

MORNING CALL Getting to Hear God's Voice

Messages from the Christian sub-culture in Columbus, Texas.

September 16, 2021

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Patient Endurance, An Admirable Quality



Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

Revelation 14:12 KJV

Blessed is the one who reads, as well as those who hear the words of this prophecy and pay attention to what is written in it because the time is near. **Revelation 1:3**

A group of friends are about to embark on a journey with me through the Revelation of Jesus Christ, the last book of the Bible, written at the end of the first century when Christians were enduring persecution from one of the most diabolical emperors of Rome – Domitian 81-96 AD.

This emperor was not satisfied with being declared a god after he had died but presumptuously declared that he was already a god and demanded to be addressed as *My Lord and my God*. In Ephesus in the Roman Province of Asia, the leaders of the city built a temple for people to worship Emperor Domitian and constructed a huge statue of him that was 27 feet high.



Once a year, on the Emperor's birthday, all citizens were required to go to the Temple, offer incense to the Emperor and proclaim: *Caesar is Lord*. If they did not, they were persecuted. Christians could not because they believed that *Jesus is Lord*. The prophet John, unwilling to participate, was exiled to the island of Patmos where Jesus gave him visions of the days to come.

These visions are contained in a book where John was shown events where faithful Christians were martyred for their faith through events called The Big Trouble or the Great Tribulation. Yet when they were killed, they immediately went to Paradise to be with Jesus. The book was written to encourage Christians to persevere, to have patient endurance, to retain their faith in Jesus even when persecuted and threatened with death. Jesus says:

Be faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life.
Revelation 3:10

Just hold on to what you have until I come. **Revelation 2:25**

Jesus encourages his followers to be overcomers, in Greek *nikao*, and their names will never be blotted out of the Book of Life. **Revelation 3:5** He also promises overcomers they will sit on his throne just as he has overcome and sits down with his Father on his throne. **Revelation 2:21**

The citizens of Ephesus persecuted Christians because they failed to worship the Roman Emperor or the pagan gods of the city that protected the city from fires and earthquakes. Christians were seen as atheists or disloyal citizens.

The Big Trouble exists for seven years with three sets of seven judgments each. After the seal and trumpet judgments, Jesus raptures all the believers still living on earth to Paradise to be with him.

Then I looked and there was a white cloud and on that cloud sat someone who was like the Son of Man. He had a gold crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. Another angel came out of the Temple. He cried in a loud voice to the one who sat on the cloud: Swing your sickle and gather the harvest. The time has come to gather it because the harvest on the earth is overripe. The one who sat on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth and the harvesting of the earth was completed. **Revelation 14:14-16**

Now seven bowl judgments occur but they affect only unbelievers. If people become believers at this time, they are immediately taken to Paradise to be with Jesus. Unbelievers who die go to Sheol. With the seventh bowl judgment, the City of Rome called Babylon is destroyed with a powerful earthquake. **Revelation 16:19** John takes two full chapters –16 and 17 – to describe its fall.

Then it is time for Jesus to take care of the Roman Emperor called the Beast from the Land and the Beast from the Sea or the False Prophet. This describes the Roman Emperor in his secular and religious roles. He leads armies against Jesus in the Battle of Armageddon. **Revelation 19:21**

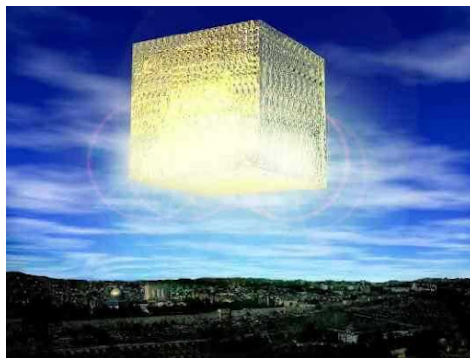
Jesus appears riding a white horse with the armies of Heaven following him. **Revelation 19:11** The Beast and the False Prophet are captured and thrown in the Fiery Lake of Burning Sulfur. **Revelation 19:19** Jesus kills the rest with the sword from his mouth and birds come and feast on the dead bodies. **Revelation 19:20**

Then the Devil, who has been the mastermind behind the Roman Emperor is chained in a bottomless pit or abyss for 1,000 years. For 1,000 years Jesus reigns on the earth with all the Christian martyrs from all the ages who have been resurrected from Paradise. **Revelation 20:4**

After the 1,000 years are ended, Satan is allowed loose again and gathers unbelievers. Satan and these unbelievers attack Jerusalem but fire from Heaven burns them up. **Revelation 20:9**

Now everyone is resurrected – those in Paradise and those in Sheol – and given new resurrection bodies. All people appear before Jesus in the Great White Throne Judgment. Jesus judges people for what they have done as recorded in the books. Those whose names are in the Lamb's Book of Life are escorted by Jesus to the New Jerusalem and New Earth. Those whose names were not found in the Book of Life are thrown into the Fiery Lake to be separated from God forever. **Revelation 20:15**

In the last two chapters of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, John is given a vision of the New Heaven, the New Earth, and the New Jerusalem. The New Jerusalem is a cube sitting above the earth shining with the Glory of God. God and the Lamb Jesus Christ reside in this City together with believers.



People will apparently have the ability to travel both horizontally and vertically in their resurrection bodies between the New Jerusalem and the New Earth.

What is the most important is that God will live among his people and they will see his face. His name will be on their foreheads, a visible sign of the mark placed on their foreheads at their baptism. **Revelation 22:3**

John hears Jesus say three times: *I am coming soon*. **Revelation 22:7,12,20** John responds: *Amen. Come, Lord Jesus*. **Revelation 22:20**

John has written this book of his visions given to him by Jesus to encourage God's people to be faithful during this horrible time of persecution at the end of the first century. They are to have patient endurance *hypomone* with faith in Jesus despite these trials. This word appears 7x in **Revelation 1:9; 2:2,3,19; 3:10; 13:10; 14:12**

John begins the Revelation of Jesus Christ by introducing himself as:

I John, your brother and companion in the tribulation suffering and kingdom and patient endurance *hypomone* that are ours in Jesus. I was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God the Hebrew Bible and the Testimony of Jesus the New Testament. **Revelation 1:9**. KJV