiah] on the heel."

☞ A showdown between Satan's seed (Antichrist) and Israel's seed (Messiah) is in store in the end times!

47 **Q5: What do I need to know to understand?**

☞ The Abrahamic Covenant:

Genesis 15:18

18 On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying,

"To your descendants [Israel] I have given this land,

From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates:

☞ The Holy Land [Israel] was given to Abraham's descendants (Israel)

☞ Genesis 17:6-7 (After God changed Abram's name to Abraham)

6 I [God] will make you [Abraham] exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and

kings will come forth from you. 7 I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your

descendants [Israel] after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be

God to you and to your descendants after you.

☞ The Abrahamic Covenant is an everlasting covenant (no expiration date)

48 **Q5: What do I need to know to understand?**

☞ The Mosaic Covenant:

Exodus 24:8 (after the people of Israel reaffirmed their covenant with God)

8 So Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words."

☞ God made a blood covenant with the people of Israel

☞ Israel is God's blood covenant people (God does not break covenant!)

☞ There are several mentions in the OT about God making good on that promise

Zech 9:11 is one example:

11 As for you [all the tribes of Israel] also, because of the blood of My covenant with you, I have set your prisoners free from the waterless pit... [describes Messiah's activity at the end times to rescue them, set prisoners free, etc.]

49 **Q5: What do I need to know to understand?**

☞The Davidic Kingdom:

2 Samuel 7:8-17 (God responded to David's desire to build for God a temple]

8 "Now therefore, thus you [Nathan] shall say to My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "I took you [David] from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people Israel. 9 I have been with you [David] wherever you [David] have gone and have cut off all your enemies from before you [David]; and I will make you [David] a great name, like the names of the great men who are on the earth. 10 I will also appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, that they [My people Israel] may live in their own place and not be disturbed again, nor will the wicked afflict them any more as formerly, 11 even from the day that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel; and I will give you [My people Israel] rest from all your enemies. The LORD also declares to you [David] that the LORD will make a house for you. 12 When your [David's] days are complete and you [David] lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant [Messiah] after you, who will come forth from you [David], and I will establish his [Messiah's] kingdom. 13 He [Messiah] shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his [Messiah's] kingdom forever. 14 I will be a father to him [Solomon] and he [Solomon] will be a son to Me; when he [Solomon] commits iniquity, I will correct him [Solomon] with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, 15 but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him [Solomon], as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you [David]. 16 Your [David's] house and your [Messiah's] kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your [Messiah's] throne shall be established forever.'" 17 In accordance with all these words and all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.

☞There are several places in the OT concerning the Davidic kingdom and Messiah's reign

☞Rev 20 (1,000 year millennial reign) is a fulfillment of God's promise to David

50 **Q5: What do I need to know to understand?**

Additional considerations:

☞There are several mentions in the OT of God [Messiah] rescuing His people Israel to make good on the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenant

☞Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Zephaniah, Zechariah, just to name a few

☞The people of Israel will always be God's chosen people:

Deuteronomy 7:6

6 For you [Israel] are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you [Israel] to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

☞As such, God will fulfill every promise made to them in the OT (including making an end of their sin, bring in everlasting righteousness, and a kingdom)

51 **Q5: What do I need to know to understand?**

☞Familiarity of Biblical feasts, which are markers on when prophesy will be fulfilled

☞The Bible is a Middle East centric book centered around the people of Israel and the Land of Israel

- œ John's vision into the heavenlies (unseen) manifests itself in the physical
- œ Last but not least, familiarity of Daniel's 70 week (490 years) prophecy
 - œ In short 69 weeks have been fulfilled (rebuilding Jerusalem, Messiah's arrival, Messiah cut off)
 - œ The 70th week (7 year period, atonement for Israel's sin, establishment of Messiah's kingdom) has been pushed back towards the end times
- œ