

# NEWSBYTES

September 24, 2022

No. 1082

Since 2001

A ministry of Calvary Chapel of Appleton

“Let us be alert to the season in which we are living. It is the season of the Blessed Hope, calling for us to cut our ties with the world and build ourselves on this One who will soon appear. He is our hope—a Blessed Hope enabling us to rise above our times and fix our gaze upon Him.” Tozer

## Standing next to an F-35 fighter jet, Lapid issues warning to Iran: ‘Don’t test us’

On visit to airbase, PM says too early to know if nuclear deal has been stopped; if Iran continues to pose threat, he adds, ‘it will discover Israel’s long arm and capabilities’

By [EMANUEL FABIAN](#) 6 September 2022, 4:40 pm



Prime Minister Yair Lapid at Nevatim airbase in southern Israel, September 6, 2022. (Video screenshot/GPO)

Prime Minister Yair Lapid said Tuesday it was too soon to know if Israel had succeeded in thwarting the emerging nuclear agreement between world powers and Iran, which it sees as harmful.

Lapid, who was on a visit to the Nevatim airbase in southern Israel, which houses the Israeli Air

Force’s fleet of advanced F-35 fighter jets, also issued a warning to Iran.

“It is still too early to know if we have indeed succeeded in stopping the nuclear agreement, but Israel is prepared for every threat and every scenario,” Lapid said in a brief statement in front of an F-35.

“If Iran continues to test us, it will discover Israel’s long arm and capabilities. We will continue to act on all fronts against terrorism and against those who seek to harm us,” he said.

“As [US] President [Joe] Biden and I agreed, Israel has full freedom to act as we see fit to prevent the possibility of Iran becoming a nuclear threat,” Lapid added.

Israel has been pressuring the US not to reenter the 2015 nuclear accord. A senior defense official said last month that Israel had two main issues with the emerging deal: the so-called sunset clause, which would lift limitations on Iran’s nuclear program when the accord expires; and sanctions relief that would allow Iran to increase funding to its proxies.

Biden took office aiming to revive the deal, which was abandoned in 2018 by his predecessor Donald Trump, who unleashed a volley of fresh sanctions on the cleric-run state.

The US said last week that Iran’s latest proposals in nuclear negotiations were “not constructive,” after the sides had seemed on the verge of reaching a deal.



Prime Minister Yair Lapid (R) meets with Air Force Commander Tomer Bar at the Nevatim airbase in southern Israel, on September 6, 2022. (Kobi Gideon/PMO)

The European Union’s foreign policy chief Josep Borrell, who is shepherding attempts to save the suspended Iran nuclear deal, said Monday that the recent exchanges left him “less confident.”

“The last interaction is not converging, it is diverging. The whole process is in danger,” he said.

Israel has meanwhile pushed the US to prepare a military option against Iran, and US President Joe Biden said in July that he would be prepared to use force if necessary to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon.

Iran's nuclear program is believed to be too advanced to be taken out with one strike and it is unclear how much damage a military attack would be able to do.



Prime Minister Yair Lapid (R) and Air Force commander Tomer Bar watch an F-35 at the Nevatim airbase in southern Israel, on September 6, 2022. (Kobi Gideon/PMO)

Lapid's statement came as the chief of the Mossad spy agency, David Barnea, was in Washington for a series of meetings "designed to explain to the American government our position regarding the dangers inherent in the agreement,"

according to the Prime Minister's Office.

Israel has long opposed the deal, arguing that Iran is seeking to build a nuclear bomb, and has published intelligence it says reveals the Iranian weapons program. Iran has denied any nefarious intentions and claims its program is designed for peaceful purposes, though it has recently been enriching uranium to levels that international leaders say have no civil use.

## Despite God's Warning, An Increasing Number of Churches Corrupt the Book of Revelation's Message

Jonathan Brentner

The last book in the Bible begins with these words: "The revelation of Jesus Christ." From beginning to end, the prophetic account magnifies the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. It's all about His glory, sovereignty, and power. Revelation is all the more relevant as we watch many of its prophecies come into sharper focus. Conditions are set for the four "horsemen of the apocalypse" to begin their trek through the world; it's just a matter of time.

Unfortunately, the numbers of those disputing the message of the book of Revelation continues to grow, even in churches that claim to believe in the inerrancy and inspiration of Scripture. Those willing to mess with its message seemingly increase by the day.

Many appear content to ignore the fact that no other book comes with both a promised blessing for those who read it (1:3) as well as a severe warning for those who mess with it by adding to or subtracting from its words (22:18-19).

## THE BLESSING: JESUS' EXALTATION IS ALSO OUR VICTORY

Revelation magnifies Christ from beginning to end. Here's a sampling of how it glorifies the Lamb upon the throne.

### *1. JESUS AS THE HEAD OF HIS CHURCH*

Chapters 1-3 display Jesus as the Head over His church. These chapters show the Lord in charge of His people just as Paul described in Ephesians 1:22-23.

Revelation 3:10-11a contains a promise of the Rapture through which Jesus will take us out of the world before the wrath of the day of the Lord descends upon "those that dwell on the earth."

Chapters 4 and 5 exalt the Lamb as the only One worthy to open the seals binding the title deed to this world. The ensuing seal judgments begin the process of the coming King wresting the kingdoms of this world out of Satan's grasp.

### *2. THE LORD JUDGES THE EARTH IN PREPARATION FOR HIS KINGDOM*

Chapter 6-18 proclaim the Lord's supreme power and sovereignty over the kings of the earth, history, nature, and all the forces that now rebel against Him. They depict the testing that Jesus said would come upon "the whole world" (Revelation 3:10).

Jesus will prove the righteousness of His Name as He destroys the kingdom of the antichrist along with its lawlessness, deception, and exceedingly great wickedness. Heaven will roar with praise for Him (Revelation 19:1-5) in anticipation of His return with us to the earth and thousand-year rule over the earth seated on the throne of David.

### 3. JESUS WILL REIGN FOR A THOUSAND YEARS AND THEN FOREVER

Jesus' ultimate display of glory to the earth happens at His Second Coming. He will then destroy the armies of the world gathered against Jerusalem, lock up Satan, and establish His rule upon the earth (19:11-20:6). After putting down a final rebellion, He will judge the world and forever eliminate death and sin (20:7-15).

Revelation 21-22 describes the glorious eternal state of the new earth and the New Jerusalem. Jesus last words to us, His church, are these, "Surely I am coming quickly!"

The exaltation of Jesus finds its fullest expression in all of the events recorded in the book of Revelation. And His victory will be ours someday.

#### THE WARNING: DON'T MESS WITH THE MESSAGE!

You've likely heard the phrase, "Don't mess with Texas!" The consequences of doing that might be dire, but they are nothing compared to messing with the book of Revelation.

Consider the warning that occurs in its last chapter:

*I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book. (Revelation 22:18-19)*

I believe these strong words occur here because Revelation . . .

- exalts the Person of Jesus.
- describes the Lord's final victory over sin and death.
- provides immeasurable comfort to believers with its description of how God will deal with this wicked world and bring in a joyous eternal state including a New Jerusalem.
- promises a glorious eternity free of death, pain, tears, and suffering (21:4).

Those who scoff at the book's message of hope do so to their own peril.

Teachers, pastors, and scholars mess with the message of Revelation in the following ways:

## 1. ALLEGORY

Many regard the book of the Revelation as allegory, or just symbolism, rather than an eyewitness account of what John actually saw and heard. This is the most popular way that the scoffers take away from its message of victory and hope.

Allegory began long ago as a way to combine pagan Greek philosophy with Christianity, especially that of the pagan philosopher Plato who believed that only the spiritual realm was good. He believed the material world was inherently evil.

Augustine, the one who firmly established allegory as the way to approach biblical prophecy, said the idea of a millennium “would not be objectionable” if somehow “the nature of the millennial kingdom was a ‘spiritual one’ rather than a physical one.” [i] Augustine modified his beliefs regarding Jesus’ future thousand-year reign on the earth in order to make them comply with the teachings of Plato.

Augustine’s hatred of the Jewish people also factored into his theology of dismissing the biblical promises regarding the future restoration of Israel.

There are many reasons to reject the allegorical approach to the book of Revelation:

- Revelation repeatedly identifies itself as a book of prophecy (1:3; 22:7, 10, 18-19).
- The allegorical approach elevates the human wisdom of the interpreter above the inspired words of the text. Words matter very little with those who employ this method.
- John’s language negates the allegorical approach to the book of Revelation. The apostle uses the word “saw” forty-four times by itself and twelve times with the word “looked.” He uses “heard” thirty times. The apostle was not telling us a story, but rather writing down words as he listened to the angels and the Lord speak.
- Those who use symbolism to interpret the book of Revelation do not agree among themselves about what is allegorical and literal.
- Those who use allegory claim to have a special “lens” by which they know the meaning of a passage that often has nothing to do with the actual words of the text.
- Allegory turns Christ’s triumphal victory over Satan’s world system into something that fails to glorify Him or comfort us in any way.

- If Revelation is symbolical and not prophetic through chapter 20, does that not greatly reduce our confidence in the promises of chapters 21-22? I believe it would.

## *2. IT'S APOCALYPTIC*

A pastor once told me that the book of Revelation was “apocalyptic” thereby suggesting that this gave him license to interpret its words other than the way that the Lord inspired them. It came as no surprise to me that he had a unique view of biblical prophecy and the future of Israel, one I had never heard prior to meeting with him.

The word “apocalyptic” is translated “revelation” in verse one of Revelation. Contrary to how we regard the English equivalent of the word, in the Greek it signifies an unveiling or revealing. In other words, this term introduces the final book of the Bible as the unveiling of Jesus and His glory, which is precisely what it does.

## *3. IT'S PAST HISTORY*

The preterists tells us that John wrote the book in AD 65 and that the Lord fulfilled all or most of the words of the book of Revelation in AD 70.

There are many problems with this errant approach:

- Church history assigns the time of the writing of Revelation to about AD 95. Irenaeus, who grew up in the church at Smyrna in the second century AD, tells us that John wrote the book of Revelation at this time. If anyone would know when the book first arrived at the church in Smyrna, it would be someone who grew up in that church and received his training in the faith from Polycarp whom the Apostle John himself disciplined.
- It's readily apparent that the prophetic events described in Revelation have not yet happened. John describes Jesus' Second Coming as a time when “every eye will see him” (1:7). This was most certainly not a first century AD event.
- The problems Jesus addressed in the church at Ephesus (2:1-7) differ significantly from what Paul wrote about in 2 Timothy as he addressed his prodigy who served as the pastor of this church. The apostle wrote his final book in about AD 67-68.
- Many believe that the church at Smyrna did not exist until after the martyrdom of the apostle Paul in about AD 68
- An earthquake caused considerable damage to the city of Laodicea in about AD 65. They would not have regarded themselves as “rich” at this time.

- Even if John wrote Revelation in AD 65, it's doubtful all seven churches would have received the book, read it aloud in all the house gatherings, and possibly made a copy of it by AD 70. For sure, no other church at the time would have seen its prophecies concerning the Lord's return.

The preterist approach makes the book of Revelation all about the church with prophecies that would have happened long before the majority of believers living at the time would have seen the book or even known of its existence. The preterist view exalts the body of Christ above its Head.

#### *4. IT'S A SECRET CODE FOR FIRST CENTURY BELIEVERS*

Another popular approach states that John wrote the entire book of Revelation in code for the suffering saints who lived during the first century AD.

All the arguments against the errant use of symbolism apply here. John recorded future events as he saw them and wrote down the words spoken to him by the Lord and by angels.

And since Revelation was written in AD 95, the majority of believers living at the time would not have even seen the book until well into the second century AD.

## **DON'T MESS WITH REVELATION**

I'm convinced that the book of Revelation is future prophecy and as such glorifies Jesus from beginning to end. Those that discredit its message do so at their own peril. Those that regard the book for what it claims to be receive a blessing when they read it (1:3).

There are verses in the book of Revelation that I do not fully understand.

However, other passages have come into sharper focus as the day of their fulfillment rapidly approaches. For example, the advancements in technology and artificial intelligence (AI) in the past two decades now make it possible for one man, the antichrist, to control the buying and selling in all the earth.

Revelation fills me with hope for what is to come. Since we see its account of future judgments rising rapidly on the horizon, how much closer must the Rapture be that happens before they hit "those who dwell on the earth."

We truly live in biblical times!