

HILLSBORO CHURCH OF CHRIST

BULLETIN ARTICLE

H A Y E S'
H O O R A H !

(Jan. 24th)

“CAN ANYONE REALLY UNDERSTAND THE BOOK OF REVELATION?”

(Adapted from R. Rutherford’s material on “Revelation”)

“WE WILL NEVER UNDERSTAND REVELATION UNLESS WE STUDY IT”

Many congregations of the body of Christ are all about studying Matthew through Jude, and then they pass over the book of Revelation and start back at Matthew. An elder said: *“I DO NOT THINK ANYBODY UNDERSTANDS REVELATION; I AM NOT SURE GOD INTENDS FOR US TO UNDERSTAND REVELATION.”* But brethren, we can clearly see a blessing is pronounced upon any who “hear, read, and keep the words of the book” (1:3). Without hesitation, one could safely say: *“REVELATION IS THE MOST MISUNDERSTOOD BOOK OF THE BIBLE.”* Brethren, we will never understand Revelation unless we study it.

“THERE ARE CERTAIN RULES TO REMEMBER: ”

We can understand the large message of Revelation even if we do not get every tiny detail of the book. Bro. Rod Rutherford stated: *“ONE DOES NOT HAVE TO SEE EVERY STROKE OF THE ARTIST’S BRUSH TO APPRECIATE THE BEAUTY OF A PAINTING.”* Some of the material we cover in the book of Revelation is there to “fill in the big picture”, and has not meaning on its own. We must not “over-interpret” Revelation. Revelation is written in symbolic (figurative) language (1:1). For example, Jesus said: *“I am the door of the sheep”* (John 10:7). Jesus is not an actual door, but He is comparing Himself to a door. We can only go to heaven through Jesus Christ (John 14:6). Revelation is written in “apocalyptic” language. This comes from a Greek word which means “an unveiling.” It is the same Greek word which is translated “Revelation.” The

Jews wrote in "apocalyptic" language when they wanted to hide the meaning from those who persecuted them. Sometimes the prophets used "apocalyptic" language. Joel used it when he foretold what would happen on Pentecost (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:16-21). The moon did not actually turn into blood or the sun into darkness on that day. This was a way of saying great and unusual things were going to happen.

"THINGS WHICH MUST SHORTLY TAKE PLACE" (1:1)

Revelation tells about things "which must shortly take place" (1:1). John said: "The time is near" (1:3). The time was near when Jesus gave the message to John more than 1,900 years ago. This means that much of Revelation **HAS ALREADY HAPPENED!**

CONCLUSION:

The key to understanding this marvelous, inspired book is to ask:
"WHAT DID IT MEAN TO THOSE WHO FIRST RECEIVED IT?"

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