

Revelation & Helps

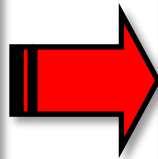
The Ethiopian confessed to something that we often experience. He was reading the Bible and he did not understand what he was reading. When Philip asked him if he understood what he was reading, his response was, "How could I, unless someone guides me?" (Acts 8:30-31). He needed some help.

Let's be honest, there are parts of the Bible that are hard to understand. Peter said that about Paul's writings, "some things are hard to understand" (2 Pet 3:16). When I come across passages that I do not understand, it's time to do some digging, research and find some help.

Before you seek outside help, do a little homework first

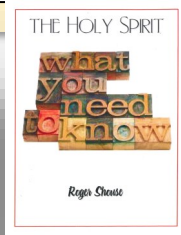
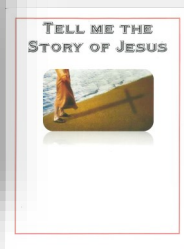
- Read the passage in different translations
- Pay attention to punctuation
- Run through the context a couple of times
- Find out the setting the passage is in (what's the background, what's going on, who is speaking)
- Think things out and see how it fits with what you already know
- Use your own resources:

- Develop a filing system for sermon notes, class material and other useful items
- Invest in good quality reference books (Vine's Dictionary, Bible Encyclopedia)



As you seek OUTSIDE help, remember...

- Things on Google and the internet contain every idea, including radical, false and the extreme
- Check the source and the background of your information
- Compare more than one source material
 - The majority of denominational material will have questionable statements about salvation, origin of sin, worship and function of the church.
- The best resources would be from someone within our fellowship, especially someone you know.
 - ask one of your preachers or shepherds
 - The Ethiopian's question was answered by Philip
 - You are looking for a Bible answer to your Bible question



Overview of Revelation

The book of Revelation is feared by many people. Some have never read it. God's wants us to know all of His will.

A. Common thoughts about the book of Revelation

- The book is too hard to understand—nearly impossible
- The book involves events in our future concerning nations and wars
- The book has very little practical or useful help many believe

B. Some things that will help you to know Revelation

1. The book is a REVELATION not REVELATIONS
2. The book fits in a type of literature called Apocalyptic (lesson 7 in our study)
 - Reflects period of persecution
 - Prophecies about the outcome are made
 - It is visionary and highly symbolic
 - Victory is the key
3. The book is designed to comfort believers who were being persecuted
4. The book is intended to exhort the believers to bear their trials with patience (the word "overcome" is used nearly a dozen times)

Colors, numbers, items are used to represent other things:

- 144,000 (7:4) doesn't actually mean that exact number
- Dragon (12:17) isn't a real dragon
- Har-Magedon (16:16) refers to something other than the actual place

5. the book draws heavily from the O.T. using words such as Babylon, Gog and Magog, Armageddon



Five Keys to Understanding Revelation

- Realize the specific audience (1:4, 11; 22:16)
- Realize the specific setting: a period of suffering (2:10, 13; 6:9; 13:7)
- Realize the specific time table (1:1, 3; 22:10,12,20)
- Realize the specific style of writing (1:1 "signified" or "communicated")
- Realize the specific purpose of the book: this is a book of encouragement to suffering Christians.

Outline of Revelation

Ch 1-3 Introduction
Ch 4-11 First Vision: Rome vs. the Church
Ch 13-20 Second Vision: Satan vs. Christ
Ch 21-22 Conclusion: Christ wins

THEME: Rev 17:14 "*These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.*"

Memory Verse

Revelation 21:27 "Only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life are allowed in this holy city"