



Daily Verse and Comment

Revelation 1:3

(3) Blessed *is* he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time *is* near.

New King James Version

In [James 1:22](#), the apostle admonishes us to be obedient doers, not just hearers, of the Word. One implication of James' comment is clear: When it comes to prophecy, we are to obey the commands so often embedded in the prophetic word. James' command to act, rather than just to hear, is frequently echoed in prophecy, as in [Revelation 1:3](#): "Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words [*logos*] of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near."

The "and" in this verse is very important. [God](#) does not say that we are blessed simply if we hear and if we read. This is not to suggest that we should not study God's prophetic word; of course, we should. All Scripture is given for our edification and our inspiration ([II Timothy 3:16](#)). It is all inspired for that purpose. However, we are to read or hear and to keep.

What do we keep? Do we keep predictions about horsemen and beasts? How does one do that? What we are to keep are those commands that are liberally sprinkled throughout the word of prophecy—in the [book of Revelation](#) and in the prophetic sections of the gospels and epistles, as well as in the prophecies of the [Old Testament](#). For instance, the [letters to the seven churches](#) in Revelation 2 and 3 contain several commands to [repent](#) and repeated commands to overcome.

The prophetic word is not just a collection of mind puzzles that we are somehow supposed to unravel. God's prophecies are not that at all, but they

are calls for change. They are calls for our growth. Remember, the blessing comes to those who keep, who do what God commands whether or not we understand the details of the prophecy.

God is faithful. A Christian reading this passage a thousand years ago, who had no idea of what we know of history or of the technology that we understand now, could receive the blessing through obedience, just as we can. Again, knowing is not the issue, but obedience is.

The word "keep" is a command that appears ten times in the book of Revelation. It is the same word that is translated in [John 14:15](#), "If you [love](#) Me, keep My commandments." We will notice just a few of its appearances. The first three are written to three of the seven churches: Thyatira, Sardis, and Philadelphia, respectively:

- » [Revelation 2:26](#): ". . . keeps My works until the end. . . ."
- » [Revelation 3:3](#): ". . . hold fast and repent. . . ." [Here, "hold fast" is the same Greek word as "to keep" in the other examples.]
- » [Revelation 3:8](#): ". . . have kept My word. . . ."
- » [Revelation 12:17](#): ". . . who keep the commandments of God. . . ." [This is written to the remnant of the seed, that is, to God's elect.]

As we can see, God has sprinkled this command to "keep" all over the prophecies of Revelation.

— Charles Whitaker

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