

The Life Changer

Study Series

The Revelation of Jesus

If there is any book in the Bible that startles the imagination of movie makers, it is the last book of the Bible called Revelation. It is full of symbolic language and scenes about the end time. The word Revelation in the original Greek means, "away from cover." This means there is an unfolding or revealing of that which is covered or hidden. The book of Revelation states that it is a revelation of Christ. The original Greek can mean "a revelation about Christ" or "a revelation



made by Christ." Both are true. In this lesson we will make a brief summary of some of the events in the book of Revelation. We will also see what the Bible reveals about Jesus and who He is.

Lesson 34



Shining Stars Series (Philippians 2:14-16)



Fatma squinted as she looked at the sun appearing just over the apartment buildings to the east.

“Two hours in the car under a hot sun would be hard,” she thought, “at least in the morning it will be a cool drive. If we come back after sundown we will miss the heat of the day.”

The whole study group was going to Sevim’s church that Sabbath morning and they were to meet at Fatma’s house at 8:15 a.m. To get to church by 10:30 a.m. everyone had to get up earlier than usual on a Saturday morning. It was 8:25 already and Yusuf and Ece hadn’t come yet. The group made their way to the cars to wait there so as to not lose time. Reşat was watching Orhan and Gökhan running in the park across the street while Mehmet was pacing back and forth in front of the car looking at his watch.

“We’ll be on time, don’t worry,” Türkan said to Mehmet. Türkan, Gül, and Gülsün were going in Mehmet’s car.

“It’s important to be on time for worship,” Mehmet said calmly. “God does everything in perfect timing. You see the sun coming up over there? It always rises and sets on time!”

“Did you bring the pastry for the road?” Türkan asked Gül.

Gül nodded quietly that she had.

“Gülsün you were going to bring a potato salad for the fellowship dinner? Is it in the car already?” Türkan asked.

“Ah, I left it in Fatma’s house. Thanks for reminding me.” With that, Fatma and Gül dashed into the apartment building together to get the potato salad.

Just then a mini-bus thundered up to the crest of the hill with a cloud

of diesel smoke and stopped. Yusuf and Ece got off slowly with eyelids half open.

Looking at Yusuf and Ece, Afife whispered to Fatma, “It looks like you won’t have much conversation in your car this morning on the drive up. Those two will be sleeping!”

“Mert is also tired. We stayed up late talking about what today will be like,” Fatma replied.

“You won’t fall asleep at the wheel will you?”

“Well since I don’t drink tea and coffee anymore I need to make sure I have enough sleep. I’m O.K. My brain is running fast this morning anyway.”

“Are you nervous?”

“Well, I feel responsible for everyone and I want it to go well.”

“It will be O.K. Don’t worry.”

In a few minutes they gathered the children from the park and the three cars were on the road to church. Four year old Gökhan was full of questions for his mother and father.

“How long will it take to get there? Are there going to be other kids there? What will we do there?”

“Hey, one question at a time!” Reşat answered. “It will take about two hours to get there and Fatma told me there will be other kids there. There are special activities just for the children. You’ll have a good time, don’t worry.”

They arrived at the church just at 10:30 and their arms were full carrying Bibles and food for the fellowship dinner into the office building. The church was on the Third floor and they couldn’t all go on the elevator at the same time. Fatma was in the last group with

Mehmet and Reşat because they were parking the cars.

Reşat looked up at the sign for the church on the wall in the lobby of the building. “I know that a church is not a building so much as a congregation but I still need to get used to the idea that we aren’t meeting in a church building like you see in the pictures.”

Fatma added, “Once you get inside it won’t seem so strange. It is very comfortable and yet reverent.”

When Fatma, Reşat, and Mehmet arrived they were greeted by Sevim and Martin and the pastor of the group, Hayati. The children had already been taken to their activity rooms and the sound of hymns was coming from the worship area. They went to join the group that was singing. After some songs and a prayer they divided into three discussion groups where they talked about a certain Bible topic. Anyone who wanted could ask questions about the topic or give answers. Sometimes the conversation got lively but everyone was respectful of other people’s viewpoints. In many ways it felt like being in Fatma’s discussion group at their home.

Later they gathered in the worship area again and Pastor Hayati asked the newcomers to introduce themselves to the church. One by one Fatma’s group members told their name and occupation to the church. When it came to Reşat, he made a little explanation.

“I was working at a printer where I had worked for many years. When I accepted to keep the Sabbath I knew that I would probably lose my job. I tried to find other work in my own profession while I was still working at the printer but I couldn’t find anything. I didn’t have to work every Sabbath, but sometimes I had to. Eventually I saw that I wasn’t going to find any job at a printer where I didn’t have to work Sabbaths. That was hard on me because I couldn’t picture myself doing anything else. But I couldn’t go on breaking the Sabbath so I just prayed about it and chose a time to quit and find work in another occupation.”

“It wasn’t easy. At first I tried to hide the fact that I was not working on Friday night and Saturday for religious reasons. I thought that I would surely not be hired anywhere if I told them about my faith. But it just didn’t work out. Once I took a job out of desperation and didn’t tell them that I wouldn’t be in on Sabbath. I just didn’t go to work that day. Of course it was a big problem and I lost my job. In the end I just chose to tell people openly that I keep the Ten Commandments including the fourth commandment. It took awhile but I found someone who would take a chance on me and I work at a factory. It isn’t much money but it is work. Afife has helped make ends meet by working as a maid .”

When Reşat said that last sentence Hayati looked at his wife and raised his eyebrow. He thanked Reşat for sharing and then others shared their experiences. The church members all welcomed the visitors and they looked so happy. They praised God as they shared what blessings they had received throughout the week and what opportunities they had for sharing their faith with others. Church members asked for prayer about a number of issues and they all knelt together, anyone praying out loud who wanted to.

There was a time where they collected tithes and the offerings from the people and a time where the children sang a hymn for everyone. Then Pastor Hayati stood up to speak.

“As you know, we Adventists place a large importance on knowledge of the Bible. We study it and encourage everyone in daily Bible reading. Before we accept people into membership of the church we want to make sure that they understand what it means to be a Seventh-day Adventist with all its privileges and responsibilities. As Adventists we have a statement of 28 fundamental beliefs of our church. These beliefs are not a creed. The Bible is our creed. The creed never changes. The Bible never changes. Our understanding of Scripture can change and that understanding is expressed in our fundamental beliefs.”

“I don’t want anyone to think that after they learn the fundamental

beliefs of our church and are baptized that there is nothing more to learn. There is so much more. The fundamental beliefs are just the minimum we must know to become functioning church members. But our growth and spiritual knowledge will ever be increasing. God is infinite and we will never learn everything. We will be learning more of Jesus and His love both in this lifetime and in the world to come. Today I want to share with you about Jesus in the Bible's last book called Revelation." (To be continued)

① Q1. What did Jesus say was the focus of Scripture? Read John 5:39; Luke 24:25-27 and 2 Corinthians 3:13-16.

A. _____

Jesus said that the Scriptures testify about Himself. He said the prophets wrote concerning the Messiah and then He pointed out the prophecies that specifically mentioned His life, death, and resurrection. Paul told the Corinthians that when the Old Testament is read with the understanding that it pointed to Jesus, it is as if a veil is removed from the eyes. Without that understanding the meaning of the Old Testament remains a mystery. Scripture reveals Christ.

② Q2. What does the Bible say about the process of learning truth? Read John 16:12 and 2 Peter 1:19.

A. _____

Truth is progressive. God does not give all the truth to His people at one time because they cannot endure it sufficiently. They would be overwhelmed by the amount of change necessary in their thinking and behavior and become discouraged. So God gives them truth in proportion to their ability to assimilate it and live it out in their life. As the sun shines brighter as it climbs to the noon sky, so does the truth that once shone in a dark place get brighter and more clear with time. Luther and other reformers worked to restore the lost doctrine of righteousness by faith but the lost truth of the Sabbath did not come fully to light until

after 1844 and the beginning of the judgment.

③ Q3. What is the book of Revelation declared to be? Revelation 1:1.

A. _____

The book of Revelation is a revelation given by Jesus Christ. As all Scripture speaks about Christ it is also a revelation about Christ.

③ Q4. How is Jesus portrayed in Revelation chapter 1? Read Revelation 1:10-20 and Hebrews 8:1-2.

A. _____

Jesus is seen in a symbolic way in Revelation 1 because He doesn't really have a sword coming out of his mouth! What is the symbolism? He is shown in long garments like the priest in the Old Testament sanctuary service taking care of the candlesticks that were in the temple. You will remember that the priest went in to the temple every morning and evening to trim the wicks and replenish the oil in the lamps so that the light would not go out in God's house. Here we see that the seven candlesticks represent the seven churches. Remember that Jesus said, "I am the light of the world" and also "You are the light of the world" (John 9:5; Matthew 5:14). Jesus is working to make sure that the light of the church in the world does not go out. Jesus is with His churches, warning them, reproving them and encouraging them. This is what the messages to the seven churches in Revelation chapters 2 and 3 is all about. In the book of Revelation we see that Jesus, though in heaven, is very near to His people.

③ Q5. How is Jesus portrayed in Revelation 5:1-9?

A. _____

Jesus is portrayed as a sacrificial lamb. He died for the sins of the world and redeemed men from eternal death. What is the book that was given to Jesus? When we look at the Old Testament temple services

we remember that the Law of Moses, the Torah, and the other writings of Scripture were kept beside the ark of the covenant in the Most Holy Place (Deuteronomy 31:26). The Torah contained the law, the covenant, and the promise of the inheritance (Deuteronomy 31:26; Exodus 24:7; Deuteronomy 33:2-4). A copy of it was given to the king so that he could govern Israel justly. So we understand that the scroll given to the Lamb in Revelation is the heavenly counterpart of the book of the law, the book of the covenant and the book of inheritance. Jesus is receiving the scroll as king so that He may govern and judge. As Jesus unrolls the scroll in heaven we see the history of faithfulness or unfaithfulness of the participants in the covenant. This is what the seven seals are all about.

② Q6. How is Jesus portrayed in Revelation 8:3-5?

A. _____

In the Old Testament sanctuary service, the priest offered incense in the Holy Place. The priest would put burning coals from the altar of sacrifice in the censer and take incense in his hand. He would bring these in the Holy Place to the altar of incense, also called the Golden Altar. There he would burn the incense before the Lord on the altar. What did the action symbolize? In the New Testament, Jesus is our high priest and therefore it is He who offers the incense. The text in Revelation says that the incense was a smoke that was offered up with the prayers of the saints, that is the believers. The incense must represent Jesus' righteousness, without which our prayers could not come before God.

The seven trumpets, outlined in Revelation chapters 8 and 9, reveal God's faithfulness to the covenant and that He brought judgments on the persecutors of God's people in answer to prayer. These will culminate in the seven last plagues of Revelation 16.

② Q7. How is Jesus portrayed in Revelation 19:11-21?

A. _____

Jesus comes as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He comes to judge and destroy the beast, the kings of the earth, the false prophet and those who received the mark of the beast. Jesus is conqueror.

As we can see there is a lot to learn about the book of Revelation and what it reveals about end-time events and Jesus Himself. When one is baptized it does not mean his or her education is finished. It is really just a beginning. Ask your church leaders to take lessons and learn more about the amazing prophecies of Revelation.

As we said earlier, the book of Revelation is not only a revelation from Christ, it is a revelation about Christ. Who is Jesus?

Q8. What expression is used for both God the Father and for Jesus in the book of Revelation? Read Revelation 1:8, 11; 21:6; 22:12, 13.

A. _____

Both God and Christ carry the title Alpha and Omega. These are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet indicating that they are the first and the last and the beginning and the end. The term expresses their eternal nature. God and Jesus are both called the first and the last.

Q9. What do we learn about the first and the last from Isaiah? Read Isaiah 44:6.

A. _____

In this verse we see that God is the first and the last and that there is no God beside Him. Isaiah reports that God says, "I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another" (Isaiah 42:8). Here we see that God will not share His glory with another and yet Jesus shares the Father's glory and titles. How can the Father and Jesus both be Lord? The Bible says there is one God.

God asked Job, "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding" (Job 38:4). And again it is written, "Can you search out the deep things of God? Can you find out the limits of the Almighty?" (Job 11:7). The answer is, "No, we cannot understand God completely. He has revealed to us enough about His character that we can love Him and accept His salvation in Christ without knowing about His nature perfectly." Yet Deuteronomy 29:29 says, "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." And Jesus said, "I and My Father are one."

❓ Q10. What does the book of Genesis say about Adam and Eve our first parents? Read Genesis 2:24.

A. _____

The Bible says that the two of them are one body. But you and I know they had two separate bodies. Yes, but God counted them as unit. They were one body.

❓ Q11. What expression is used for God in Deuteronomy 6:4, 5?

A. _____

The Hebrew word describing God as "one" in Deuteronomy 6:4 is the same word used in Genesis 2:24 to describe Adam and Eve as "one" body.

❓ Q12. What did Jesus say about being "one" with God? John 10:30-33, 14:9; 17:20-23.

A. _____

❓ Q13. What does the Bible declare Jesus to be? Read John 1:1-3, 14; Colossians 1:15-19 and Hebrews 1:1-3.

A. _____

Jesus is the Creator. He is the divine Word that was with God from all eternity.

② Q14 What did Jesus do to save us? Philippians 2:5-11.

A. _____

Jesus is divine, the image of God and one with God. The Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ are the same Spirit (Romans 8:9). Jesus came to this earth in human flesh to reveal God's true character to men to win their allegiance and to die as a sacrifice for their sins. Only the Creator is of equal value as the Creation and could offer a sacrifice for the whole of humanity. The wages of sin is eternal separation from God's life-giving power. Jesus paid that penalty. Only someone with life in Himself could suffer sin's penalty and live again and give life to others. If Jesus were not divine, no one would be saved.

In order to save humanity the Creator entered into humanity. In order to save man this union has to be eternal. God so loved the world that He gave His only Son (John 3:16). This is the sacrificial love of God. Christ gave up the privilege of His former appearance to be in humanity forever. Thus Satan's accusation that there is only self-seeking and no sacrificial love on the part of God is shown to be false. The cross of Calvary shows the character of God to the universe forever. All glory and honor is due to God and to the Lamb. Jesus is Lord!



Shining Stars Series (Philippians 2:14-16)



After the sermon the people sang again and prayed together. Then they prepared the meal and they sat together to eat and drink and fellowship. Fatma noticed that Afife was long-faced and not eating. Fatma invited her into the children's room, which was now empty, to talk.

“Afife, what’s the matter, are you O.K.?”

“I’m O.K. I’ll be fine.”

“You’re not O.K. What’s the matter.”

Afife was quiet for some time and then said rather tearfully, “When Reşat said that I was working as a maid the pastor looked at his wife and made some kind of face. I’m so embarrassed. I just want to leave.”

“Afife, I am sure you are misunderstanding. I’m sure the pastor isn’t looking down at you. You are imagining things.”

“Everyone looks down on maids, Fatma. Everybody.”

“Look, I will call Hayati in here and we will talk this through.”

“No, no, I don’t want to talk about it,” said Afife. But it was too late, Fatma had dashed out the door to get the pastor. When Fatma came in the room with the pastor, they found Afife looking down at the ground.

“Afife Hanım, Fatma tells me that I have upset you,” Hayati said. “What is the matter?” Afife didn’t answer; she just got teary-eyed. Hayati continued, “Afife, if I did something to offend you it is only fair that you tell me what it is so that I can make it right. We are a family here and issues come up, but we work through problems, we don’t avoid them.”

Finally Afife spoke, “When Reşat said that I was working as a maid you looked at your wife some way and I was ashamed.”

Hayati reached out and touched Afife’s shoulder, “Afife Hanım, I am so sorry. I didn’t mean to hurt your feelings. Believe me I was not looking down upon your situation at all. Just the opposite is true.”

Afife raised her head and looked at Hayati with a puzzled look on her face. “What do you mean, just the opposite is true?”

“Let me explain. Afife Hanım, many people come to the church to learn about Jesus. We give lots of lessons about prophecy and religious history and doctrines. That is all good and well. But in addition to right theology what we really want to see in people’s lives is the fruit of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness and faith. One other grace we are looking for in people is humility.

Hayati continued, “When we see these attributes described in the Bible in people’s lives then we have confidence that they have really been born again and are not simply agreeing intellectually to a set of doctrines. Jesus left heaven and the adoration of angels to come to this world to live in human flesh to save us. It was almost infinite humiliation for God to come in human form. But His love for us compelled Him to come.”

“Unfortunately most people are not willing to be humble and step down to follow Jesus. They want to keep their pride and societal status in place and follow Jesus too. But they can’t do that. Humility is the opposite of pride which was the first sin. Most people refuse to take a lower position and keep the Sabbath. They prefer their status and continue to break God’s law.”

“One of the shining attributes of God is the self-sacrificing love and humility that we find in Christ. When Reşat Bey said without shame in front of everyone that you were working as a maid I looked at my wife and raised my brow. But believe me it was not because of contempt. Just the opposite! We see this kind of humility so rarely that I was communicating to my wife that this was the real thing. I was seeing a revelation of Christ in you.”

Afife’s face burst into a big smile through her tears. “Really?”

“Really. I see Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

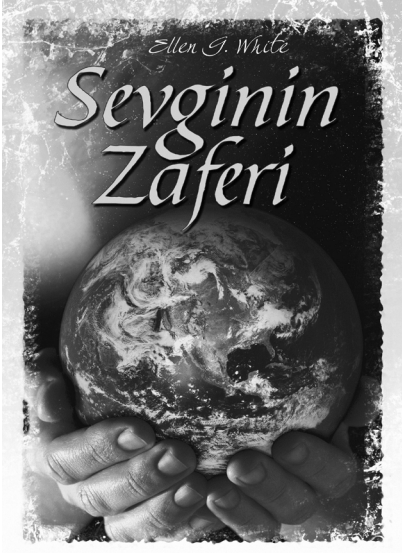
② Q15. In addition to knowing correct doctrine, do you think someone could say about you that they see the fruit of the Spirit?

A. _____

Call to commitment through prayer.

Notes

SEVGİNİN ZAFERİ



Kötülüğün kaynağı, henüz çözülememiş bir sırdır. Neden kötülük var? Nereden geliyor? Kötülüğün bir sonu olacak mı? Bunlar yanıtlanması gereken çok önemli sorulardır.

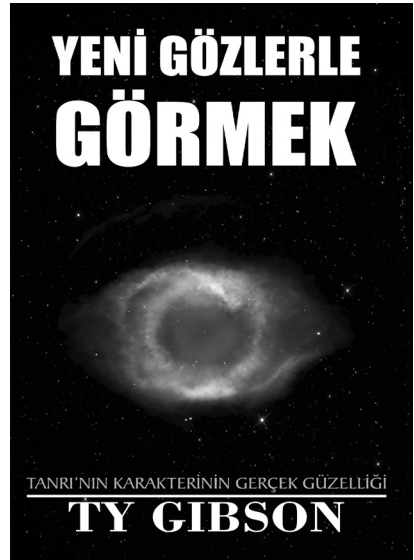
Büyük mücadele, görünen dünyayı, görünmeyen dünyadan ayıran perdeyi aralamakta ve bu dünyanın tüm sakinlerinin dahil olduğu doğüstü savaşı gözler önüne ermektedir.

Kitap, uğrunda savaştıkları şey için çok önemli olan iki tarafın, iyinin ve kötünün arasında geçen evrensel savaşın nasıl başladığından ve nasıl sonlandırılacağından bahsetmektedir. Geçmişten, şimdiki zamandan ve gelecekte söz etmekte, çok dokunaklı bir ricayla ve ciddi bir uyarıyla sona ermektedir. Bu kitabı okurken, sanki Tanrı ile röportaj yapıyormuş hissine kapılacaksınız.

Güzel olduğu kadar şok edici bir yolculuğa çıkmaya hazırlanın. Okuduktan sonra artık aynı kişi olmayacaksınız.

YENİ GÖZLERLE GÖRMEK

Pek çok şeyi görebilmek için, kişinin gözleri açık olmalıdır. Fakat Allah ile öyle değil. Gözlerinizi çok fazla açarsanız ya da çok fazla yakından bakarsanız, O'nu gördüğünüzü düşünürken aslında O'nu gözden kaçırabilirsiniz. Pek çoğumuz tam da bu hatayı yaparız. Allah'ı görmeyi umarak insanlara bakarız. Dinlere bakarız. Hatta aynaya bakarız. Kaçınılmaz olarak da hayal kırıklığına uğrarız, zira İlahî Kişi'nin daha güzel bir resmini ummuştuk. Sayısız insan Allah'tan dönmüştür, çünkü O'nu bir kişide ya da bir toplulukta gördüklerini sanmışlardır... ve açıkçası gördüklerinden hoşlanmamışlardır. Elinizde tuttuğunuz kitap Allah hakkındadır.





Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 2:1-5)



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This study series is a continuation of the Fate Changer series
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