

# Revelation's HOPE

## Lesson 2: Island of Death/Mortality

### I. Revelation 1

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show unto his servants, even the things which must shortly come to pass: and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John; <sup>2</sup> who bare witness of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, even of all things that he saw" (**Rev 1:1-3** ASV)

- Where did he see these things?

"I John, your brother and partaker with you in tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus" (**Rev 1:9** ASV).

- John = a "son of thunder", now humble in older age.
- Patmos – "mortality", "my killing"
- Island of mortality with a vision of immortality.
- Imagine it→ See pictures of Patmos online at <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Skala-of-patmos.JPG>

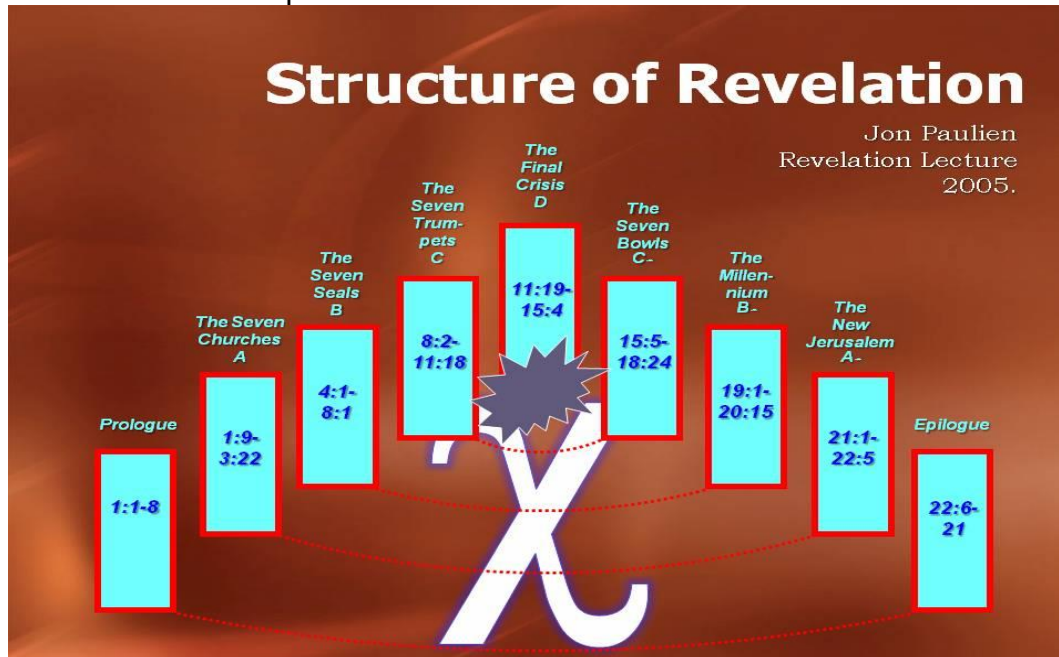
### II. Dating of Writing

- When Emperor Nerva followed Domitian as ruler in A.D. 96, "it is believed that John was released in a general amnesty of Christians and that he returned to Ephesus to finish writing out the Revelation before he died" (*God Cares Volume 2* by C. Mervyn Maxwell, page 53).
- Both internal (within the book) and external evidence validate this.
- External Evidence: For instance, Iranaeus in his book *Against Heresies* v. 30.3 says that Revelation was written near the end of the reign of Domitian (AD 90-95). Evidence from within the book suggests that it was written during a time of persecution: Many of John's friends have DIED and here he is in the Island of Mortality!
- Here is what we know from the Book of Revelation→
- Internal Evidence<sup>i</sup>
  1. John was on the island of Patmos alone (**Revelation 1:9**). Greek testifies to this (less quality than John: spelling errors & redundancy = John does not have a scribe)
  2. Antipas had been killed (**Rev. 2:13**)
  3. There was imprisonment at Smyrna (**2:10**)
  4. General persecution for everyone was occurring (**3:10**)
  5. There were martyrs for Jesus (**6:9**)
  6. Beast of Rome persecutes God's people (**Chapter 17**)
- Conditions within the Churches also suggest an early date: Smyrna, which was established ca 60-64, was in existence.
- The presence of the Nicolaitians was already within the church (they originated probably the late 1<sup>st</sup> Century = before 100 A.D.)

\* Therefore: Revelation probably was written between 95-100 A.D.

III. What method of Writing did John use? Repetition and Enlargement (Jewish) and Chiasm→

- A. Structure of Revelation
- Builds up to the final crisis.



- Goes from the Island of mortality to Immortality.
- Not Chronological: neither is Daniel = repetition and enlargement.
- Another undercurrent of structure to keep in mind: Hebrew Scriptures and the Sanctuary →

#### IV. Sanctuary Progression<sup>ii</sup>

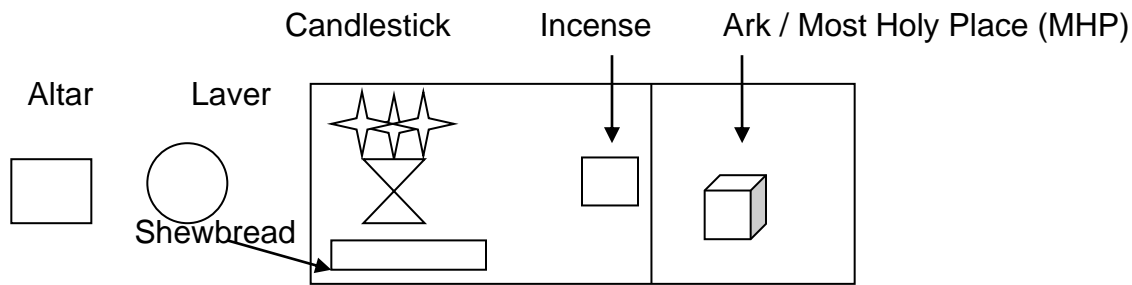
A. Revelation begins by going into the sanctuary and then the second half of the book has the judgments going out of the sanctuary (*ibid*).

1. 7 Churches – Candelstick (1:12)
2. 7 Seals – throne room (4:1-11)
3. 7 Trumpets – Altar of Incense (8:2-5)
4. 7 Angels / Great Controversy – Ark of Covenant (11:19)
5. 7 Plagues – Altar & smoke (15:8;16:7); Solomon's in MHP
6. 7 Shouts – none
7. New Jerusalem – presence of God (MHP)

B. Where are we in the sanctuary progression?

1. 7 churches = HP
2. 7 Seals = Ark / Throne MHP
3. 7 Trumpets = MHP
4. 7 Plagues = out of MHP
5. 7 Shouts = source is MHP, receptor is Earth (MICAH 1)

SEE THE AREAS OF THE SANCTUARY BELOW



## V. Review of Structure of Revelation

- Builds up to the final crisis.
- Goes from the Island of mortality to Immortality.
- Not chronological: repetition and enlargement.
- Results in life evermore before God in His city with HIM as the temple.
- Leaves us with a question. . .

## VI. Which School of Thought?

- Preterism: Applies to John's day
- Idealism: Principles apply to our time
- Futurism: 7 Churches apply to John's time and the rest to the Church after the rapture.
- Historicism: John's time, ours and the future.
- Evidence for Historicism →

### A. Historicism

- Revelation itself testifies that the message is for John's time and beyond:  
<sup>19</sup> "Write therefore the things which thou sawest, and the things which are, and the things which shall come to pass hereafter. . ." (**Rev 1:1** ASV).
- It is also for non-Christians (**Revelation 22** = the Spirit and Bride say "come" drink the water of life freely).
- Historicist interpretation fits with text.

### B. Life in Revelation

- "Life" occurs 18x in the ASV of Revelation
- The word "eternal" is linked to some really good news (**Revelation 14:6-7**).
- The audience would want their names in the Lamb's book of life (**21:27**)
- The audience would want to drink of the water of life (**22:17**)
- The audience would want to eat of the tree of life (**22:2, 14 & 19**).
- John is given another chance at life →

## VII. From mortality to Immortality

A. **When Emperor Nerva followed Domitian as ruler in A.D. 96, "it is believed that John was released in a general amnesty of Christians and that he returned to Ephesus to finish writing out the Revelation before he died" (God Cares Volume 2 by C. Mervyn Maxwell, page 53).**

B. John leaves a dismal situation for a more hopeful one! The Island of Mortality changes into. . .a vision of Immortality! An ISLAND OF HOPE!

C. He receives this hopeful vision from Heaven! From His Heavenly Friend: Jesus who sent it by an angel!

D. A powerful song reminds us of this HOPE!

What heavenly music steals over the sea!  
Entrancing the senses like sweet melody!  
'Tis the voice of the angels borne soft on the air;  
For me they are singing; their welcome I hear.

On the banks of old Jordan, here gazing I stand,  
And earnestly longing, I stretch forth my hand;  
Send a convoy of angels, dear Jesus, I pray!  
Let me join that sweet music; come, take me away.

Though dark are the waters and rough is the wave,  
If Jesus permit, the wild surges I'll brave;  
For that heavenly music hath ravished me so,  
I must join in that chorus! I'll go! let me go!<sup>iii</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> {Source: personal study and Tom Shepherd's Revelation class, Spring 2002 @ Union College}

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid (same source as mentioned before).

<sup>iii</sup> Adventist Digital Hymnal Online ([www.adventisthymnal.org](http://www.adventisthymnal.org))