

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes
First Quarter 2019: *The Book of Revelation*
Lesson 1 The Gospel from Patmos

Read for this week's study

Revelation 1:1-8; John 14:1; Deuteronomy 29:29; John 14:29; Romans 1:7; Philippians 3:20; Daniel 7:13, 14.

Memory Text

“Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near” (Revelation 1:3, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. The Title of the Book
- III. The Purpose of the Book
- IV. The Symbolic Language of Revelation
- V. The Godhead
- VI. The Keynote of Revelation
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. What kind of reading is implied in Revelation 1:3? Why don't we do that anymore today? Read 2 Peter 1:19. What does the text mean when it describes prophecy as a light shining in a dark place? (Sabbath afternoon)
2. Read Revelation 1:1-3. What is the significance of the book's title? What is the book really about? What is the relationship between the Jesus of Revelation and the Jesus of the Gospels? Read John 14:1-3. How does the very broad promise in this passage help us better understand what Jesus is doing for us in heaven right now? (Sunday's lesson)
3. Read Revelation 1:1. What are the two key purposes of the Book of Revelation? Read Deuteronomy 29:29. Why are some things not revealed to us? What is the purpose of the things that are revealed? John 16:12 gives us one reason why God keeps secrets from us. Can you think of any others? Read John 14:29. What crucial principle of prophecy is articulated here? (Monday's lesson)

4. Read Revelation 13:1, Daniel 7:1-3 and Ezekiel 1:1-14. What is the one thing all these visions have in common? Read Revelation 1:1 and Daniel 2:28 and 45. What is the significance of Revelation's use of Daniel 2 here? (Tuesday's lesson)
5. Read Revelation 1:4-5 and Romans 1:7. What common greeting is found in both and from whom is the greeting given? Read Revelation 1:6. What does it mean to be kings and priests while still in this world? How should this fact impact the way we live each day? What will it mean in eternity to be kings and priests? (Wednesday's lesson)
6. Read Revelation 1:7-8. The wording of this text is derived from Daniel 7:13, Zechariah 12:10 and Matthew 24:30. What do these texts tell us about the Second Coming? Who is it that has promised Jesus' return? How should that give us confidence that Christ will return as promised? (Thursday's lesson)
7. If Revelation is the unveiling of Jesus Christ, why does the word "apocalypse" have a negative meaning today? Why is the word "fear" so often associated with the prophecies of Revelation? (Friday's lesson)
8. Think about some of the failed predictions made just in the past twenty years regarding end-time events and the Second Coming of Jesus. What are the negative results of these failed predictions? How do these failed predictions make Christians in general look to those outside? How do those who believe in predictive prophecy strike the right balance between living for the long term and anticipating the soon coming of Jesus? (Friday's lesson)

Key Texts

Rev 1:1-3

- 1 ***The revelation of Jesus Christ,***
 which God gave Him,
 to show to His servants
 what must soon take place.
 And He signified it,
 sending it through His angel
 to His servant John,
 2 who testified
 concerning the word of God
 and ***the testimony of Jesus,***
 which he saw.
- 3 Blessed is the one who reads
 and those who hear (with understanding)
 the words of this prophecy
and keep the things which are written in it,
 for the time is near.

Rev 1:4-6

4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia:
Grace to you and peace
from **the One** who is, and who was, and who is to come,
and from **the seven spirits** which are before his throne,
5 and from **Jesus Christ,**
the faithful witness,
the **firstborn** from the dead, and
the **ruler** of the kings of the earth.

To the One who
loves us and
has **freed** us from our sins by His blood, and
6 has **made** us a kingdom, priests before God,
even His Father—
to Him be glory and power forever and ever,
Amen.

Rev 1:7-8

7 Behold, he is **coming with the clouds,**
and every eye will **see him,**
including those who **pierced him,**
and all the tribes of the earth will **mourn over him.**
Yes, Amen.

8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,”
says the Lord God,
“the one who is and who was and who is to come,
the Almighty.”

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

And the early Christians sorely needed the encouraging message of that sixty-sixth book, and the picture of the angels celebrating, because there was a serious crisis among God’s people on this planet at that time.

For one thing, the Second Coming seemed to be indefinitely delayed. They thought he would come around 50 A.D., and Paul had to tell them, “No, not yet”, in his letter to Thessalonica. There were still more things to happen. By the 90’s—what had gone wrong that Jesus had not yet returned? And besides this, there were heresies in the church. Some were even teaching that Christ had not really come in human form. He had not really suffered and really died. He

had faked it all. They're called the *Docetists*, who taught he just pretended to do it. And then there was great opposition, and serious persecution. The apostles were all dead, save one. And he was the elderly John, now a prisoner on the Isle of Patmos. What good news was there, to encourage the early Christians?

And you could count on God when things were that bleak, to send a message of encouragement and enlightenment and explanation to his people. He surely wouldn't send a book of mysteries and dates and schedules of events that they could not possibly understand. Rather, that sixty-sixth book that he did send, the book of Revelation (which means clarification, not mystification), that sixty-sixth book is an invitation to discouraged early Christians to look a little higher—to take the *larger view* of things. To see how they've all been caught up in a vast great controversy that affects the whole universe! And that it's a controversy over God's own character and government. And then to read on and see that God has already won this war, and the angels all agree with him. To see that this is the good news. And then to read on and realize that God is inviting us to join in the celebration; and then to go out to the world and invite all others who are willing to listen, to join in God's victory in the war. And then we Christians might not seem so much on the defensive all the time; we have good news to tell. There's no way God and his side can lose. And should we not *join the winning side?* is the invitation in that sixty-sixth book.

And the book also says that you can count on God to wait until this truth about him—this good news about his character and government—has been spread all over the world. Because God is the kind of person who will wait until his children have had an opportunity to understand the issues in the war; and to be ready for the awesome events the Bible describes as taking place before Jesus' return. To see and to present the plan of salvation in the larger setting of the great controversy over the character and government of God is, I believe, the highest privilege of God's friends on this planet today. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *Conversations About God*, #1, "The Conflict in God's Family" recorded January, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/1MMCAG>*

Don't you think, then, we could afford to be sympathetic with our Christian friends who would even venture to say that our doctrine of Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary was appropriately discovered in a field of corn. They might have stated it a little more politely, especially when they sense how serious we are about this, and they sense how much it means to us. But wouldn't you agree, an understanding of what Christ is doing in heaven, in the

presence of the whole onlooking universe, especially since 1844, is a very great revelation of the truth about God and what he is looking for in his people.

How best to approach this subject? There are some who have felt that we don't get much information on this from the Bible, we get it largely from Ellen White. Now it's true, she has written a great deal on this subject. Is there very much about this judgment, this ministry of Christ before the onlooking universe in the Bible itself?

Well, for myself, I like to start with the seventh chapter of Daniel. And, incidentally, while considering this doctrine and its possibilities for being misunderstood, like the thought that Jesus has to intercede with the Father, I think we need to remind ourselves that there's nothing Satan would rather do, not change our apparent belief in each of the doctrines, but just twist our understanding enough so that our explanation of these doctrines will put God in a false light. Now think how he's done that with the Sabbath. And with why Jesus had to die. And just to add one more statement as to what he's trying to do:

From the beginning, it has been Satan's studied plan to cause man to forget God, that he might secure them to himself. Hence he has sought to misrepresent the character of God, to lead men to cherish a false conception of Him. The Creator has been presented to their minds as clothed with the attributes of the prince of evil himself,—as arbitrary, severe and unforgiving [if someone has to plead with God to forgive us, what does that suggest about God?] The Creator has been presented to their minds as clothed with the attributes of the prince of evil himself,—as arbitrary, severe and unforgiving,—that He might be feared, shunned, and even hated by men. {5T 738.1}

And Ellen White says in *Great Controversy*, 536:

When we consider in what false colors Satan has painted the character of God, can we wonder that our merciful Creator is feared, dreaded, and even hated? The appalling views of God which have spread over the world from the teachings of the pulpit have made thousands, yes, millions of skeptics and infidels.

So while we talk about Christ interceding in the presence of the Father, I think we need to realize that explanations from the pulpit of these great doctrines have had the effect of turning people against God. And forbid that we should do that in our discussions tonight. Think how God has been misrepresented from the pulpit. During the inquisition, tying people to the stake and burning them to win their conversion. Think about what that said about God.

In Daniel 7:9, is the description of the prophet's dream in which he saw God, and heaven itself:

As I looked [he writes], thrones were placed, and one that was ancient of days took his seat. His raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool. His throne was fiery flames. Its wheels were burning fire. A stream of fire issued and came forth

from before him [and surely we're familiar with this picture of the fire. That the glory of the LORD has the appearance of fire. Was the Father there alone?]. A thousand thousand served him, and 10,000 times 10,000 stood before him [look at the company there. What kind of a house would you build for the LORD if he's surrounded by that many people?]. The court sat in judgment, and the books were opened.

This is not the only reference to the convening of the heavenly court, is it? You remember Paul saying, "God, may you win your case when you take it into court", in Romans 3. How about Job 1 and 2? Zechariah 3?—and other places in which the heavenly court is convened. Is this not the court in which Christ appeared after the resurrection and asked, "Was it enough?" And they bowed their heads and said it was more than enough. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Faith, Righteousness and Salvation, #15 "What is Christ Doing in the Heavenly Sanctuary - Especially Since 1844?", recorded April, 1975, Lynwood, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/15MMFRS> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/16MMFRS> (Part 2)

As we study the prophecies here, what do they say about God? Do the prophecies even leave room for delay, by the way? Well, the Book of Revelation certainly does, doesn't it? It even speaks of it. "Hold! Do not let these events occur until my servants are sealed in their foreheads." It's hard not to get into Revelation when we're reading Daniel.

But then you also mentioned preparation for the last days. As I was reviewing this before coming, it's significant to me how Jesus commented on the purpose of prophecy. Not just Daniel, of course, but others; there are so many in Daniel that are so specific. Look at Matthew 24. Jesus himself made some prophecies, and he commented on the purpose of them. Matthew 24:25. You remember they asked how soon he would come. "Well," he said, "several things will occur before I come." In fact, verse 23: "Then if anyone says to you, 'Lo, here is the Christ!' or 'There he is!' do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. Lo, I have told you beforehand."—suggesting that he had warned them in advance, so they'd be prepared. But he gave an additional reason in John 13:19. And I think prophecies have these dual purposes, suggesting it does pay to work them out, indeed. There is warning. Unless, of course, we misinterpret them and are looking for the wrong thing. So it pays to study carefully. But an additional reason is given in 13:19. "I tell you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am he."

And of course belief is trust. In other words, when you see this happening, it will strengthen your faith and your trust. Now that makes one look about to see what it was that he told them.

“I tell you this now before it takes place.” {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – Daniel, recorded 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1984:

<http://pkp.cc/39MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/40MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

As they sat together one day on the Mount of Olives, Jesus spoke of many signs by which the disciples could tell when the end was getting nearer. Very familiar passages to all those who believe in the advent; he spoke of alarming disturbances in earth and sky. He spoke of growing distrust between the nations. He spoke of the rise of false religious leaders; a subject we have discussed before. He particularly warned of those who would arise and teach that his second coming was to be in secret. “Don’t believe that,” Jesus said. As in the next passage, Matthew 24:26, 27, 30, and 31:

Don’t believe it [that is, don’t believe that I will be coming in secret]. For the Son of Man will come like the lightning that flashes across the whole sky from the east to the west. . . . And all the peoples of earth will weep as they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. The great trumpet will sound, and he will send out his angels to the four corners of the earth, and they will gather his chosen people from one end of the world to the other. (GNB)

Now that is hardly the description of an invisible event. Quite on the contrary, John affirmed very clearly in the last book in the Bible, that every eye will see him come. And you remember that passage in Revelation 1:7: “Every eye will see him.” (RSV) {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #19, “How Soon Will the Conflict Be Over?” recorded June, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* <http://pkp.cc/19MMCAG>

Recommended Listening: Faith, Righteousness and Salvation, #15 “What is Christ Doing in the Heavenly Sanctuary—Especially Since 1844?” is available at:

<http://pkp.cc/15MMFRS> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/16MMFRS> (Part 2)

Further Study with Ellen White

He who knows the end from the beginning has provided for the attack of satanic agencies. And He will fulfill His word to the faithful in every age. That word is sure and steadfast; not one jot or tittle of it can fail. If men will keep under the protection of God, His banner will be over them as an impregnable fortress. He will give evidence that His word can never fail. He will prove a light which shineth in a dark place until the day dawn. He, the Sun of Righteousness, will arise with healing in His beams. . . . {RC 129.5}

Your work is to cooperate with Christ, that you may be complete in Him. In being united to Him by faith, believing and receiving Him, you become part of Himself. Your character is His glory revealed in you.—Manuscript 44, 1897. {RC 129.7}

In the Revelation are portrayed the deep things of God. The very name given to its inspired pages, “the Revelation,” contradicts the statement that this is a sealed book. A revelation is something revealed. The Lord Himself revealed to His servant the mysteries contained in this book, and He designs that they shall be open to the study of all. Its truths are addressed to those living in the last days of this earth’s history, as well as to those living in the days of John. Some of the scenes depicted in this prophecy are in the past, some are now taking place; some bring to view the close of the great conflict between the powers of darkness and the Prince of heaven, and some reveal the triumphs and joys of the redeemed in the earth made new. {AA 584.1}

So with all the promises of God’s word. In them He is speaking to us individually, speaking as directly as if we could listen to His voice. It is in these promises that Christ communicates to us His grace and power. They are leaves from that tree which is “for the healing of the nations.” Revelation 22:2. Received, assimilated, they are to be the strength of the character, the inspiration and sustenance of the life. Nothing else can have such healing power. Nothing besides can impart the courage and faith which give vital energy to the whole being. {MH 122.3}

Christ came as a personal Saviour to the world. He represented a personal God. He ascended on high as a personal Saviour, and will come again as He ascended to heaven—a personal Saviour (MS 86, 1898). {6BC 1054.2}

In giving us His word, God has put us in possession of every truth essential for our salvation. Thousands have drawn water from these wells of life, yet there is no diminishing of the supply. Thousands have set the Lord before them, and by beholding have been changed into the same image. Their spirit burns within them as they speak of His character, telling what Christ is to them, and what they are to Christ. But these searchers have not exhausted these grand and holy themes. Thousands more may engage in the work of searching out the mysteries of salvation. As the life of Christ and the character of His mission are dwelt upon, rays of light will

shine forth more distinctly at every attempt to discover truth. Each fresh search will reveal something more deeply interesting than has yet been unfolded. The subject is inexhaustible. The study of the incarnation of Christ, His atoning sacrifice and mediatorial work, will employ the mind of the diligent student as long as time shall last; and looking to heaven with its unnumbered years he will exclaim, "Great is the mystery of godliness." {COL 133.4}

The Bible is its own expositor. Scripture is to be compared with scripture. The student should learn to view the word as a whole, and to see the relation of its parts. He should gain a knowledge of its grand central theme, of God's original purpose for the world, of the rise of the great controversy, and of the work of redemption. He should understand the nature of the two principles that are contending for supremacy, and should learn to trace their working through the records of history and prophecy, to the great consummation. He should see how this controversy enters into every phase of human experience; how in every act of life he himself reveals the one or the other of the two antagonistic motives; and how, whether he will or not, he is even now deciding upon which side of the controversy he will be found. {Ed 190.2}

Not one soul who in penitence and faith has claimed His protection will Christ permit to pass under the enemy's power. His word is pledged: "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me." Isaiah 27:5. The promise given to Joshua is given to all: "If thou wilt keep My charge, . . . I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by." Zechariah 3:7. Angels of God will walk on either side of them, even in this world, and they will stand at last among the angels that surround the throne of God. {PK 587.1}

The omnipotent power of the Holy Spirit is the defense of every contrite soul. Not one that in penitence and faith has claimed His protection will Christ permit to pass under the enemy's power. The Saviour is by the side of His tempted and tried ones. With Him there can be no such thing as failure, loss, impossibility, or defeat; we can do all things through Him who strengthens us. When temptations and trials come, do not wait to adjust all the difficulties, but look to Jesus, your helper. {DA 490.5}

Every weak, doubting, struggling soul who yields fully to the Lord is placed in direct touch with agencies that enable him to overcome. Heaven is near to him, and he has the support and help of angels of mercy in every time of trial and need. {AA 299.1}

But though the conflict is a ceaseless one, none are left to struggle alone. Angels help and protect those who walk humbly before God. Never will our Lord betray one who trusts in Him. As His children draw near to Him for protection from evil, in pity and love He lifts up for them a standard against the enemy. Touch them not, He says; for they are Mine. I have graven them upon the palms of My hands. {PK 570.4}

While we trust in Christ's saving power, all the arts and wiles of the fallen host can do nothing to harm us. Heavenly angels are constantly with us, guiding and protecting. God has ordained

that we shall have His saving power with us, to enable us to do all His will. Let us grasp the promises and cherish them moment by moment. Let us believe that God means just what He says. {HP 32.2}

God is ever seeking to bring human minds into association with the divine. He offers us the privilege of co-operation with Christ in revealing His grace to the world, that we may receive an increased knowledge of heavenly things. Looking unto Jesus, we obtain brighter and more distinct views of God, and beholding, we become changed. Goodness, love for our fellow-men, becomes our natural instinct. We develop a character that is the counterpart of the divine character. Growing into His likeness, we enlarge our capacity for knowing God. More and more we enter into fellowship with the heavenly world, and we have continually increasing power to receive the riches of the knowledge and wisdom of eternity. "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Mrs. E. G. White. {ST, May 28, 1902 par. 6}

The heart of God yearns over His earthly children with a love stronger than death. In giving up His Son, He has poured out to us all heaven in one gift. The Saviour's life and death and intercession, the ministry of angels, the pleading of the Spirit, the Father working above and through all, the unceasing interest of heavenly beings,—all are enlisted in behalf of man's redemption. {SC 21.2}

The Lord declares by His prophet, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Jeremiah 31:3. While the sinner is yet far from the Father's house, wasting his substance in a strange country, the Father's heart is yearning over him; and every longing awakened in the soul to return to God is but the tender pleading of His Spirit, wooing, entreating, drawing the wanderer to his Father's heart of love. {SC 54.1}

Through creation and redemption, through nature and through Christ, the glories of the divine character are revealed. By the marvelous display of His love in giving "His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," the character of God is revealed to the intelligences of the universe. Through Christ our heavenly Father is made known as the God of love. {ST, December 15, 1914 par. 5}

Infinite love—how great it is! God made the world to enlarge heaven. He desires a larger family of created intelligences (MS 78, 1901). {1BC 1081.2}

Had God the Father come to our world and dwelt among us, humbling Himself, veiling His glory, that humanity might look upon Him, the history that we have of the life of Christ would not have been changed. . . . In every act of Jesus, in every lesson of His instruction, we are to see and hear and recognize God. In sight, in hearing, in effect, it is the voice and movements of the Father. {TMK 338.4}

Christ, the Light of the world, veiled the dazzling splendor of His divinity and came to live as a man among men, that they might, without being consumed, become acquainted with their Creator. Since sin brought separation between man and his Maker, no man has seen God at any time, except as He is manifested through Christ. {MH 419.1}

Christ came to teach human beings what God desires them to know. In the heavens above, in the earth, in the broad waters of the ocean, we see the handiwork of God. All created things testify to His power, His wisdom, His love. Yet not from the stars or the ocean or the cataract can we learn of the personality of God as it was revealed in Christ. {MH 419.3}

God saw that a clearer revelation than nature was needed to portray both His personality and His character. He sent His Son into the world to manifest, so far as could be endured by human sight, the nature and the attributes of the invisible God. {MH 419.4}

God regards us as His children. He has redeemed us out of the careless world and has chosen us to become members of the royal family, sons and daughters of the heavenly King. He invites us to trust in Him with a trust deeper and stronger than that of a child in his earthly father. Parents love their children, but the love of God is larger, broader, deeper, than human love can possibly be. It is immeasurable. Then if earthly parents know how to give good gifts to their children, how much more shall our Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him? {COL 142.1}

Christ was the greatest teacher the world has ever known. He came to this earth to shed abroad the bright beams of truth, that men might gain a fitness for heaven. "For this cause came I into the world," He declared, "that I should bear witness unto the truth." John 18:37. He came to reveal the character of the Father, that men might be led to worship Him in spirit and in truth. {CT 259.1}

Man's need for a divine teacher was known in heaven. The pity and sympathy of God were aroused in behalf of human beings, fallen and bound to Satan's chariot car; and when the fullness of time was come, He sent forth His Son. The One appointed in the councils of heaven came to this earth as man's instructor. The rich benevolence of God gave Him to our world, and to meet the necessities of human nature He took humanity upon Himself. To the astonishment of the heavenly host the eternal Word came to this world as a helpless babe. Fully prepared, He left the royal courts and mysteriously allied Himself with fallen human beings. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." John 1:14. {CT 259.2}

Recommended Reading: *Desire of Ages* Chapter 73 – "Let Not Your Heart be Troubled"

Desire of Ages Chapter 87 – "To My Father and Your Father"

<https://egwwritings.org>