

Revelation



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A *Discover Together*
BIBLE STUDY

Revelation

Discovering Life for Today and Eternity

Sue Edwards



 **Kregel**
Publications

Revelation: Discovering Life for Today and Eternity
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How to Get the Most Out of a Discover Together Bible Study

Women today need Bible study to keep balanced, focused, and Christ-centered in their busy worlds. The tiered questions in *Revelation: Discovering Life for Today and Eternity* allow you to choose a depth of study that fits your lifestyle, which may even vary from week to week, depending on your schedule.

Just completing the basic questions will require about one and a half hours per lesson, and will provide a basic overview of the text. For busy women, this level offers in-depth Bible study with a minimum time commitment.

“Digging Deeper” questions are for those who want to, and make time to, probe the text even more deeply. Answering these questions may require outside resources such as an atlas, Bible dictionary, or concordance; you may be asked to look up parallel passages for additional insight; or you may be encouraged to investigate the passage using an interlinear Greek-English text or *Vine’s Expository Dictionary*. This deeper study will challenge you to learn more about the history, culture, and geography related to the Bible, and to grapple with complex theological issues and differing views. Some with teaching gifts and an interest in advanced academics will enjoy exploring the depths of a passage, and might even find themselves creating outlines and charts and writing essays worthy of seminarians!

This inductive Bible study is designed for both individual and group discovery. You will benefit most if you tackle each week’s lesson on your own, and then meet with other women to share insights, struggles, and aha moments. Bible study leaders will find free, downloadable leader’s guides for each study, along with general tips for leading small groups, at www.discovertogetherseries.com.

Through short video clips, Sue Edwards shares personal insights to enrich your Bible study experience. You can watch these as you work through each lesson on your own, or your Bible study leader may want your whole study group to view them when you meet together. For ease of individual viewing, a QR code, which you can simply scan with your smartphone, is provided in each lesson. Or you can go to www.discovertogetherseries.com



and easily navigate until you find the corresponding video title. Woman-to-woman, these clips are meant to bless, encourage, and challenge you in your daily walk.

Choose a realistic level of Bible study that fits your schedule. You may want to finish the basic questions first, and then “dig deeper” as time permits. Take time to savor the questions, and don’t rush through the application. Watch the videos. Read the sidebars for additional insight to enrich the experience. Note the optional passage to memorize and determine if this discipline would be helpful for you. Do not allow yourself to be intimidated by women who have more time or who are gifted differently.

Make your Bible study—whatever level you choose—top priority. Consider spacing your study throughout the week so you can take time to ponder and meditate on what the Holy Spirit is teaching you. Do not make other appointments during the group Bible study. Ask God to enable you to attend faithfully. Come with an excitement to learn from others and a desire to share yourself and your journey. Give it your best, and God promises to guide you on this adventure that can change your life.



Why Study Revelation?

Crackpots have predicted the end of the world for centuries. Nostradamus, a sixteenth-century Frenchman, prophesied a future doomsday ushered in by cataclysmic events, and his books are still in print. Pseudo-scientists predicted December 21, 2012, as the end, according to an ancient Mayan calendar. Harold Camping missed it three times, insisting that the world would end in 1994, then May 21, 2011, and—once that date passed—October 21 later that same year. In response, atheists created a website, *Eternal Earthbound Pets*, and offered to rescue left-behind cats and dogs for a fee of \$135 each.

Nineteen hundred years before Camping's predictions, God told us how the world would *really* end and how to get ready. But he did not tell us when; in fact, he advised us not to speculate.

But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. (Matthew 24:36)

Are you ready for the end? In the last book of the Bible, Revelation, the apostle John wrote down the exact words of the risen Christ to help us prepare for our future with him. The book comes alive with color, sound, visions, songs, terror, triumph, warnings, and promises. Jesus even promises to bless us if we read Revelation, and all the more if we heed its instructions.

To me, a study of Revelation seems timely. A few days before the crucifixion, the apostles asked Jesus what signs to expect when his return was imminent. His answer both excites and alarms me.

Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, "I am the Messiah," and will deceive many. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains. (Matthew 24:4–8)



Sure, don't be alarmed by the accelerated pace of natural disasters, conflicts, scarcity, and confusion we observe today. I sense the end is drawing closer. My emotions easily overwhelm me as I consider the future. But a thorough immersion in Revelation has infused me with courage, hope, and excitement. My prayer is that this study will do the same for you.



Introduction to Studying Revelation (8:46 minutes).

I have focused on five special chapters—the first three and the last two—passages that I believe are most pertinent for Christians today. The middle portion of the book describes God's judgments on the earth in its final days. I don't believe Christians will be present during those excruciating days, and I'll explain my reasoning later in this study. I respect other points of view but I find a thorough investigation of these five chapters the most beneficial as we consider how God wants us to prepare for the end.

The first three chapters paint a glorious picture of the resurrected Christ and record his seven letters to first-century churches. These early churches represent the different kinds of churches that have existed through the ages. The letters both commend and point out deficiencies in these churches, providing lessons to help us get ready for our future.

The last two chapters unfold with unspeakable energy, beauty, and promise, as John describes what Jesus shows him: a new Eden, redemption's climax, and our eternal home. Walk with me through these incredible pages, and experience the blessing that God promised to all who read and heed.