

Revelation Lesson 3

Revelation 1:3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

J. Vernon McGee stated: This verse gives us the beatitude of Bible study. This is the first of *seven beatitudes* (more on those in a moment) found in the Book of Revelation. This verse says, "Blessed is he that readeth," and that means the reader, or in the church, the teacher. Both those who read this book and those who hear it will be blessed. And both the reader and the hearer are to keep those things which are written in the book.

Blessed – This word means that one possesses the favor of God; it is that state of being marked by fullness from God. It indicates the state of the believer in Christ. The same word is used in the famous Beatitudes of Christ in Matthew 5.

Now how exactly can one be “full” from God? Simply because the believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit because of Christ and as a result should be fully satisfied no matter the circumstances. Hence the Psalmist stated: Psalms 23:5 “Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.” Indeed when we view ourselves as citizens of the Kingdom and that our King provides for us His Servants then we realize all of what God has done, is doing and will do for us. This knowledge helps us to reside in the Kingdom within our heart (so to speak) thus we see: Matthew 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. and Matthew 5:10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. lived out before our lives as we live in a Kingdom state of mind and operate from that frame of reference.

The 7 Blessings from the Book of Revelation are as follows:

Rev 1:3 Blessed *is* he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time *is* at hand.

Rev 14:13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

Rev 16:15 Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed *is* he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

Rev 19:9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed *are* they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Rev 22:7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed *is* he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

Rev 22:14 Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

Now, one can really get “full” from God by doing three things with this book:

is he that readeth – The wording for readeth is the same found in Luke 4:16 “And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.” Christians in their public worship followed the Jewish custom of public reading of the Scriptures (Note: 2 Corinthians 3:14 But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ.) The church reader gradually acquired an official position in later times

within the Churches as the ability to read by that time was almost nonexistent and not to mention that in later times as churches grew more Liturgical and taught more false doctrine, churches made the position official due to the control to keep the Bible out of the hands of the publick.

Now, John expected this book to be read in each of the seven churches mentioned (as seen in our next verse) and elsewhere. But, the duty of the public reading was to be done by whom? The laity? (a nonexistent position according to the Bible) The lector (the Bible Reader?) nope! By none other than each angel (or messenger or preacher/pastor) of each of the 7 churches.

Today the public reading of the Bible is an important part of worship that is often poorly done. John Rhyes-Davies stated in the documentary KJB – The Book That Changed The World – the following:

“The result (the Translation of the King James Bible) is a masterpiece of form and language, and for those involved, the very gateway to Heaven itself. Oh and there was one last thing. It had to sound right. So we know that THE TEXT WAS DESIGNED TO BE SPOKEN OUTLOUD. Now everyone who sings in the bath knows that it sounds that much better in the bath. Why? Because it echoes. If you want dignity and gravitas, you need echo. And where is that to be found? In every church in the land (of England). Let's give it a try.

John 1:1-2, 4 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
2 The same was in the beginning with God. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

And they – Properly those that do the next action: HEAR. Thus this THEY or Group pertains to those that HEAR.

that hear – There are 7 definitions of “hear” and the meaning found in this verse is: To understand and comprehend.

The words – The meaning of “words” is “the word, declaration of a prophet, meaning prediction, prophecy” it is the same wording found in:

Luke 3:4 As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

John 12:38 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

Acts 15:15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,

2 Peter 1:19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

of this prophecy – The word prophecy here is used to mean: Prediction, the foretelling of future events, including the declarations, exhortations, and warnings uttered by the prophets while acting under divine influence; of the prophecies of the revelations and warnings of the Book of Revelation.

and keep those things which are written therein: - The word keep means to: Particularly to watch, observe attentively, keep the eyes fixed upon. This is the fallacy of most today. While we enjoy reading and studying many truly fail to “KEEP” up with “those things which are written therein.” We've lost the sense of urgency. Thus John is wanting the hearers to keep in mind those things which he wrote down which relate to OUR future; and obey the truths that are revealed. The blessing which results from having in possession the revealed truth of God is not merely in reading it, or in hearing it:

because we keep seeing the word AND, AND, AND. Why? Because the AND connects the thoughts into ONE. Thus the TRUE blessing is one that you READ it, two THAT YOU HEAR IT and Third THAT YOU LIVE IT. Hence you apply and use the Truth so that when properly regarded, it exerts a suitable influence over our lives and on into the lives of others.

for the time is at hand – This wording and the word “shortly” in Revelation 1:1 both have the same understanding substantially, even though two different Greek words were used. To be sure, these statements have caused many to cringe that perhaps God really didn't mean “shortly” or it has caused some (all operating on Human intellect) to state that the events happened in John's lifetime or thereabouts.

We need to understand a few things:

- 1.) God is on a different time than we are. Our Time is set by the Sun, Moon and Stars (Genesis 1:14-19) due to the phrase “UPON THE EARTH.” Hence, time as we know it essentially exists in our world.
- 2.) 2 Peter 3:8-9 explains it: But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.
- 3.) Finally, understand that we ARE IN THE LAST DAYS not because Israel became a nation in 1948 but because of the statement in Hebrews 1:1-2 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

So we are IN the LAST DAYS! Because Jesus began His public ministry and spoke to us!

Look at another example: Daniel had visions from God, yet when he told others about what he saw, they did not understand the visions. Even Daniel did not understand, yet the understanding would come about “at the end of the days!”

26. And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days.
27. And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, **but none understood it.** Daniel 8:26-27
4. But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.
8. And **I heard, but I understood not:** then said I, **O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?**
9. And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for **the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.**
10. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; **but the wise shall understand.**
13. But **go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.** Daniel 12:4,8-10,13

We see from Scripture that Daniel saw visions that both he and those around them could not understand. Even when Daniel asked God for understanding, to know when these things would happen, he was told that he was not to know, only that they were to write the vision down and that he would stand in his lot at the last days.

Now notice: Matthew 24:14-15 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. 15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

Observe what Matthew under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost appended: (whoso readeth, let him understand:) How could they understand a SEALED Book, UNLESS IT HAD BEEN UNSEALED?

Furthermore, Jesus' statement about the Gospel of the Kingdom being "preached in all the world" so that then "shall the end come." We note thusly:

That Paul the Apostle states twice: Colossians 1:5-6 For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; 6 Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth:

Colossians 1:23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

If Paul stated that the Gospel HAD ALREADY BEEN PREACHED to all the world it would make sense that the Apostles (and writers of the NT) BELIEVED Christ would RETURN IN THEIR LIFETIME!

Note:

Peter preached on the day of Pentecost Acts 2:14-21 about the last days.

After Pentecost Peter is seen preaching the soon coming of Jesus Christ, saying we are living in the last days. The people who listen are cut to the quick and cry out what shall we do?

If these new Christians did not believe that Jesus was coming very soon, then why do we see them selling all of their possessions and the living together breaking bread with one another?

In much of the new testament, we see Paul who also warns of the nearness of Christ's return:

In Romans 13:11-14 It is very interesting how Paul puts it: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. It seems that maybe some were growing weary, and Paul wanted all to again realize the nearness of His coming.

In 1 Corinthians 7:25-31 we see that Paul even recommends that it is not good not even to marry! It is a good thing that they did not listen to Paul on this or else the church might not have survived the years ahead. Never the less, we see Paul saying that because the time is so short, it is better if you never got married. And those of you who are married, act as if you are not married!

Paul instructed the people to be careful because they were living in the last days in 1 Corinthians 10:6-12.

Note: 1 Corinthians 10:11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Paul speaks to the corinthians assuring them that the coming of Christ was so near that "not all of us will sleep" in 1 Corinthians 15:51-52.

After some time people started to get worried because one by one people were dying. Weren't we all to be here in the flesh when Jesus comes?

So Paul encourages them in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 by showing them that those who will sleep (die) will be raised up when Jesus comes to see Him come!

In verse 17 Notice the phrase: "we which are alive and remain". Paul thought that the time was extremely near.

The following scripture speak of the closeness of Christ coming:

- If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema **Maranatha**. 1 Corinthians 16:22. (**Maranatha means, O Lord, come!**)
- Let your moderation be known unto all men. **The Lord is at hand**. Philippians 4:5.
- For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but **now once in the end of the world** hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. Hebrews 9:26.
- Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, **as ye see the day approaching**. Hebrews 10:25.

James, speaks of the nearness of the end and the fact that all the possessions of the wicked will amount to nothing in the end. James 5:1-9.

Peter, in addition to his first sermon recorded in Acts 2, often spoke of the nearness of the end. 1 Peter 1:3-12. 1 Peter 1:18-20.

Note: v.7 "But **the end of all things is at hand**: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." v. 17 **For the time is come that judgment must begin** at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? 1 Peter 4:7,17.

Finally we even see John speaking of the nearness of the end just like the others and that was BEFORE he received the Revelation.

18. Little children, **it is the last time**: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby **we know that it is the last time**. 1 John 2:18.

28. And now, little children, abide in him; that, **when he shall appear**, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. 1 John 1:28.