

Revelation 1: A Prophecy for the Last Generation

Revelation 1:2, 1:19 and 4:1–2 | Sunday, December 7 | Revelation Series

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OVERVIEW

Hal picks up the chain of revelation at verse 2, where John bears witness to the Word of God, to the testimony of Jesus Christ, and to all that he saw — and the whole message turns on that last phrase. The Greek behind it is *idon*, which Gingrich and Danker define as perception by actually seeing something: an eyewitness. Hal tells how he prayed for a key to the symbols that are explained nowhere else in the Bible, and how the Holy Spirit gave him that word. A first-century man could not have watched these events, so God, who created time, time-traveled John forward to see them and brought him back to describe them in the only terms he had — it looked like this, it approximated that. From there Hal walks the outline of verse 19 and on to what he calls the plot point of the book: the verse that begins and ends with *meta tauta*, where a door stands open in heaven and a voice says “come up here.” John is caught up, and that, Hal says, is a preview of coming attractions.

KEY SCRIPTURES

Revelation 1:2 — John bore witness to the Word of God, to the testimony of Jesus Christ, and to all that he saw

Revelation 1:10–11 — In the spirit on the Lord’s day — “write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches”

Revelation 1:19 — The outline: the things you have seen, the things which are, the things after these things

Revelation 4:1 — *Meta tauta* — a door standing open in heaven and the voice saying “come up here”

Revelation 4:2 — Immediately John is in the spirit, and a throne is standing in heaven

Revelation 22:8–9 — “I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things”

Revelation 22:10 — Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near

KEY TERMS

Idon — the Greek word behind “all that he saw” — Gingrich and Danker: perception by actually seeing something, an eyewitness

Meta tauta — “after these things” — the two Greek words that mark where the book goes future

Plot point — Hal’s term, borrowed from screenwriting, for where a story turns; here it is chapter 4, verse 1

Time-traveled — how Hal describes what God did with John — brought him forward to see these things happen, then brought him back

The Church age — “the things which are” — the present age, the things that pertain to the churches

A preview of coming attractions — John hearing “come up here” and standing instantly in heaven, ahead of what Hal says the Church will experience

The gift of pardon — the free gift Christ paid for and put your name on; it cannot be bought, earned or deserved

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Answer from the message itself. Every answer is in the teaching.

1. What does the Greek word *idon* mean, and why does Hal look it up?

2. What did Hal pray for while he was writing *There's a New World Coming*, and what was he given?

3. How does Hal answer the question of how a first-century man could see things that had not happened?

4. What limits did that put on John as he wrote?

5. What three-part outline does verse 19 give, and what does Hal say about the second “and”?

6. What does *meta tauta* mean, and where does Hal say the book turns on it?

7. Why does Hal call that verse the plot point of the book?

8. What happens to John at that point, and what does Hal say it previews?

9. In Hal's reading, what does the plot point tell us about where the Church is when the book goes future?

10. How many times does John say “I saw,” and what are the other two counts Hal gives?

11. What is John told at the end of the book that Daniel was not?

12. Hal says there is one sin Jesus could not die for. What is it?

DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

1. John insists over and over that he actually saw and actually heard these things. What difference does it make whether Revelation is a vision to be admired or an eyewitness account to be believed?

2. Hal prayed for a key to the parts he could not understand, and says the Holy Spirit gave him one. Where have you asked God for understanding, and what came of it?

3. If John could only say “it looked like this” or “it approximated that,” what does that ask of us when we read him?

4. The outline of verse 19 puts us inside “the things which are.” What difference does it make to live in a chapter of a book you can read ahead in?

5. Hal says the plot point could happen at any moment and asks, are you ready? If you expected to hear “come up here” today, what would you change?

6. He says the one unforgivable thing is refusing a gift that has already been paid for. Why is a free gift so hard for people to receive?

MEMORY VERSE

“Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.”

— Revelation 22:10, as Hal reads it in this message