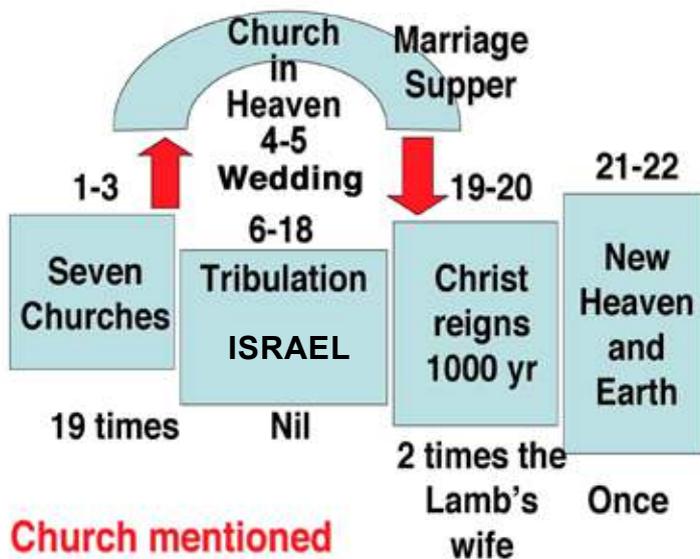
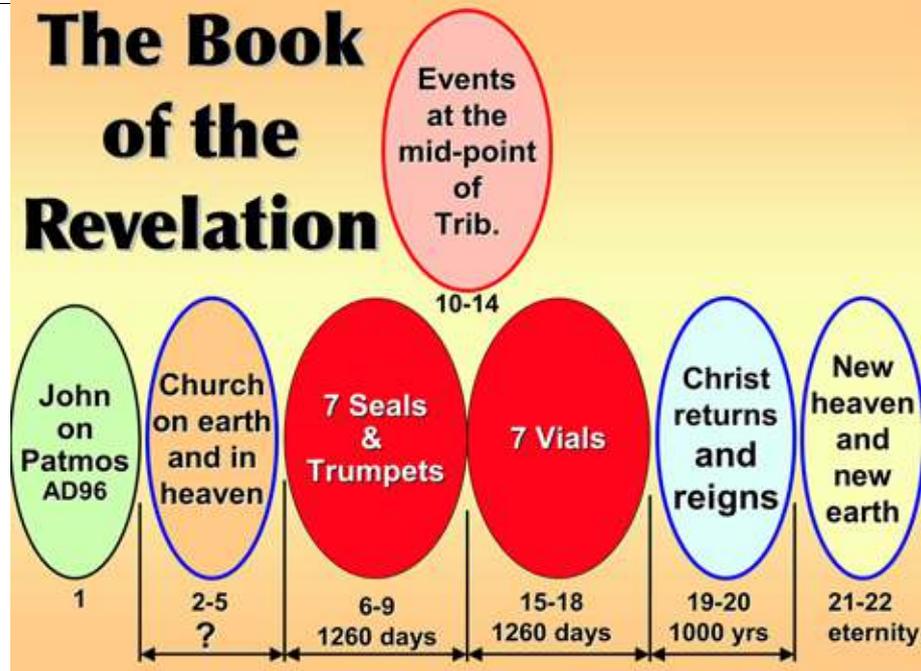


# The Book of the Revelation



# Overview of the Revelation

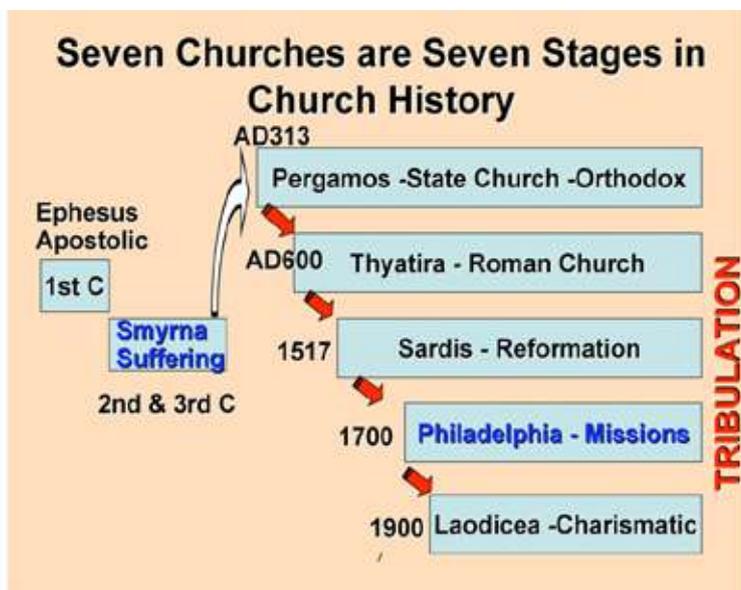
John Ecob

The Book of the Revelation is a chronological outline of God's prophetic program from the beginning of the Church age to eternity.

## The Church Age - Chapters 2 & 3

Chapters 1 to 3 describe Christendom as 7 golden candlesticks and the Lord Jesus, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, viewing the testimony of the seven stages of Christendom from the days of the Apostles to the Rapture. The saved remnant within Christendom is described as "overcomers" in each stage of Church history.

**Ephesus** is the Apostolic era; **Smyrna** is the period of 10 Pagan Persecutions; **Pergamos** represents the State Church beginning with Constantine (AD 313); **Thyatira** began with Pope Gregory and the Papacy (AD590) and goes into the Tribulation; **Sardis** is the Reformation Church (1516); **Philadelphia** is the great Missionary Church of the 18th and 19th centuries and **Laodicea** is the Charismatic / Ecumenical Church beginning in the 20th century.



## The Rapture of the Church - Chapters 4 & 5

This Church Age concludes with the **Rapture of the True Church** in chapters 4 and 5 where John foresees himself caught up through the open door into heaven.

*“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1Thess.4:16-17).*



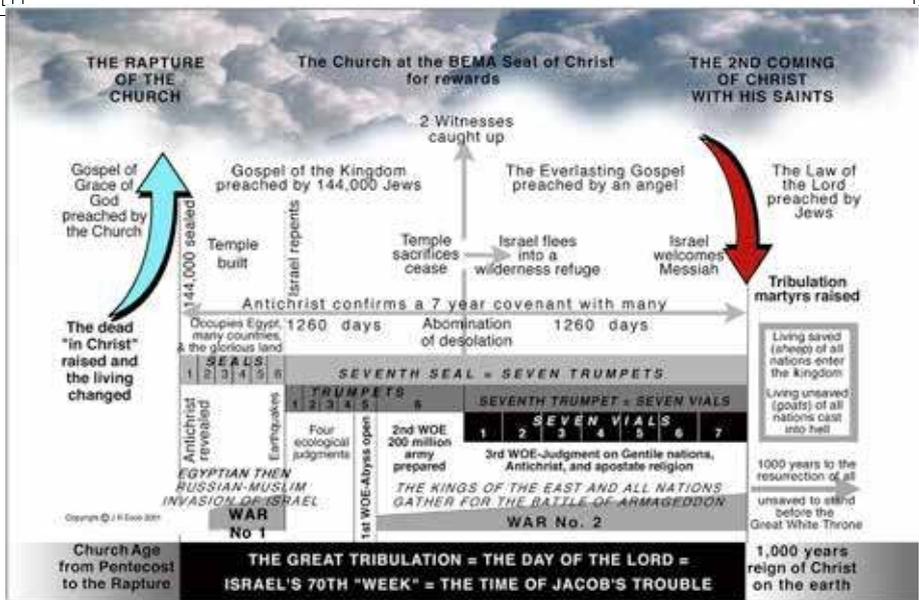
*“the day of the Lord (the Tribulation) so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief... **God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation (Rapture) by our Lord Jesus Christ” (1Thess.5:2-9).***

### **The Day of the Lord or The Tribulation - Chapters 6 to 18**

From chapter 6 to chapter 18 the **Great Tribulation** is described in detail. It is a period of 7 years.

The **first half of the 7 years of Great Tribulation** is seen in chapters 6 to 9; events occurring at the **mid-point** are seen in chapters 10 to 14; and the **second half** (42 months) is the period when Satan empowers Antichrist and the vial judgments are poured out.

During the first half of the 7 years **Israel turns to the Lord** and is persecuted by Antichrist in the 2nd half of the Tribulation.



## *The Second Coming of Christ - Chapter 19*

Chapter 19 gives a vivid description of **Christ coming WITH His bride**, the Church, and the marriage supper of the Lamb follows on earth.

*“And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude...saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready...Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb” (Rev.19:6-9).*

If the Bride (the Church) comes WITH Christ and has made herself ready for the marriage supper of the Lamb then she must have been gathered to Him beforehand. In fact the marriage must have **already taken place in heaven** for the marriage supper always follows the wedding. According to Jewish custom the marriage took 7 days after which the guests joined in the festivities.

All the armies of heaven follow the Lord including millions of angels and *“all the saints”* from every age (Zech.14:5). When Christ returns He is met by an army demonically mobilized by Antichrist from all the kings of the earth for the final battle known as Armageddon.

Antichrist and his armies are smitten and cast into the lake of fire and Satan is bound for 1,000 years in the Abyss (Bottomless Pit). Finally, **Christ begins His universal reign** on the throne of David as King of kings over the whole earth.

### *The Millennial Kingdom - Chapter 20*

The millennial Kingdom is clearly indicated in chapter 20 where it is mentioned six times that the kingdom of Christ on earth is a period of 1,000 years.

- 1) Satan is bound in the bottomless pit for 1,000 years (Rev.20:2).
- 2) Satan is loosed at the conclusion of the 1,000 years (Rev.20:3,7).
- 3) The Tribulation martyrs are raised and reign with Christ for 1,000 years (Rev.20:4).
- 4) The remainder of the dead are raised at the conclusion of the 1,000 years (Rev.20:5).

At the end of the 1,000 years Satan is loosed from the Abyss to test the nations and he raises an army that encircles Jerusalem. Christ destroys Satan's army with fire from heaven and this is followed by the **resurrection to damnation** when the unsaved are raised and judged at the "*great white throne*" then cast into the lake of fire.

Those who deny that Christ will literally establish His Kingdom on earth for 1,000 years are called Amillennialists. The word A-millennialist means "no millennium" just as a-theist means "no God". These theologians deny any kingdom of Christ **on earth after His return** in glory and power.

How do Amillennialists interpret the 1,000 years? They selectively spiritualize the entire Book of the Revelation. Thus they can say that 1,000 years is just a symbolic way of saying "a long period of time" and represents Christ's kingdom on earth which they claim began when Christ came the first time. Thus they will tell us that we are in the millennium now and Christ is reigning over His Church which is His kingdom on earth.

To the Amillennialist all the prophecies given to Israel; of the Kingdom of Christ on earth in the Old Testament, must also be spiritualized. To do this they then make the extraordinary claim that Israel was the "church" in the Old Testament and that the nation of Israel has been replaced by the Church in the New Testament.

When it comes to the resurrections Amillennialists cannot accept that the Old Testament saints have already been raised with Christ, or that those who are *"in Christ"*, the Church, will be Raptured before the Tribulation, or that the Tribulation martyrs will be raised at the Lord's coming: their denial of a millennial kingdom after Christ returns has forced them into believing in a "general resurrection" of all the saved and unsaved when Christ returns.

If the 1,000 years in Revelation 20 is not a literal 1,000 years then how do they interpret **other periods** in the Revelation? We read that two prophets will testify for 1,260 **days** in the first half of the Tribulation; that Israel will be persecuted by Antichrist for the 1,260 **days** of the second half of the Tribulation while Antichrist reigns for 42 **months**.

These periods correspond with the 70th "week" of Daniel's prophecy (Dan.9:27) in which the **future Roman prince** (Antichrist) will interfere with Jewish sacrifices in the rebuilt Temple. They also correspond with the periods described as *"a time, times, and a half a time"*, or three and a half years, in Daniel chapters 7 and 12. To be consistent, these must be literal periods and therefore the 1,000 years must also be taken literally.

Amillennialists have no choice but to agree with a **literal interpretation of the first 69 "weeks"** of Daniel's prophecy (Dan.9:24-26) being **483 literal years** from the command to rebuild Jerusalem in the days of Nehemiah to "Messiah the Prince" because it **has already been fulfilled**, but they can't admit that the 70th "week" is to be literally fulfilled immediately preceding Christ's return.

The inconsistency of Amillennial teachers is apparent. Either the Bible means what it says or it is no different to the spooky writings of mystics that need a wild imagination in order to interpret it.

When taken literally the Book of Revelation is a clear chronological outline of all time from the early Church to eternity. It beautifully gathers up all the Bible prophecies to give a fitting conclusion to God's Word.

### *The Eternal New Heavens and Earth*

Chapters 21 and 22 follow with heaven on earth for all eternity. The millennial saints are given resurrection bodies (Rev.20:5) before the

earth is renovated with fire:

*“And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, **the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God**” (Rev.21:3).*

Earth will be the place of God’s throne in the Father’s house of many mansions, the heavenly Zion, where the Church is now dwelling in heaven (Rev.22:3). It will be transferred to the New Earth.

There will still be three classes of people in eternity: the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church of God.

The Church will dwell in the New Jerusalem, redeemed Israel around the City, and the Gentile *“nations of them that are saved”* will occupy the New Earth.

The names of the 12 Apostles will be inscribed in the foundations of the wall of the City (Rev.21:14). Paul says that the Church is *“built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets”* (Eph.2:20).

The names of the 12 Tribes of Israel will be inscribed on the 12 gates to the city indicating that redeemed Israel will be located close to the City just as they were throughout history.

The kings of the earth will *“bring their glory and honour into it”* (Rev.21:24-26).

Only 12 angels are seen on the New Earth around the New Jerusalem; one at each of the 12 gates (Rev.21:12). The remainder no doubt will be in heaven where they have been since their creation. Angels have been *“ministering spirits”* and they will no doubt continue in that role serving Almighty God.

The occupation of all the saints will be to serve God in ways yet undefined. All we are told is: *“his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads”* (Rev.22:3-4).

Eternity will be anything but boring for God has said, *“Behold, I make all things new”* (Rev.21:5). We cannot hope to imagine what God has in store for those that love God. All we know is that if we suffer for Him we shall also reign with Him!