

## “Promises From The Book Of Revelation”

Over the centuries the church of our dear Lord has experienced various forms of adversity, but during its early existence there was a period of persecution that was exceptionally severe. It was a time in which many Christians were imprisoned, beaten, banished to desolate islands, burned at the stake, killed in public arenas by wild animals, and suffered many other types of torture (it is amazing that the church continued to grow during these trials). When John, the inspired apostle, penned the book of Revelation he mentioned the tribulation that the church was under at that time (Rev. 1:9). While on earth Jesus had informed His disciples that they would be hated by the populace: “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you” (John 15:18). The animosity of the world not only brought death on the cross for our Lord Jesus, but also numerous deaths and tremendous hardship for the church for many decades. The early years were the roughest as far as physical abuse was concerned. If anybody needed a **promise of victory**, the Christians of that era did and that is exactly what the Lord gave to His church in the book of Revelation.

Christians today also need encouragement because the devil has not taken a leave of absence nor retired. He is, at the moment, feverishly working to discourage, frustrate and tempt every Christian, whether it is a spouse, parent, elder, deacon, teacher, preacher, young person or old. The ancient church now exists in a modern world and it also needs God’s promises of a happy future. Christians will always need this kind of encouragement (Heb. 3:13). This article proposes to examine only a few of the encouraging promises from the last book of the Bible.

### God Promises That He Knows Our Circumstances.

The first three chapters of this book emphasizes over and over that God is very much aware of what is going on in each congregation of the Lord’s church. Unto each of the seven churches addressed in chapters two

and three, the Lord said, “...I know thy works...” (Rev. 2:2,9,13,19; 3:1,8,15). He knew about their works, their sins, their need to repent, what they stood for and what they stood against, what they loved and what they hated. He knew the condition of their hearts whether their love needed to be revived (2:4-5), if they were faithfully obedient (3:10), or if they were just being mediocre Christians (3:14-16). If you read passages like Psalm 139; Matthew 10:29-30 and Mark 2:8, you will see that God knows everything there is to know about us as individuals. This is what makes Him God; He is omniscient, He knows everything. He knows everything there is to know about us every second of every minute of every hour of every day of every year we live on this planet.

When a person knows a great deal about a subject, he becomes an expert on that subject (whether it be a baseball team, cooking, or the stars in the universe, etc.). It also shows their desire and interest in that field of study. Since God knows so much about us, it must also follow that mankind, and especially Christians, are important to Him. The death of Jesus is proof positive that He really cares about the salvation of sinful man (Heb. 2:9). His blood purchased the church (Acts 20:28). It makes no sense to die for something that has no value whatsoever to you. God cares very deeply about us, therefore He knows all about our toils and struggles that we experience. Have confidence, dear reader, God knows all about your circumstances and He truly cares about you and will provide for your needs (1 Pet. 5:7).

### God Promises Heaven For The Obedient

The Book of Revelation begins with the Lord’s promise to bless everyone that reads, hears and heeds this holy and sacred document: “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand” (Rev. 1:3). To “keep those things,” is terminology meaning to **obey** those things that God has written (i.e. instructions given to the seven churches in chapters two and three). Again, in the last chapter, a wonderful promise is made to all of those that are obedient that they may enter the heavenly city giving them access to the tree

of life (Rev. 22:14). The entire volume of the Bible continuously teaches obedience, compliance and submission to the delivered word of God (Jude 3). God rewards those that diligently seek Him and that reward is eternal salvation (Heb. 5:8-9; 11:6). These are the words of God, not mine. According to God’s word the person that obeys God’s will is the person that has a faith that brings justification (James 2:20-26). God says the person that will be saved is the one that believes and is baptized, not he that believes and is not baptized (Mark 16:16). Obedience to God’s will is one of the key elements in getting to heaven (Matt. 28:18-20).

Receiving the crown of life is no small blessing; on the contrary, it is enormous beyond description. Remember there are only two eternal destinations: heaven or hell. All people living on earth from the beginning of time until the end of days will live eternally in one of those two places, paradise or torment. All people that are faithful in keeping God’s holy commandments will be allowed to pass through the gates of pearl and wear the crown of life (Rev. 2:10). The saved will be permitted to stand with all of the redeemed around the glorious throne to give praises to the Almighty in the eternal city. This wonderful assurance is revealed in a scene described in Revelation 7:9-7.

The picture that God paints of heaven in the last two chapters is both beautiful and exciting. Heaven is a place of no tears, no death, no sorrow, and no pain. Why there are not more people endeavoring to get to heaven is puzzling. The beauty of God’s heavenly city is certainly beyond compare (Rev. 21-22). Are you doing what the Bible says? If not, why not?

### God Promises Hell For The Disobedient

The promise to the disobedient of course is the exact opposite of heaven. Instead of no crying, no pain, no suffering, the occupants of hell will suffer all of these. The Bible says that hell is a lake of fire and brimstone and it will supply eternal destruction by a fire that burns forever (Matt. 25:46; Rev. 21:8). Do you remember the bush that Moses saw that burned but was not consumed (Ex. 3:2)? Hell will burn

the people there, but will not consume them. No one needs a video of hell to assure them of the horrible pain that fire produces. Burning is, without doubt, the highest level of pain one can imagine. Not only that, but the scriptures also say that the devil and his co-workers will be in the lake of fire and brimstone. Be assured of this Bible fact, hell is the most horrible place anyone can ever experience and it has no end.

Sin is the reason people will be lost (Isa. 59:1-2; Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 6:9-11). One of those sins that God will punish people for is tampering with His word. Either, adding something to it or eliminating some aspect will result in a loss of any possibility of heaven, and will also receive punishing plagues. Since God cannot lie this carries the same weight as a promise (Titus 1:2). Many denominations have removed baptism as being essential to salvation. They say you do not have to be baptized to be saved while Jesus says that you do (Mark 16:16; 1 Pet. 3:21). False teachers say baptism does not have any impact upon the removal of sin while the Bible says that it does (Acts 2:38; 22:16). Search your Bible and you will find that baptism is the only means by which a person may enter into Christ (Gal. 3:27). In Christ is where grace and salvation can be found (2 Tim. 2:1,10). I strongly urge you to hear the words of our Lord and not listen to the words of those (false teachers) that would lead you in the wrong direction. Blind guides will only lead you into the ditch (Matt. 15:14).

### **God Promises That Jesus Will Be Victorious**

A spiritual battle rages between those that serve God and spiritual hosts, powers and principalities that stand in opposition to our Lord on high (Eph. 6:12). Revelation 17:14 speaks of this war, "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." In Revelation nineteen the Lord is pictured as mounted upon a white horse with heavenly armies following Him (Rev. 19:11-14). The enemies of the Lord were defeated by His might and, "cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone" (v.20). That will be the eternal fate of the devil: "And the devil that deceived

them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Rev. 20:10).

During times of persecution the church must have appeared to be going down in defeat because so many Christians were dying brutally by the authority of the powerful Roman government. But the Lord gave blessed assurance that it is not the church that will lose this battle. As a matter of fact, kings, great men, rich men, chief captains, mighty men, and others, will attempt to hide themselves and even call upon the mountains and rocks to, "... fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the Lord" (Rev. 6:15-16).

In the end, the Lamb and His bride will sit around the supper table and feast while the enemy languishes in painful torment (Rev. 19:7-9). This same passage affirms that "... These are the true sayings of God." In other words, you may have total confidence that you will see all of this come to pass.

### **Conclusion**

Christians should all be greatly strengthened by these promises. The wayward and the sinner should be greatly affected as well. You should be motivated to repent and become loyal servants of the victorious Son of God. If you have not yet obeyed the Gospel of Jesus Christ, will you not begin to follow Him today? Hear and believe God's word (Rom. 1:16;10:17), repent of your sins (Luke 13:3,5), confess that you believe Jesus to be the Son of God (Matt. 10:32,33; Rom. 10:9-10), and be baptized for the remission of your sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16). Then live faithfully as a servant of Jesus Christ (Rev. 2:10), and live with the great hope of a glorified home with God and with all the heavenly hosts.

This tract is condensed from a lesson presented at the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Mid-West Lectures, "God's Precious Promises." To hear or view the complete lesson go to [www.kc-cofc.org/2009Lectures.htm](http://www.kc-cofc.org/2009Lectures.htm) or contact the 39th Street Church of Christ 15331 East 39th Street Independence, MO 64055-4240 USA

# *God's Precious Promises...* **Promises From The Book of Revelation**

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