

## Lesson 79

### 11.2. Perspective of Christ's return ⇒ Revelation 1:1~11

#### Introduction

- Let us begin our study of the Book of Revelation, which concludes God's revelations to humanity. The word '*Revelation*' is a real translation of the Greek word for '*apokálypsis*.' Genesis recounts the beginning of all things. It recounts the creation of the earth and the heavens, as well as God's revelation of His principles to humanity. The book of Revelation describes the end of all things.
- Between Genesis and Revelation, what do we have? We have a process: God's plan to rescue mankind. This is everything we have studied so far. Genesis is the beginning and Revelation is the end. What connects the two is what we have studied until now. The question that arises is, 'How will it all end?' Let's start looking at that today.
- Many say that the value of something is truly high when we ask ourselves, 'What would I do without this thing?' If you can survive without it, then it is not very important. But if you cannot survive without it, then it is very important. We can apply this to the Book of Revelation: What would the Bible be like without it? Without it, the Bible would be incomplete, lacking a conclusion and a final flourish. Without the Book of Revelation, the Bible would be incomplete. Without the book of Revelation, the Bible would be strange.
- Griffith Thomas, a great evangelical writer, summarizes the Bible as follows: everything refers to Jesus:
  - Genesis to Deuteronomy: revelation – everything is revealed in these books.
  - Joshua to Esther: preparation.
  - Job to Song of Solomon: aspiration.
  - Isaiah to Malachi: the prophets – expectation.
  - Matthew to John: manifestation.
  - Acts to Jude: fulfillment.
  - Revelation: consummation.
- To fully understand the Book of Revelation, it is important to be familiar with the rest of the Bible, especially the Old Testament. Of its 404 verses, Revelation contains 265 phrases involving about 550 references to the Old Testament. Therefore, it is impossible to fully understand Revelation without studying the Old Testament. Be careful! There are many so-called '*experts*' on Revelation, but we can only study it based primarily on the Old Testament.
- The book of Revelation is God's prophecy to humanity. Why does God give us prophecies? Have you ever thought about that? History would happen anyway, so why did God leave us written prophecies? These prophecies contain impressive details about everything that will happen in the future, such as the prophecy we saw in Daniel's Seventy Weeks. Why did God do that?

- When Jesus came the 1st time, hundreds of prophecies were fulfilled. God had revealed all of this to his prophets beforehand. When Jesus was taken to the temple as a newborn, Simeon declared, *'For my eyes have seen Your salvation.'* The prophetess Anna, who was also in the temple, thanked God when she saw the child. They knew all the prophecies about the coming of that child.
- Why does God give prophecies to humans? The answer is simple: out of love. God gives prophecies to His people out of love.

⇒ **Genesis 18:17**; *'Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing?'*

⇒ **James 2:23**; Abraham was called the friend of God.

It's friendship, brothers! It is friendship for a race that constantly rejects the Lord. Because of his love for humanity, God gives us prophecies. God's friendship with humanity is tremendous. He treats us as friends in the deepest sense of the word. Jesus said, *'A friend gives his life for his friends.'* We have a vague notion of what a friend is. Out of love, God hides nothing from us. He tells us everything in advance.

⇒ **Isaiah 46:9-10**; *'I am God ... Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done.'*

⇒ **Amos 3:7**; *'Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.'*

⇒ **John 15:12-15**; *'I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.'*

- Prophecies provide security and peace, and Revelation was written for these reasons, among others. In particular, Revelation was written to comfort the early Christians who were severely persecuted by the Roman Empire. They found comfort and encouragement in the revelation of future events, which strengthened their resolve to bear witness to Jesus.

⇒ **Revelation 1:9**; *'Companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.'*

- John wrote the Book of Revelation to comfort the Churches by revealing Jesus as the Judge. The Book of Revelation portrays Jesus as the sovereign Lord of the Church and the judge of all the earth. Before the revelation of the Book of Revelation, Jesus was seen as a humble servant who submitted himself to death like a silent sheep. Although the message of grace is one of humility, Revelation reveals the Judge.
- John was Jesus' closest disciple. During the Last Supper, he laid his head on Jesus' chest. He is called the Apostle of Love. He was close to Jesus. However, when John saw the glorified Jesus in Revelation, he lost all strength and fell as if dead (⇒ **Revelation 1:17**). Revelation reveals the glorified Jesus; it is tremendous, brothers. This is why the Book of Revelation is so important.

- The four Gospels depict Jesus as a king, a servant, a man, and God. The epistles portray Jesus as the head of the Church. However, the Book of Revelation presents Jesus as the sovereign Lord of the Church and the judge of all the earth.
- We know that the entire Bible points to Jesus. Everything was written so that we could understand the glory of the Lord Jesus. This revelation to humanity is divided into two parts: the first and second comings of Jesus. Everything written about the first coming has been fulfilled. All the prophecies that have not yet been fulfilled are directed, concentrated, and point to the Second Coming. In summary, the Bible reveals Jesus, who came the first time, returned to heaven, and will come again. Everything related to the first coming of Jesus has already been fulfilled. What remains to be fulfilled is related to his second coming.
- God has a purpose in revealing the Second Coming of Jesus so clearly and in such detail. We have a great desire to learn about the Book of Revelation and to know what the end times will be like according to the Word of God. It is natural and healthy to be curious about these things when we are truly interested in Jesus; it is healthy. However, there is also unhealthy curiosity when we are only curious.
- Do you know God's purpose in revealing so many details about the future? It is for us to take a position of waiting for Jesus' return. Because this return is certain, our generation is called to take a stance in life: to wait for the Bridegroom and the wedding day. This means living a life of holiness. The study of prophecies draws our attention to the fact that Jesus is at the door. The certainty of his return should inspire us to prepare for that day. But what if Jesus does not return before I die? It does not matter; I only have this life. How do I want to get to Heaven? Whether it is through the rapture or physical death, my time on earth will be complete. Like Paul, we must get to heaven by saying, *'I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.'* My crown is already reserved, as are the crowns of all who love Jesus' return. As we have already studied, to love Jesus' return is to be ready for it and to dedicate the rest of our lives to that glorious day. In order to study the Book of Revelation, we must position ourselves in this way.

⇒ **1 John 3:2~3**

- *'Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.'*

⇒ **2 Peter 3:11~14**

- Peter is talking about the end times. How should we be? **V.14**; *'Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless'*

⇒ **Titus 2:11~15**

- Jesus, *'Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.'*

We read three passages about the end times, the return of Jesus, and the end of everything. How are they connected to what we read? Be holy! Sanctify your life. Be blameless. Be without blemish. Renounce worldly passions and everything that is unclean or of the world (⇒ **1 John 2:15-17**).

Renounce everything that is of the flesh and comes from Satan. These things defile us spiritually and separate us from God.

- Let us agree among ourselves that we will study the final events described in the Book of Revelation. Along with that, each of us must pay attention to living a holy and pure life in our daily lives. Neither you nor I can purify our own lives; only the blood of Jesus can purify us from all sin. However, Jesus does not force his way in. We have to surrender certain aspects of our lives to Jesus so he can transform them. Sometimes, we don't even want to acknowledge certain sins. We think they are normal. We think they are right. Jesus doesn't change what is right. We must recognize that we are wrong. Ask the Holy Spirit for enlightenment, and he will reveal everything in your life that contradicts the Word of God. Then, with the right attitude – with wisdom and gentleness – confess your sins, and you will be cleansed and purified. The more you are cleansed and purified, the more sensitive you will be to sin.
- Another absolutely necessary thing is for each of us to read the Books of Revelation and Daniel several times. You will have your own revelation. Many people say they don't read the Book of Revelation because they don't understand it, but this is inconsistent. How can someone say they don't understand something if they've never read it? Isn't that strange? Others say they've read it and didn't understand anything. That's due to a lack of knowledge. Previous readings are absolutely necessary. As we've seen, Revelation is the consummation, and without a foundation in the Old Testament, no one can understand it.

#### ⇒ **Daniel 12:8~10**

- How interesting! These are the last words of the Book of Daniel. After receiving tremendous revelations, Daniel says, *'I heard, but I did not understand ... but the wise shall understand.'* God said: *'Daniel, you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, (there's no point in sitting there and thinking about it) and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days.'*
- We are the generation of the last days. In the name of Jesus, we are all wise and will understand. The closer we get to that day, the more we will understand. The wicked will not understand, but the wise will. Revelation is not a difficult book; it is the conclusion of the Bible. Daniel received tremendous revelations from God. Keep in mind that it was God who revealed them to Daniel. In this passage, we read that God did not reveal them to Daniel, who said, *'But I did not understand.'* God reveals His Word. The Book of Revelation is neither easy nor difficult, as are no other books in the Bible. We depend on God's revelation. We are the generation of the last days. Note what God said to Daniel: *'but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.'*
- The wise will understand because God will reveal it to them. In this passage, *'the opposite of wicked is wise, not pious.'* There is no requirement to be intelligent or study theology. Everyone who has accepted Jesus has the Holy Spirit in their spirit, so they are no longer considered wicked, but wise, and will therefore understand. God will reveal it to them, which is why they will understand.

- Consider the Book of Revelation as a continuation of the Old Testament. Remember that God's plan for Israel is on hold and that Israel is being disciplined. When the Church is raptured, God's plan for Israel resumes, and the final 7 years of the 490 years allotted to Israel begin. This explains why Revelation contains over 550 references to the Old Testament. Revelation is essentially the Old Testament; it contains more than 70 references from the Book of Isaiah alone. Why? Because it is a continuation. God returns to deal with Israel; it is the conclusion of the Old Testament. For the Church, the conclusion is the Rapture. For Israel, God ends the program during the period of tribulation.
- But who was the Book of Revelation written for? This is interesting for the Church. Revelation was written so that the Church would know the outcome of everything, (*Israel has the Book of Daniel*). Those who read, hear, and keep the prophecies of Revelation will receive a special blessing, as we will see in the next lesson. I believe Satan has worked hard to prevent the revelation of this book to the Body of Christ. However, in the name of Jesus, we will participate in the special blessing of those who read, hear, and keep the revelations of the outcome of the Bible. May God bless us.