

## Jewish Revelation notes – Week 1

References – Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum, Ariel Ministries, Yashanet study of Revelation, Torahclass.com, hadavar messianic ministries, **The Revelation of Yeshua HaMashiach by Dr. William Adriaan Liebenberg**

### **Eschatology –**

What is the meaning of the word Eschatology?

Eschatology is derived from the Greek word, "eschatos", which is defined by Thayer's Greek lexicon as: 1) extreme, a) last in time or in place, b) last in a series of places, c) last in a temporal succession; and 2) the last, a) referring to time, b) of space, the uttermost part, the end, of the earth; c) of rank, grade of worth, i.e. lowest.

Typically when we talk about eschatology as Christians we mean the final destination of the soul, or the end of the world. Eschatology, generically, is the area of theology and philosophy concerned with the final events in the history of the world. It is the ultimate destiny of humanity and related concepts.

Different Western eschatological expressions include:

- 1) Preterists (interpret events as if they already happened),
- 2) Historicists (associating prophetic symbols with historic nations, events, or persons),
- 3) Poemiscists/ Spiritualists (also known as Idealists, Historical-Spiritualists)(that prophecy is only poetry meant for encouragement that Jesus will come again some day-Luther); and lastly
- 4) Futurists (all of prophecy will happen in the future).

Western Eschatology tends to mostly be about prediction and fulfillment –

Jewish Eschatology and prophecy is more about patterns.

Example, in Matthew 24 (vs 15) -

<sup>15</sup>“So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation,’<sup>[a]</sup> spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand—

Jesus quotes Daniel 9:27 <sup>27</sup> He will confirm a covenant with many for one ‘seven.’<sup>[a]</sup> In the middle of the ‘seven’<sup>[b]</sup> he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the

temple<sup>[c]</sup> he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.

“That literally happened with Antiochus Epiphanes 160 years earlier (B.C.), when he desecrated the temple by slaughtering a pig on the altar! Y’shua knew that it happened, because Y’shua himself celebrated the Feast of Hanukkah (John 10: 22-23), which is the Feast of Lights/ Dedication. The origin of this festival was when the Jewish Maccabean brothers cleansed the temple from Epiphanes. Here Y’shua is using Preterism— not in the way the Liberal or Evangelical Preterists do— but He used the form of Preterism. In other words, He took something that happened already and made it prophecy and said it will happen again.”

Secondly, Y’shua uses Historicism, meaning something ongoing that happens through history. Read Josephus when the Holy of Holies was destroyed. Look at the Temple Mount when the temple was destroyed in 70 AD. The Romans put a pagan statue on the Temple Mount and began to worship it. The early Christians thought it was "the abomination of desolation" that was spoken of by Daniel and Y’shua!

Also, in April-July 130 AD, Hadrian began building his temple of Capitoline Jupiter atop the Temple Mount and Jerusalem was renamed Aelia Capitolina, another "abomination of desolation". Later, Emperor Julian the Apostate, Constantine’s nephew, tried to repaganise the Roman Empire. He tried to reverse Y’shua’s prophecy of "There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down" by allowing the Jews, in 361-363 AD, to build a "third temple". All this was an "abomination of desolation".

Today, once again, the Dome of the Rock (the Mosque of Omar) stands on the Temple Mount— yet another "abomination of desolation". Why is it another "abomination of desolation"? Because there are 16 references in the Qur’an that say God has no Son. The Biblical reference in 1 John 2: 22 we read, "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Y’shua is the Messiah? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son." See, again another "abomination of desolation": in other words, historicism is also true.

Each fulfillment is a type or a shadow of the ultimate one to come; that is how Y’shua understood and taught prophecy. But Poemiscism is also true. John wrote the Book of Revelation to encourage the church that he is the last apostle

being martyred, and he was there to encourage the church that Y'shua will eventually come back. People had serious doubts and expected Y'shua to still come in their lifetime. So Poemiscism (encouragement) is also true! But Futurism, the original prediction and a literal fulfillment in the future is also true! Those in Y'shua's time believed and knew that prophecy is multifaceted fulfillment. Each fulfillment is a picture of the final one; that is the way prophecy was handled by the people who wrote the New Covenant.

*Liebenberg, Prof (Dr) WA (2017-08-31). The Revelation of Yeshua HaMashiach: FULL Book Hebraic Perspective Verse by Verse (END-TIME STUDIES SERIES 2) (Kindle Locations 1264-1269). Kindle Edition.*

**Jewish/Midrashic Eschatology** - Jewish eschatology is concerned with the Moshiach (the Jewish Messiah), the continuation of the Davidic line, and Olam Haba (Hebrew for "the world to come"; i.e., the afterlife), and the resurrection of the dead.

Midrashic Eschatology deals with patterns of prophecy and events throughout scripture that lead toward the tikkun olam – fulfillment of all things.

Midrash was essentially developed by Rabbi Hillel. Paul or Sha'ul was a student of Gamaliel (Hillel's grandson) Jesus and John both speak in terms of Midrashic method. It was a pharisaic way of teaching.

Remember that Jesus said to the crowds and to His disciples, (Matthew **23:2-3**) "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. <sup>3</sup> So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach." Jesus, Saul, and John were all on the Pharisee side of Jewish theology and understood and spoke prophetically in Midrashic terms.

Always think in terms of patterns – for example the two witnesses in Revelation 11. Where are the patterns? Moses and Elijah, the law and prophets. Old Covenant (Moses prepared the way), New Covenant (John the Baptist prepared the way – in the spirit and power of Elijah), the word of God in Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit in His followers in the current ecclesia, witnesses yet to come.

Other patterns include lengths of time (ie 3.5 years), objects with symbolism such as lampstands and olive trees, people such as the virgin/maiden with child, and concepts such as the abomination of desolation.

Prophecy incorporates past, present, and future because YHWH is literally past present and future.

Why do midrashic patterns matter? Romans 15:4 For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ to John is revelation of hope. It is about the restoration of all things. In particular it is about the marriage of YHWH and His bride. So, going into the revelation we have to answer some questions:

Who is Israel? Was Israel exclusive to the twelve tribes? How did a gentile become part of Israel?

Did God divorce Israel? Isaiah 50:1

Why did God divorce Israel and what did Israel continue to do?

What's the problem? Deuteronomy 24:4, Jeremiah 3:1 the remarriage problem.

If God divorced Israel will He remarry her? Hosea 2:19-20

How can He if He has to follow His own law? Numbers 30:7-8, 1 Corinthians 7:39

Why is the Bible and the book of Revelation a love story? What is Shalom and what does the groom have to do with shalom?

Background:

- Yochanan, who was the youngest of the disciples, wrote this Revelation. He was referred to as “the beloved disciple” who belonged to the “inner circle” of Y’shua followers.
- Yochanan moved to Ephesus, one of the locations of the Ten Tribes, probably during the Jewish war of CE 66-70 during a period of extreme persecution.
- Four times the author refers to himself as “Yochanan”. He was well known to his readers and his spiritual authority was widely acknowledged.
- It is accepted that the Book was written between C.E. 70-95. During this period Yochanan was in captivity on the island of Patmos where he wrote the first nine chapters of the Book, the remaining chapters were written in Ephesus when he was later released.
- During this time the Romans expected all people to worship the Emperor Domitian as a God, many refused and were executed.

## About the Book:

- The title means “unveiling” or “disclosure” of Y’shua the Messiah.
- “Unveiling” comes from the Greek word “Apokalypsis” in English “Apocalypse” means “to make publicly known”.
- The full name of the Book is The Revelation of Y’shua the Messiah or better The Revelation about Y’shua the Messiah.
- Because of the unified (united) contents of this Book it should never be called “Revelations” but rather The Revelation of Y’shua HaMashiach.
- It is the only New Covenant Book that focuses primarily on prophetic events.
- It is an authentic prophecy concerning the continuing suffering and persecution of Believers and would become even more intense and severe in the years ahead – the final days before the end of the world.
- The Book contains predictions for a long chain of events that will conclude with Messiah’s Second Coming.

Liebenberg, Prof (Dr) WA. The Revelation of Yeshua HaMashiach: FULL Book Hebraic Perspective Verse by Verse (END-TIME STUDIES SERIES 2) (Kindle Locations 10663-10675). Kindle Edition.

## Layout of Revelation

Ch 1 – Past

Ch 2 – 3 Present

Ch 4-22 Future

Aleph-beit 22 letters of the Jewish Alphabet – Jesus is Aleph Tav the beginning and the end, the never ending and the victorious

Chapter 1 notes –

What is the purpose of the revelation? For God to reveal Y’shua in all of his glory and majesty. In the Gospels Y’shua reveals God. Here it is reversed.

There is a growth aspect of the New Testament with Y’shua being revealed from infancy to the cross as the Son of God. The revelation of Jesus continues to grow.

What is the witness that Elohim is giving concerning Israel? That He will remarry Israel. That is the promise of YHWH in TaNaCH.

This is the only book in the Bible that starts with promise of a blessing. How is the blessing received? If you read, hear, and keep the promises of the revelation.

The seven churches are assemblies, ecclesia, not synagogues. They include scattered messianic Jews. These aren't necessarily gentile congregations.

Notice the number 7 which is the number of God, the number of completion, and the wholeness. Revelation is the book of sevens.

Notice favor and peace not peace and favor. Favor and peace is God's plan of redemption for sinners. We first receive grace and then peace.

Understanding the day of the Lord. When does Jewish day start? The darkness comes first, then the light. This is the pattern.

The seven lampstands are seven menorah. There are many menorah throughout the revelation because Israel is meant to be a light to the world. Jesus is the light at the center of the menorah.

Chapters 2 and 3 the present and the churches. These assemblies represent churches of the present. We are in the age of the resurrection and the Ruah ha Kodesh the Holy Spirit. The age to come is when this age ends and Jesus comes again.

Each church follows a pattern.

- 1) Each letter starts with a personal address to that Assembly to which the letter was written.
- 2) It is then followed by a character description of Y'shua.
- 3) Then the recognition of all the good deeds the Assembly did.
- 4) The shortfalls of the Assembly are then highlighted.
- 5) The explanation of the corrective action to be taken is laid down.
- 6) This is followed by the challenge to the Assembly.
- 7) The letter ends with a reward or a promise.

It is very important to note that these letters were not addressed to unbelievers (pagans), but to the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel, so they could repent of the paganism they were involved with.

Finally, each person who reads this book must decide for him / herself in which one of the 7 Assembly group he / she belongs and then take up the challenge to be set-apart!

Liebenberg, Prof (Dr) WA. The Revelation of Yeshua HaMashiach: FULL Book Hebraic Perspective Verse by Verse (END-TIME STUDIES SERIES 2) (Kindle Locations 11012-11025). Kindle Edition.

## Four Theories concerning the Seven Letters

Theory 1: Seven letters were written for seven Assemblies that existed in those days only, and are not applicable for today's Believers – then the Book of the Revelation will have no meaning today at all. There is a group claiming that Armageddon is gone past and the crucifixion and the destruction of the Temple dealt with Armageddon. They are known as Preterists as explained in the Part 1 - Introduction.

Theory 2: Seven Letters were written to one body of Believers (the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel) and this Body went through seven time periods of history. History proves that this in reality happened; as the years moved on the Ten Tribes were absorbed into paganism. These seven periods are presented by the letters, which is explained in the various letter under 'Timeline View'.

Theory 3: Seven Letters were written to seven different Assemblies which represented the entire Body of the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel that existed then (and throughout the past ± 2000 years) and all the letters were / are applicable at any point in time in history.

Theory 4: A combination of theories 2 and 3, which the author feels is the accurate one based on Jewish Eschatology view explained in the Part 1 - Introduction.

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Example – Ephesus

### 1) Name of Assembly

1. To the messenger of the assembly of Ephesos write,

Setting: Ephesos was seaport city of about 0,5 million people. Situated on the western coast of Asia Minor, it was the political capital of the Roman province of Asia.

It was famous for the goddess Artemis or Diana temple, one of the seven wonders of the world.

Sha'ul founded the Assembly and stayed there for 3 years, and later asked Timothy to be its leader.

Sha'ul's teachings caused mayhem among those who practiced false religion there (Acts 19: 23-31).

One of the B'rit Hadashah (N.T.) letters was written to the Assembly at Ephesos.

This was also Yochanan's home Assembly who was the "local Apostle" there.

He wrote the last 12 chapters of the Revelation (from 10 onwards) from Ephesos when he was released from Patmos.

Historians agree that he died there.

Timeline View: This was the Assembly period that was "sent" to take the Good News to the world, the Assembly birthed during the time of Acts after the crucifixion of Y'shua (Assembly of Acts ± 30-33 C.E.). 2)

Character description of Y'shua walking in the midst of the seven golden lampstands, says this:

Y'shua is the Yarek of the Body of Believers, the center of the Menorah (Rev 1: 13, 16).

Recognition - 2 "I know your works, and your labour, and your endurance, and that you are not able to bear evil ones, and have tried those who say they are emissaries and are not, and have found them false; 3 and you have been bearing up and have endurance, and have laboured for My Name's sake and have not become weary.

This Assembly was under constant persecution from both the pagan Romans and the Orthodox Jews.

They did a lot of humanely motivated works – i.e., served Y'shua under moral or social pressure.

The positive aspect is that they did not open their doors to sects and did not accept hypocrites (1 John 4: 1; 2 Cor 11: 13; Acts 20: 29-31); meaning they stayed 'set apart' by guarding the Torah and believing in Y'shua.

An individual's doctrine (i.e., against Torah) or when his life is filled with wickedness (transgression of the Torah) should be judged (John 7: 24). The way to do this is mentioned in 1 Tim 5: 19-20.

A person's character and motives should never be judged (Matt 7: 1).

Shortfalls - 4 But I hold this against you, that you have left your first love.

They had abandoned the first and great commandment: “You shall love your Elohim with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” (Matt 22: 37, Deut 6: 5). Thus, they left their first love for YHWH by moving away from Torah as Y’shua still reinforces “if you love Me do my Torah” (John 14: 15).

A second theory is: ‘first love’ in Greek is ‘protos agape’ and these words have a second meaning, and that is ‘love feast’ and that it refers to the Covenant Meal, which Christians call Holy Communion. Some scholars say the early Assembly kept the Covenant Meal weekly at the end of Shabbat on the first day of the week and use Acts 20: 7 as motivation. The ‘love feast’ can also refer to the Shabbat feast and that this group moved away from the Shabbat.

Corrective Action - 5 So remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the first works, or else I shall come to you speedily and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. 6 Yet this you have, that you hate the works of the Nikolaites, which I also hate.

What was the solution? They must do their first works, meaning returning to what the Torah commands: “Love YHWH!”

The “lampstand” (oil in the menorah / lamp) refers to the Light of the Ruach HaKodesh which YHWH will remove. “Candlesticks” (as in some Bibles) is an incorrect translation as there were no candles at that time. The Greek word “luchnia” should have been translated as “lamp stands”.

Ephesos was a sect of heresy. They led lives of unrestrained indulgence. They ate things offered to idols. The leader, Nicolas, allowed other men to marry his wife and they supported either polygamy or the holding of wives in common. The Nicolaitan leaders exerted authority over the congregation and declared exclusive power to interpret Scripture correctly.

They aspired to power and prestige, were very carnal, and they ate food offered to idols (Num 22-25, 31: 15-16; Acts 15: 29; 1 Cor 10: 27-29). YHWH hates the deeds of this Assembly.

The winning formula – remember, repent and return to foundation of Torah.

Challenge - 7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies.

The Ruach says to these Lost Sheep of the House of Israel to get out of Babylon, listen and repent! (Rev 18: 4)

Ultimately the message to each of the seven assemblies is for the individual Believers in all assemblies, meaning you must decide if it is you the Ruach is talking about here.

Reward To him who overcomes I shall give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of Elohim. "Overcomes" refer to 1 John 5: 5. "Tree of Life" refers to the trees in the New Jerusalem city, which are on both sides of the stream of living water that comes out of YHWH's throne (Gen 2: 9; Rev 22: 2). The fundamental reward for faithful, victorious obedience is to eat of the Tree of Life in the in the Paradise of Elohim.

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