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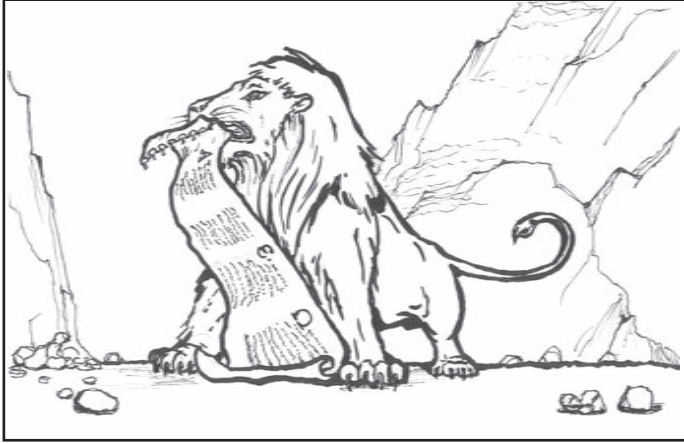
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Introduction



The Good News From Patmos Island

Almost 2,000 years ago, the Roman government sent Jesus' follower John to Patmos. Patmos is a small, rocky island in the Aegean Sea. The Roman government sent John there because he preached the Good News about Jesus. John was very old when the Roman government sent him to Patmos. As a prisoner on Patmos, John suffered awful things. One Sabbath day, Jesus visited John there in a vision. Jesus came to give hope to John during his time of suffering. Jesus also came to give John visions about future happenings in the church, from John's day until Jesus' Second Coming and beyond.

John wrote the visions on a scroll. A scroll is a rolled-up piece of writing paper. John named this scroll "The Revelation of Jesus Christ [the Savior]" (Revelation 1:1, NKJV). The word written "of" in Revelation 1:1 shows us two things: the book of Revelation is both **about** Jesus and **from** Jesus. This scroll, or book, shows us the things that Jesus did in heaven for His people after He woke up from the dead and went back to God the Father. The book of Revelation also shows us the things that Jesus does in heaven for His people right now and what He will do for them when He comes back to this earth. Jesus sent the book of Revelation to His people to give them hope. Jesus wanted His people to know that He was with them during their everyday troubles and sorrows on this earth. We need the hope that Jesus gives us in the book of Revelation because we live on a planet that is hurt by sin and the worldwide war between good and evil.

During this quarter, we will study the book of Revelation. We will look at the book's most important parts and ideas. Everyone should read this book carefully. We will learn from our study for the next three months that the book of Revelation shows us Jesus Christ. It shows us His life, His death, His resurrection or waking up from the dead, and the special work in heaven that He does right now for His people to save them from sin.

While we study the book of Revelation, we will follow these important rules and truths:

1. We believe that the messages in the Bible come from God. But the words used for God's messages to us come from humans. We will look at the verses and the word pictures in the Old Testament to understand how John wrote the messages in the book of Revelation.

2. We believe that the prophecies, or special messages, in the book of Revelation show us the history of God's people from New Testament times to the end of this earth's history. There is a special name for this way of looking at and understanding the special messages in the

book of Revelation: it is named the historicist method, or plan, for studying and understanding prophecies. So, we will not force a meaning on the verses in the book of Revelation and make them say what we want them to say and mean. No, we will let the Bible show us what the verses mean. We will study the Bible's language, its word pictures, symbols, and the meaning of the words around the verses in Revelation to help us understand its messages.

3. We also will look closely at John's arrangement of ideas and information in the book of Revelation. This study is very important because it helps us to understand the prophecies in Revelation and when they will happen. We can separate the book of Revelation into four parts:

- a. Revelation 1:1–3:22 show us what is happening in the churches during John's day. These chapters also show us what will happen in the church at different times in history.
- b. Revelation 4:1–11:19 also show us the church's history from John's time until the end time. These chapters use end-time word pictures and symbols to give us more information about those times.
- c. Revelation 12:1–14:20 are the center of the book of Revelation. These chapters include the Three Angels' Messages (Revelation 14:6–12). Revelation 12:1–14:20 also show us the whole history of the war between God and Satan, from before Jesus' time on earth until His Second Coming.
- d. Revelation 15:1–22:21 look mostly at end-time happenings.

The symbols and word pictures in the book of Revelation become clear only when we understand that they are meant to show us Jesus.

4. Jesus must be at the center of any understanding that we have about Revelation's prophecies. All the prophecies in Revelation talk about Jesus. The symbols and word pictures in the book of Revelation become clear only when we understand that they are meant to show us Jesus. Jesus is the whole reason for the symbols and word pictures that are in the book of Revelation.

God promises good things to the people who read the book of Revelation, follow its words, and obey its warnings: "The book of Revelation starts with a promise from God. God promises good things to everyone who reads the book of Revelation and tries to understand its information. 'The [person] who reads the words of God's message is happy. And the people who hear this message and do what is written in it are happy. The time is near when all of this will happen' [Revelation 1:3, ICB]. When we as a people understand what this book means to us, then we will see something wonderful happen. We will see our people wake up to Bible truth. Yes, we do not understand fully the lessons that the book of Revelation teaches us. But God wants us to study the book anyway, even if we cannot understand everything we read."—Ellen G. White, *Testimonies [special messages] to Ministers [pastors] and Gospel [having to do with the Good News about Jesus] Workers*, page 113, adapted. During our study of the book of Revelation, we invite you to learn for yourselves the things that you need to understand and obey while we wait for Jesus to come back.

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