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Foreword

This study guide is about hope. Unlike what you might expect, *Revelation: A Study Guide* by my friend Kay-Chong Yeo is a view of the future and a glimpse back at the past. We who are believers have hope in our hearts because we know Jesus Christ. Titus 2:13 describes our hope. *“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ.”*

Two very different men lived in the twentieth century. One was Dr. Bertrand Russell, a famous philosopher and atheist who believed and taught that hope in God was nonsense. He once said, “Religion is something left over from the infancy of our intelligence, it will fade away as we adopt reason and science as our guidelines.” Before his death he analyzed the coming world crisis, writing, “Mankind is on a spiral downward to despair: I have given up all hope.” It is clear, that he had not found hope in Christ.

The second man was the great European psychiatrist, Dr. Paul Tournier, who was a humble follower of Jesus. Toward the close of his life, he too wrote about hope, saying, “The only hope for the redemption of mankind is a personal confrontation with the Lord Jesus Christ.” You can see the vast contrast between two men with completely different belief systems.

The book of Revelation has always been a book of mystery, intrigue, and challenge mixed with hope. Few Christians ever venture into the study of this book because they fear the unknown. Yet Rev. 1:3 states: *“Blessed is the one who reads and hears the Words of this prophecy, and the ones keeping the things written in it, for the time is near.”* We are assured blessings when we read and study Revelation.

I am thrilled that Kay-Chong helps eliminate the fear of things to come in this study guide. Like a skilled surgeon with a scalpel, Kay-Chong presents Revelation’s insights to us line-by-line, precept-upon-precept.

The book of Revelation is the unveiling of a mystery—a revelation. The whole of Scripture verifies it. My own study of this book through the years has been guided by three principles:

1. *There is no higher authority for interpreting the inspired Word of God than the source of that inspiration.* Father God confirms His truth through Scripture. No author of the Bible contradicts another. The Scriptures never fail to be consistent. An interpretation that holds for one passage of prophecy will hold for another passage as well.

2. *To understand certain passages of Revelation, it is often necessary to study the original languages.* The Old Testament was written in Hebrew, the New Testament in Greek. Understanding prophetic words and phrases often requires an understanding of the original Greek or Hebrew word. It provides a fuller and more complete definition of what the author was saying in the context of Jewish life and culture at the time.

3. *Historical evidence either confirms that a prophecy has been fulfilled, or that it is yet to be fulfilled.* Prophecies are statements about future events, either they happen as foretold or they don’t. If a prophecy can be said to have been fulfilled in reference to a

particular time and place, then the evidence uncovered by archaeologists and historians about that place will be consistent with that prophecy.

On a 1995 prayer journey into Egypt our 6-member team experienced firsthand the Scripture coming alive at an archaeological dig occurring in Zoan, Egypt. Zoan was the ancient city where Moses confronted the great Pharaoh to demand “Let God’s people go.” This city combined social, religious and political influence of that day. A British team sponsored by Prince Philip was funding the dig at Zoan, when we arrived. It was late in the day when the Muslim guards, who thought we were Jewish archaeologists (our guide was an archaeologist, but not us), allowed us into the heavily guarded premises. We were there to find the burial ground of Pharaoh Shishak, the man we believed through our research was behind the beginnings of Freemasonry.

As we walked through the area, one of the guards came to Gigi, our guide, and asked if our team wanted to see their recent find. She answered, “What is it?” He said are you interested in the grave of King Shishak. Wow!! This was the main reason we had come to Egypt. Through translation, we were able to confirm prophetic Scripture with physical evidence. Clearly, Shishak lived in the day of Solomon and Jeroboam, and was an arch-enemy of Solomon’s who plundered Jerusalem and took the vessels of Solomon’s temple back with him to Egypt. (Is. 19:11-14; 1 Kings 11:40; 2 Chron. 12:5-9) We were able to reach into the past to dig out its ancient roots so that we may project into the future how to pray more effectively about a cult belief spread around the world. The traces of the spirit of Freemasonry began in Babel, migrated and developed in ancient Egypt through Pharaoh Shishak, increased during the Greco-Roman periods, and later crossed into Europe and ultimately around the world.

These three principles are listed in priority. The first, that God reveals truth through the Word; the second, that the original language, in its cultural context aids in understanding certain passages; and third, that historical evidence confirms the fulfilment of prophecy. To apply prophetic passages to historical events without reference to other prophetic passages in the Word results in mistaken interpretation. Any interpretation of the prophetic, including Revelation demands a complete and thorough reading and comparison of the entire Scripture.

This is why I am very impressed with Kay-Chong’s study guide. He has masterfully simplified the difficult subject of last day prophecy. As Kay-Chong says, “The Book of Revelation is called the revelation of Jesus and therefore, is not an optional subject (Rev. 1:1).” He continues, “The spirit of prophecy and prayer is to make known the testimony of Jesus or what is on His heart. Revelation was given to equip the Church to operate in the spirit of prophecy and prayer (Rev. 19:10 –11).” The church in the last days should be operating in the spirit of prophecy and prayer; not fear and hopelessness. If Scripture urges us to “*Worship God, for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*” (Rev. 19:10), then what are we waiting for? Here is the perfect road map to help you start your journey.

Dr. Alice Smith
U.S. Prayer Center
Houston, Texas USA
www.EddieAndAlice.com

Preface

Seriousness of the Times

"For thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Once more I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory,' says the LORD of hosts. 'The silver [is] Mine, and the gold [is] Mine,' says the LORD of hosts. The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,' says the LORD of hosts. 'And in this place I will give peace,' says the LORD of hosts." (Haggai 2-6)

This is the hour we are living in – a crucial and strategic time where the only certainty is uncertainty. We are living in the End Times. One of the most vital needs for the Church of Jesus Christ today is to understand the times and know what to do. We need to ask God for the spirit of the “*sons of Issachar*” (1 Chron. 12:32) so that we can interpret what God is saying and doing in these hours and to respond in accordance to the heart and will of God.

Two key books we need to know to make sense of what is happening are the books of Joel and Revelation. The book of Joel is an instruction manual for the Body of Christ on how to prepare ourselves for the coming Day of the LORD. It is a call to all believers to live radically in the Last Days. The book of Revelation gives us major information about End-Times. This is the most important and crucial book especially for the End-Time Generation.

Why the Book of Revelation?

The book of Revelation is one of the most misunderstood books in the entire Bible.

Firstly, many teach that with the exception of scholars, it is impossible to understand this book. But this book was written to be understood by all. This book can be understood in its plainest form.

Secondly, many teach that it is not relevant for believers today. It was written to help God's people endure and overcome throughout history, but it was written especially for the End-Time Generation that will undergo the coming Great Tribulation. It is the “*prophetic prayer manual*” for the End-Time Church.

Finally, this book is unique in that it is the only book in the entire Bible where God promises a special blessing to anyone who reads or hears it (Rev. 1:3) as well as a curse to anyone who adds or subtracts from it (Rev. 22:18 – 19).

The book of Revelation is a book that gives us more information on the End-Time activities and events than any other book in the Bible. It is a prophetic book which gives us detailed and crucial information about what is to come during End-Times.

However, the book of Revelation is more than a book about God's activities and “events” in the End-Times. It is called the “Revelation of Jesus” (Rev. 1:1) because it reveals His heart, power and leadership in preparing the people of God for His glory.

Why this Study Guide to the Book of Revelation

We are living in the Last Days!

The Church needs to understand the time and know how to prepare ourselves! It is vital for the Church to understand this book of Revelation because it gives us important insight on what is going to happen and how to prepare ourselves so that we can be the burning and shining lamp of God in the coming days (John 5:35).

The Church will go through the Great Tribulation with great testing and in great victory. This differs from the popular pre-tribulation Rapture view that teaches that the Church will be raptured before the tribulation and will therefore, miss the End-Time revival and crisis.

We all agree that the Bible teaches that the Church will be raptured. The issue is one of timing. I believe that the Church will be raptured at the end of the Tribulation, rather than at the beginning.

I respect the godliness and wisdom of many who hold the pre-tribulation Rapture view, but I see it as a serious mistake that will leave many unprepared.

In this Study Guide we seek to answer the following questions:

1. Who Jesus is in the Last Days?
2. What is Jesus looking for in His Church?
3. Why is the coming judgment of God so severe?
4. What will happen to the Church of Jesus Christ during this time?
5. How should all believers prepare ourselves, how can we avoid the pitfalls of deception and how should we partner with God in releasing the glory of God to all nations?

I do not ask anyone to accept my views. Rather, all of us need to study, meditate and process the Book with the revelation and understanding of the Holy Spirit. Truth is never hurt by scrutiny but rather it is confirmed by it. We must boldly challenge all ideas that we hear and refuse any that we cannot clearly see in the Scriptures for ourselves.

Let us adopt the spirit of the Bereans who searched the Scriptures to see if the things that Paul said were so (Acts 17:10 – 11). Likewise, I challenge all of us to seek out what is really in the book of Revelation and what God is saying to all of us through this precious book!

May he who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches! (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22)

Kay-Chong Yeo
Director, One Thing Ministries
International House of Prayer (Singapore)

About Dr. Alice Smith...

Alice Smith is cofounder and executive director of the U.S. PRAYER CENTER in Houston, Texas.

She is a member of America's National Prayer Committee, the International Reconciliation Coalition, and the International Strategic Prayer Network. Alice has earned her Doctorate of Ministry from Wagner Leadership Institute in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Alice's first calling is to intercessory prayer and to represent a life of integrity and transparency to the body of Christ. She has always been willing to go minister to the masses of people or even to the few. She and her husband, Eddie, travel each year to preach and serve people worldwide, as well as the Christians in the United States. Alice conducts seminars, retreats and conferences on a variety of subjects including intercessory prayer, spiritual intimacy, personal freedom, spiritual warfare, and spiritual mapping.

She is a regular contributor to Charisma, Ministries Today, Spirit-Led Woman, and Pray! magazines. Alice is a regular guest on CBN's 700 Club, and an occasional guest on Benny Hinn's, This is Your Day. She is the editor of Insight, a weekly teaching email newsletter that goes to thousands of praying Christians in more than 70 nations. In addition, she and Eddie offer a 52-week free Internet course on prayer that serves to train Christians worldwide who have few resources.

Her favourite activities are to enjoy her family, spend time with her husband, and play games with her four grown children and five grandchildren.

Alice Smith is an internationally-known conference speaker, and the author of the best-selling books:

- Beyond the Veil: Entering into Intimacy with God Through Prayer,
- 40-Days Beyond the Veil: Experience Daily Encounters of Divine Intimacy,
- Beyond the Lie: Finding Freedom from Your Past, and her newest book -
- Delivering The Captives: Understanding The Strongman - And How to Defeat Him
- Spiritual Intimacy: Moving Joyfully into the Deeper Life