

Hello. /We will begin the 20th lecture on “An Introduction to the New Testament.” This will be our final lecture. /Today we will study the book of **Revelation**. /In the history of the church, Revelation is the most difficult book to interpret.

/Many people have misinterpreted Revelation and have fallen into heresies and false teachings. There are many false teachings today. /The book is difficult to interpret because of its genre.

/Revelation is a book of apocalyptic literature. Ezekiel and Daniel also include apocalyptic details. /Books of apocalyptic literature use a lot of symbolism and imagery. They contain prophetic words of the things that are to happen in the future and about God’s judgment and the church’s ultimate victory.

/There are many views on how we are to interpret and understand these symbols and images. Because people may interpret the text in a very subjective way, it becomes difficult to understand Revelation.

/Despite this, we must not avoid Revelation but must read it and learn it. /When recording the book, the Apostle John said, “Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it.” 1:3; 22:7.

/The author of Revelation is the Apostle John. 1:1,4,9; 22:8. /In 1:1-4, the author reveals his name. /The Apostle John, who because of Emperor Domitian’s persecution and jealousy was exiled to the island of Patmos, received these words of revelation while he was in exile.

/In its history, the church faced the most severe persecution under the reign of Emperor Domitian. /During the time of Emperor Domitian, Christian leaders were arrested and imprisoned. Domitian’s successor, Nerva, abolished this order in the year 96.

/For this reason, we believe that Revelation was written at around 94-96 during the time of persecution under Domitian. /Revelation says that the church, which has come face to face with affliction, persecution, heretics, false teachings, the world’s temptation, and immorality, must keep the chastity of its faith. Revelation also reveals to us our Lord Jesus Christ’s glorious return, the final judgment, a new heaven, and a new earth.

/Why does God show us these visions? These visions encourage Christians who are living in the world to endure and to have hope.

/Therefore, Revelation is Jesus’ word of encouragement for the church that is in the midst of a fierce battle. It is the Lord’s promise for believers who endure until the end, but it is a warning of judgment to Babylon and to those who belong to Babylon.

/John says that the recipients of this book are the seven churches in Asia, which are Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. These

seven churches represent all churches of the New Testament times when they receive the word of God.

/It is similar to Timothy receiving 1 and 2 Timothy in the place of all believers. These seven churches represent all churches in receiving the letter. /The seven churches are located in Asia Minor, which is to the west of Turkey. It is a place where John carried out his ministry.

/Revelation chapters 2 and 3 contain a message of reproach and admonishment as it tells the church on this earth what it is to do. This is ecclesiology.

/Jesus shows us and reveals to us what the true church looks like. /By reading Revelation 2-3, we as believers on this earth must know what the true church looks like. We must also work hard with a reform-minded passion.

/Because believers on this earth are still weak and unstable, the church on earth also is unstable and imperfect. /For this reason, most of the churches are complimented, but they are rebuked as well.

/All churches on earth must work so that the Lord does not rebuke them. /The churches on this earth are already being persecuted. 1:9, 2:9, 3:9. /A greater persecution is approaching them. 2:10; 13:7.

/The church on earth is under the constant attack of the world and Satan. /However, the Lord writes to this church, encouraging them by saying, "The Lamb will conquer them... and those with him are called and chosen and faithful." 17:14.

/What is the core message of Revelation? The message is that it is in God's plan of salvation for Christians living in Asia Minor to undergo suffering and persecution. Revelation also shows us that God reigns over the world and the church and that all nations will eventually perish in the judgment of God.

/The Lord first reveals to us the church in heaven. He also reveals the one who sits on the throne in heaven. /In chapters 4-5, he shows us the true appearance, power, glory, identity, and blessing of the church.

/4:1 says, "After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.""

/The Lord reveals heaven, and then he reveals the glory of the eternal king who sits on heaven's throne. /Surrounding the throne are four living creatures, angels, who never cease to sing, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!" Verse 8.

/24 elders, who represent all believers of the Old and New Testament times, are seated with him. /4:10-11 says, “The twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.””

/This is what worship looks like in heaven. /It is telling the church on earth to first learn about who God is and how great his glory is. /The main theme of chapter 4 is “God who sits on the throne and his glory.” **The main theme of chapter 5 is “The Lamb who is between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders.”**

/5:1 says, “Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals.” /The one who sits on the throne that we saw in chapter 4 holds a scroll in his right hand.

/However, this scroll is sealed with “seven seals.” /We can understand this scroll to be the scroll that contains God’s plan for reigning over the history of the entire world. /John earnestly desired to learn about God’s plan for ruling, but he wept because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. 5:4.

/John wished to see God’s will and his plan for ruling. /At this moment, chapter 5:5 says, “And one of the elders said to me, “Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.”

/Lifting his eyes, John saw the “Lamb” standing between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders. 5:6. /The Lamb is Christ who was killed. /He is the mediator between God and the church, he is God the Son, and he is the head of the church.

/The Lamb takes the scroll from the right hand of him who is seated on the throne. Verse 7. /Then the four living creatures and 24 elders fall before the Lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, and they praise him.

/Let us read 5:9-10. / “And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”

/And the angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, gave praise. /Verses 12-13 read, “Saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!””

/God who sits on the throne in heaven and Christ, who is the Lamb and who is in heaven, receive all the praise and all the glory. The churches on earth will see the glory of God whom we serve.

/From chapter 6, Christ who is the Lamb removes one by one the seals on the scroll that was in God's right hand and reveals the secret of God's will. /There are many opinions among theologians concerning when the content of chapter 6 to chapter 18 will be fulfilled.

/People interpret the book of Revelation in many different ways. We will take a brief look at some of these viewpoints. **/There are various viewpoints as to when and how the prophecies written in Revelation will be fulfilled and how we are to correctly interpret them.**

/There are especially a lot of views on when the word of Revelation 6 -18 will be fulfilled. /There are four main views about this matter. /The first is preterism. Preterism says that the prophecies recorded in Revelation had already been fulfilled when Jerusalem perished and also when the Roman Empire perished.

/According to preterism, Revelation is a symbolic expression of all the things that were fulfilled in the past.

/Secondly, we have futurism. /Futurism says that the details in Revelation 6 – 18 will be fulfilled on the last day, the last day of history, right before Christ's return.

/Thirdly, we have historicism. /Historicism views the prophecies of Revelation as happening one by one in chronological order from the 1st century early church to Christ's return.

/Historicism sees Revelation chapters 2 and 3 as the start of the church times (the 1st century) and Christ's return in Revelation 19:11-21 as the end. Historicism tries to connect these prophecies to the events of world history and church history.

/Fourth, we have idealism. /Idealism says that the visions and revelations in the book of Revelation are not actual events but are the principles of spiritual warfare that are continually happening and repeatedly observed during the time of the church.

/The symbols in Revelation actually do have a form of repetition. /We can see this become more severe as we head towards the end of history in Revelation 18 and 19.

/The prophecies in Revelation have in part been fulfilled in the past while some parts are to be fulfilled in the future. /We must remember that God's word is the most fundamental truth that is needed in all ages by all churches. Therefore, the prophecies in Revelation speak of the things that are to happen in the world in the period between Christ's first coming and his second coming. We can say that Revelation shows us the appearance of

the church in a universal and all-generational way. Thus we can say that the idealistic viewpoint on Revelation is the most basic viewpoint.

/This does not mean that preterism, futurism, and historicism are completely incorrect. /Revelation is about the things that happen from the time of the seven churches in Asia of the early church to the things that happen as we draw near to the end of history. There is a historical aspect to it in the way it repeats itself.

/There clearly are futuristic aspects as well. /Revelation ultimately looks to the future. /The marriage supper of the Lamb (19:6-9), Christ's return (19:21), and the new Jerusalem (21:1-22:5) give us hope for the future.

/We will now look at the content of chapters 6 to 18 in detail. /Chapters 6 to 18 include three series of judgments: the seal judgments, the trumpet judgments, and the bowl judgments. /The repeated details of chapters 6 to 18 form the core of the message of Revelation.

/In chapter 6, Christ who is the Lamb opens the first to sixth seals of the scroll that was in the right hand of God to reveal the secrets. We find in the sealed scroll God's plan for reigning over his plan for salvation and history.

/As each seal is opened, the secrets of God's plan for reigning are revealed one by one. /When the first four seals of the seven seals are opened, four horses appear. 6:1-8.

/When the fifth seal is opened, believers who had been slain ask how long it will be until the wicked are judged. 6:9-11. /The sixth seal unleashes a great earthquake and brings about darkness, and the stars fall and the sky vanishes.

/The vision of these seals shows us the history of the world and the principles of judgment. The first seal refers to the gospel movement. The second seal is the antichrist movement, a war of ideologies. The third seal shows us famine and a war of economies, a trade war. The fourth seal refers to religious war. In these ways, Revelation reveals to us war, financial pressure, and plagues.

/The church lives through this history. /However, Jesus Christ's return marks the end of this history (the sixth seal).

/Thus, Revelation 6 teaches believers about the affliction and history the church on earth must pass through, and it also encourages believers to have a proper view of history.

/Chapter 7 is placed between the sixth seal and the seventh seal. /This chapter introduces the 144,000 people of Israel who have the seal of God. Here, the great multitude in white robes consists of people "from all tribes and people and languages." 7:9. /They are "the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." 7:14.

/The church on earth must pass through a time of affliction and pain. Those who pass through the great tribulation with faith and in faithfulness will be clothed in white robes and will forever give praise and worship. 7:10.

/They are before the throne of God, and they serve him day and night in his temple. 7:15. God protects them and “they shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them.” 7:16.

/Then, Christ who is the Lamb will be our shepherd, he will guide us to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from our eyes. 7:17. /Those who are redeemed will be in this glorious form in heaven.

/When we think about this glorious appearance, the church that must pass through this suffering and affliction receives comfort.

/In chapter 8, the seventh seal is opened, and the seven angels with trumpets appear. 8:1-5. /8:2 – 11:19 is about the vision of the seven trumpets. /Whenever a trumpet blows, a vision of the world’s destruction is shown.

/And finally, it ends with this proclamation: “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.”

/Chapters 12 to 14 are about visions of the church’s affliction. /John writes these words for the persecuted church, and chapters 12 to 14 are words of encouragement for the church.

/Here, the Apostle John uses various symbols to describe the world and the church. /In chapter 12, he depicts the church as a woman who gives birth to Christ who will fight Satan. In chapter 14, we see the church in battle.

/Satan is portrayed as a dragon (chapter 12) and as a prostitute and Babylon (chapters 17-18). /The great prostitute and the great city of Babylon will perish (chapters 18-19).

/Chapters 17 and 18 are about the fall of Babylon and the judgment of the prostitute. /But it says that Christ who rides the white horse will defeat the beasts and all the nations. 19:11-21.

/The beast and the false prophet will fall at the battle of Armageddon (Chapter 16 and chapter 19). /Chapter 16 talks about the seven bowls of wrath. /This too, like the series of the vision of seals and the series of the vision of trumpets, is a series.

/Whenever a bowl is poured out onto the earth, the nations of the world and all the sinful forces are judged.

/Revelation 20 is about the final judgment that comes after the thousand year reign. /It says that the angel seized Satan “and bound him for a thousand years, and threw

him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.” 20:2-3.

/Let us read 20:4. /“Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.”

/There is much debate about the thousand year reign. /There are three ways in which theologians interpret these verses. /However, because there are two interpretations in premillennialism, we can say that there are four interpretations.

/First, we have premillennialism. We have dispensational premillennialism and historic premillennialism. Next, we have postmillennialism. Thirdly, we have amillennialism.

/Premillennialism is divided into two schools: dispensational premillennialism and historic premillennialism.

/Premillennialists believe that the gospel must be spread to all nations, that there will be apostasy, that there will be war, that the antichrist will appear, and that the great tribulation will happen before Christ returns. They say that Jesus will return before the thousand year reign. We believe that historic premillennialism is the correct view.

/Postmillennialists claim that Jesus will return after the thousand year reign. /They say that world evangelism will happen in full before Christ’s second coming, that we will encounter an age of joy and peace.

/Thus, this belief says that the church will enjoy a time of peace, a Christianized world, before Christ’s return.

/Amillennialists deny the literal thousand year reign but believe in a spiritual thousand year reign. /According to amillennialists, the thousand year reign is spiritually being fulfilled in today’s church age.

/Some amillennialists differ in their interpretation of Christians being kings along with Christ. /Some claim that believers who have died and gone to heaven reign with Christ. /Others interpret it as saying that every spiritual victory the church experiences on earth is the meaning of this kingship.

/Regardless, amillennialism says that the long, one thousand year period is a symbol of Christ’s reign that happens through the church. They teach this to be the thousand year reign. /All three interpretations are alike in that they acknowledge Jesus’ historical second coming and are waiting for his return.

/Lastly, chapters 21-22 describe a new heaven, a new earth, and a new Jerusalem. /In other words, it shows us the coming of God's eternal kingdom and its glory. /The church is "the Bride, the wife of the Lamb." 21:9.

/Revelation ends with words of warning and encouragement. 22:6-21. /It says that anyone who changes the words of the book will be cursed, and it concludes by saying that the grace of the Lord Jesus will be with everyone.

/Believers! I pray that the Lord Jesus Christ's grace be with you all at times as I conclude the final lecture on "An Introduction to the New Testament." /Thank you for work.