

John to the Seven Churches of Asia Minor (from Patmos)

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The Apostle John and the Book of Revelation

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Archaeology and the Seven Churches of the Revelation



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The author is identified in verse one: “John, who bore witness to the Word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ.” The author identifies himself as John in several other places as well (1:4, 9; 22:8). This is almost certainly John the Apostle. John was known to be ministering in Asia Minor and associated with the churches there, some of whom are addressed in the book. External evidence also points to John the Apostle’s authorship.

Early church figures like Justin Martyr ascribed to John the writing of the book of Revelation. It was only in the mid-third century that another author was proposed, that being John the Elder (an obscure figure in the early church). Dionysius argued that Revelation’s drastically **different vocabulary and style** from the Gospel of John and his epistles made it unlikely John the Apostle was the author of Revelation. However, even Dionysius was forced to admit that there was **little evidence for the very existence of John the Presbyter**, let alone that he had written a book of the Bible.

The **difference in style and vocabulary is easily explained if it is kept in mind that Revelation is a completely different kind of work than the Gospel of John or John’s letters**. It is not very surprising that John would use different words attempting to explain all the fantastic things being shown to him in contrast to what he would use to describe the life and teachings of Jesus or concerns about false teachers coming into the church.

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John dictating the Revelation
given to him from Jesus

This book is generally known by two names, “The Apocalypse of John” and “Revelation” (or shorthanded as Revelation). Both these names convey the same thing, that is, the book is an account of what was **revealed to John concerning the last days**. The book is the **Revelation of Jesus (through an angel) to John, rather than John’s Revelation to the Church**.

This word is used eighteen times in the NT. It means to “uncover, reveal.” It can be used in the sense of revealing truth, or revealing a thing or person, such as the glory of the “Anointed One,” the Lord Himself or the children of God.

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Date of the Book

There are two popular dates ascribed to the writing of Revelation, an “**early**” date before A.D. 70 (probably in the mid 60’s), and a “**late**” date of around A.D. 95.

The early date view rests largely on internal evidence, with the only external source being a Syriac version of the New Testament (ca. 550), and seeing events occurring before and just after 70 as being described in Revelation. Early date proponents date the book before A.D. 70, largely on internal evidence, and believe the events portrayed in Revelation as relating to those occurring before, and just after, A.D. 70. **Early date proponents** argue that references to “**the temple of God**” and “**the altar**” in Revelation (11:1) meant that **Jerusalem had not yet been destroyed**. They also point to John’s description of the healing of the beast in Rev. 13, arguing that it agrees with a popular myth that the persecuting emperor Nero would come back from the dead.

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Date of the Book

The **late date of circa A.D. 95**, is supported both by **external evidence and internal evidence**. Two of the most important witnesses to the Apocalypse being written in the time of the emperor Domitian are **Hegesippus (ca. A.D. 150)**, viewed often as the “Father of Church History,” (Eusebius probably depended on him) and **Irenaeus (ca. A.D. 120-202)**, probably deserving the title as the first theologian of the patristic period.

Additional early church fathers, and sources, are Publius Papinius Statius (ca. A.D. 92), Clement of Alexandria (ca. A.D. 150-215), Tertullian (ca. A.D. 160-220), The Muratorian Canon (ca. A.D. 170), Origen (A.D. 185-253), Dio Cassius (A.D. 150-235), Victorinus (d. A.D. 304), Eusebius (ca. A.D. 260-340), Epiphanius (ca. A.D. 380), Jerome (ca. A.D. 340-419), Sulpicius Severus (ca. A.D. 400), and Orosius (ca. A.D. 420).

The Apostle John and the Book of Revelation

Key Figures of the Book

John

John is shown in Revelation as one **mediating the revelation** given to him, as a servant conveying the message.

Jesus

Revelation is the only place outside of the Gospels (and a few statements in Acts and the epistles) where Jesus speaks. **Unlike the Gospels, in Revelation Jesus is a conquering warrior king** who brings **judgment and punishment, similar to what He spoke before the High Priest at His illegal trial before the Sanhedrin**, “Again the high priest asked him, ‘Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One? And Jesus said, ‘I am, and **you will see the Son of Man** seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.’” (Mark 14:62)

Satan

Much of what we know about Satan comes from Revelation. Before the creation of the material universe, **Satan rebelled against God and “made war” on Him**. He is defeated and banished from heaven. His pursuance of the People of God is shown in graphic detail in Revelation, as well as his end, his destruction.

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Message of the Book

The **message of Revelation is of perseverance, of overcoming**. John admonishes Christians of all Christian until the coming of Jesus to **continue on** (Rev 22:17-21), even in **the face of all kinds of evil persecution**, because eventually evil will be overthrown and those who endure and overcome will be rewarded.

While John was exiled on the island of Patmos, he was visited by the glorified Jesus, who commanded him “what you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia” (1:11). From what follows, it is clear Jesus Himself had seen problems in those churches and wanted to address them. However, the problems He saw are present in every church, so in a sense, Revelation has some application for all churches everywhere, at all times.

17 The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.

18 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, 19 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.

20 He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming soon.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.

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Outline of the Book

- I. Introduction: “Therefore write the things which you have seen, [1:1-18]”**
 - A. Prologue (1:1-3)**
 - B. Greeting and Praise (1:4-8)**
 - C. Introduction of John, the Son of Man, and the Seven Churches (1:9-20)**
- II. Letters to the Seven Churches: and the things which are, [1:19—3: 22]**
 - A. Letter to Ephesus (2:1-7)**
 - B. Letter to Smyrna (2:8-11)**
 - C. Letter to Pergamos (2:12-17)**
 - D. Letter to Thyatira (2:18-29)**
 - E. Letter to Sardis (3:1-6)**
 - F. Letter to Philadelphia (3:7-13)**
 - G. Letter to Laodicea (3:14-22)**

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Outline of the Book

III. Visions of the End Times: and the things which will take place after these things. [4:1—22:5]

A. Scrolls and Bowls 4:1—16:21

- 1. The Throne Room (4:1-5:14)*
- 2. The Seven Scrolls (6:1-8:1)*
- 3. The Seven Trumpets of Judgment (8:2-9:21)*
 - a. Incense as the Prayers of the Saints (8:2-6)*
 - b. Trumpets 1-6 (8:7-9:21)*
 - c. The Little Book (10:1-11)*

B. The Measuring Rod and The Two Witnesses (11:1-14)

C. The Seventh Trumpet Sounds (11:15-19)

- 4. Satan, the Woman and the Child (12:1-17)*
- 5. The Beasts (13:1-18)*
- 6. The Lamb, 144,000, Preaching Angels and Reapers (14:1-20)*
- 7. The Seven Bowls of God's Wrath (15:1-16:21)*

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Outline of the Book

D. Rebellions and Kingdoms 17:1—22:5

- 1. The Woman and the Beast (17:1-19:10)***
- 2. The Battle Between Christ and the Forces of Satan (19:17-20:3)***
- 3. The Millennium, Rebellion and Battle (20:4-10)***
- 4. The Great White Throne Judgment (20:11-15)***
- 5. New Heaven, Earth and Jerusalem (21:1-22:5)***

IV. Conclusion [22:6-21]

- A. Instructions for Believers (22:6-17)**
- B. Warning (22:18-19)**
- C. Benediction (22:20-21)**

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The Text of the Revelation 1:1—3:22

- “1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated *it* by His angel to His bond-servant John, 2 who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, *even* to all that he saw. 3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.
- 4 John to the **seven churches** that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, 5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood — 6 and He has made us *to be* a kingdom, priests to His God and Father — to Him *be* the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. 7 BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen.

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The Text of the Revelation 1:1—3:22

- 8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”
- 9 I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance *which are* in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. 10 I was in the Spirit on the **Lord’s Day**, and I heard behind me a loud voice like *the sound* of a trumpet, 11 saying, “Write in a book what you see, and send *it* to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.”
- 12 Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; 13 and in the middle of the lampstands *I saw* one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. 14 His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. 15 His feet *were* like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice *was* like the sound of many waters. 16 In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.

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Introduction to the Seven Churches

17 When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, “Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, 18 and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.

19 “Therefore write the things which you *have seen*, and the things *which are*, and the things which will take place *after these things*.

1:20 “As for the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.” (Rev 1:1–20 NAS95)

The seven churches are first introduced in 1:4 whereby John addresses the *Book of Revelation* to them (1:11). Described as the “*seven lampstands*” in 1:20, these real churches, namely, Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, are located in the Roman province of Asia Minor (modern southwestern Turkey). In chapters 2-3 a letter is specifically written to each of them, dictated to the apostle John from Jesus Christ (e.g., Rev.

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Introduction to the Seven Churches

2:1). Each letter addresses their spiritual conditions. For example, the church at Ephesus is commended for its rejection of evil, its endurance, patience, and doctrinal vigilance. But this church is rebuked for serving God out of orthodoxy, not passionate *agape*-love (cf. Matt. 10:37; Mark 12:28-34). In fact, an examination into each letter reveals a **general outline used for all: (1) self-description of Christ** which is most apropos to the church's situation (cf. drawn from *Revelation* 1:12-20), **(2) commendation, (3) criticism, (4) correction, (5) consequence of disobedience, and (6) a promise or incentive for obedience.**



Interpretative Constructs of the Book

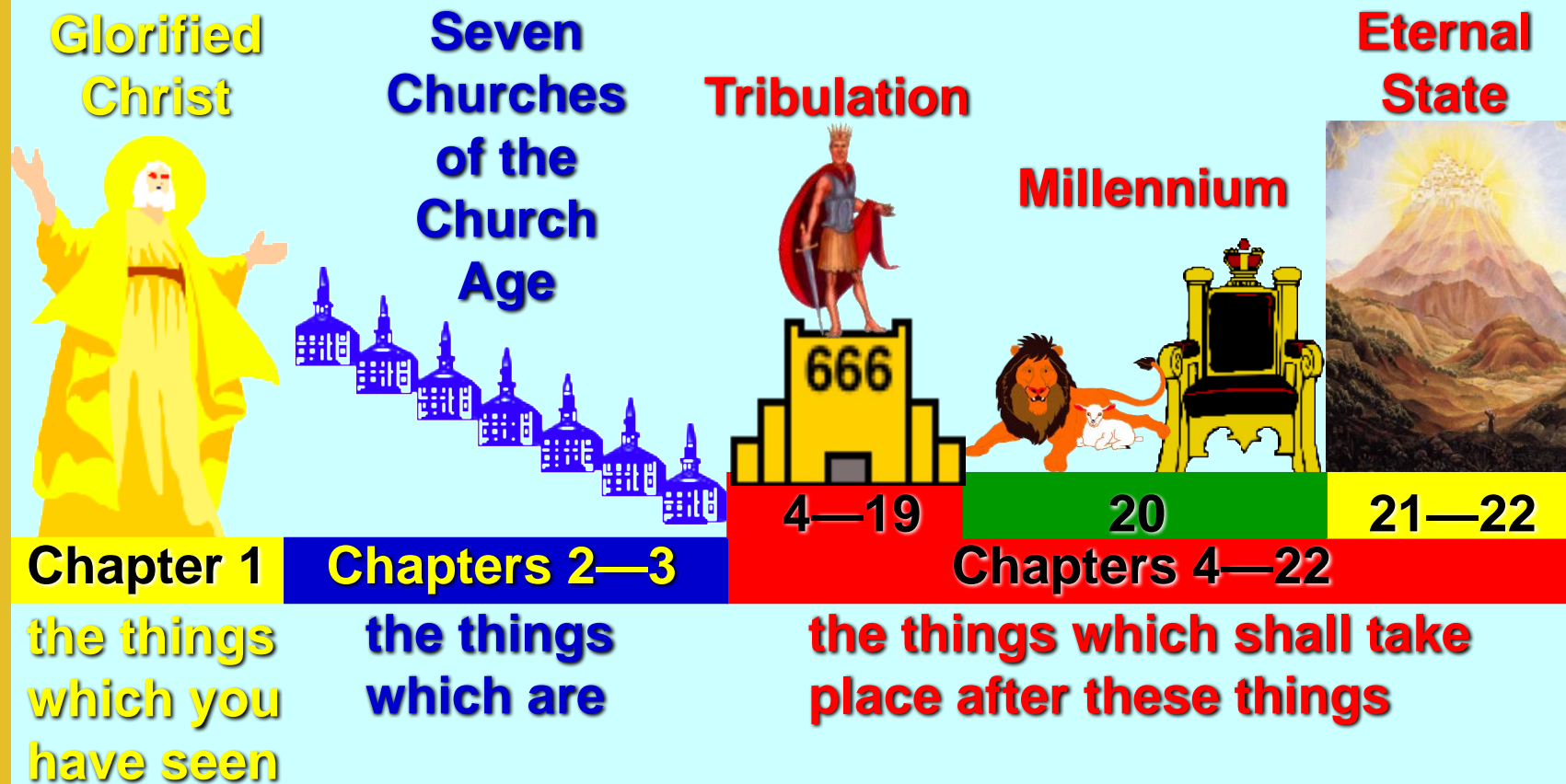
	1–3	4–19	20–22
Preterist	Historic churches	Symbolic of contemporary conditions	Symbolic of heaven and victory
Idealist	Historic churches	Symbolic of conflict of good and evil	Victory of good
Historicist	Historic churches	Symbolic of events of history: fall of Rome, Mohammedanism, papacy, Reformation	Final judgment, millennium (?), eternal state
Futurist	Historic churches and/or seven stages of church history	Future tribulation; concentrated judgments on world and on antichrist; coming of Christ	Millennial kingdom; judgment of wicked dead; eternal state

An Overview of the Church Age?

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OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

**“Write therefore the things which you have seen,
the things which are,
the things which shall take place after these things.”
— Revelation 1:19 —**



An Overview of the Church Age?

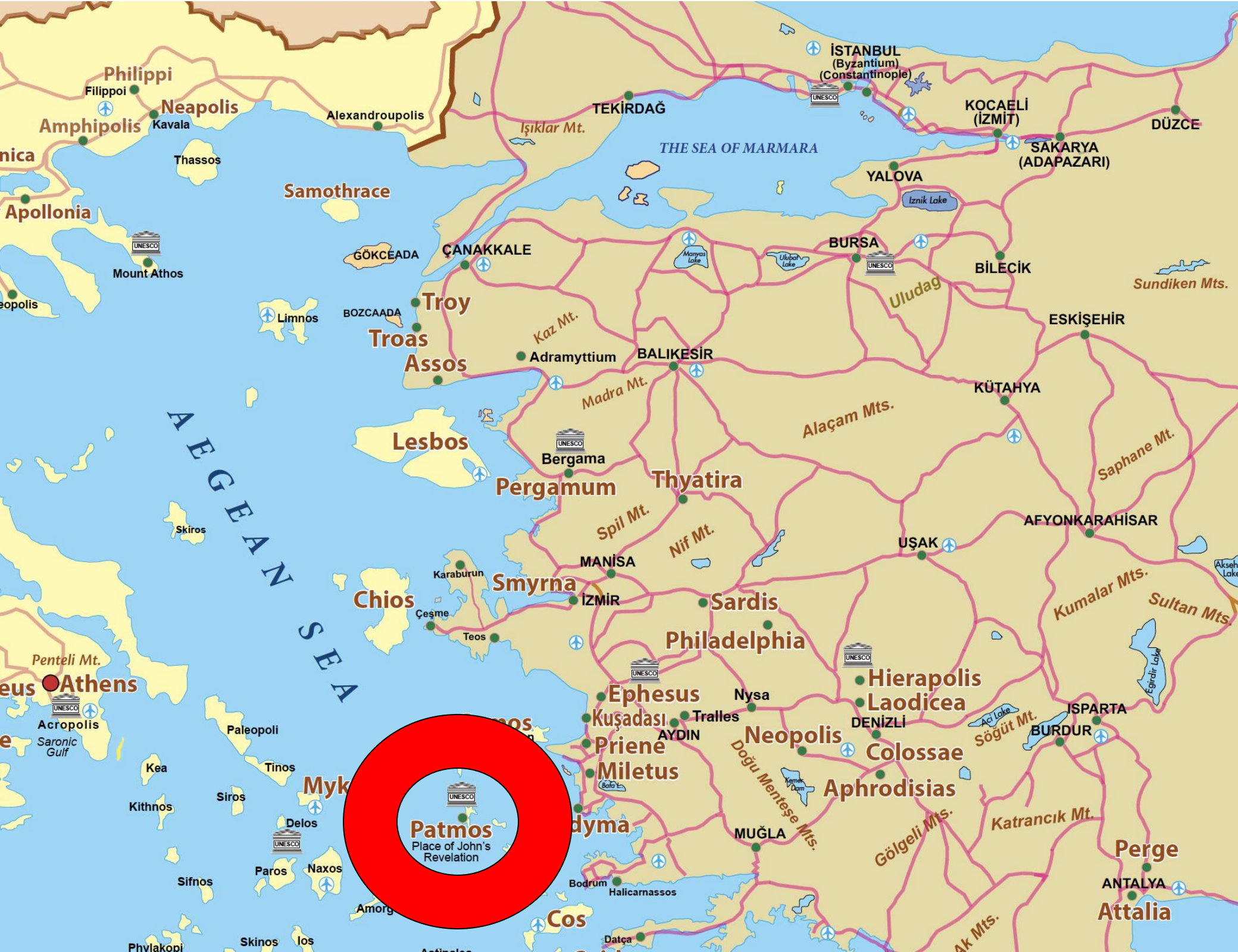
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Letter to the Churches

Seven Churches of Asia Minor





Patmos
Place of John's Revelation

Seven Churches of Asia Minor

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The order of the churches in the book of Revelation coincides with order on the map—a circular letter.

Ephesus

Smyrna

Pergamum

Thyatira

Sardis

Philadelphia

Laodicea



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THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF REVELATION AND PATMOS

A Biblical Study Tour

OCTOBER 17- 30, 2025



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Letter 1: Church at Ephesus

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Rev. 2:1-7 Church in Ephesus (site study) – The Loveless Church

“To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: ‘The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands.

“‘I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false. I know *you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary*. But I have this against you, that *you have abandoned the love you had at first*. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.’

Biblical Archaeology and the Church at Ephesus

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Biblical Archaeology the Church at Ephesus

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Archaeology and the Bible Church: Church at Ephesus

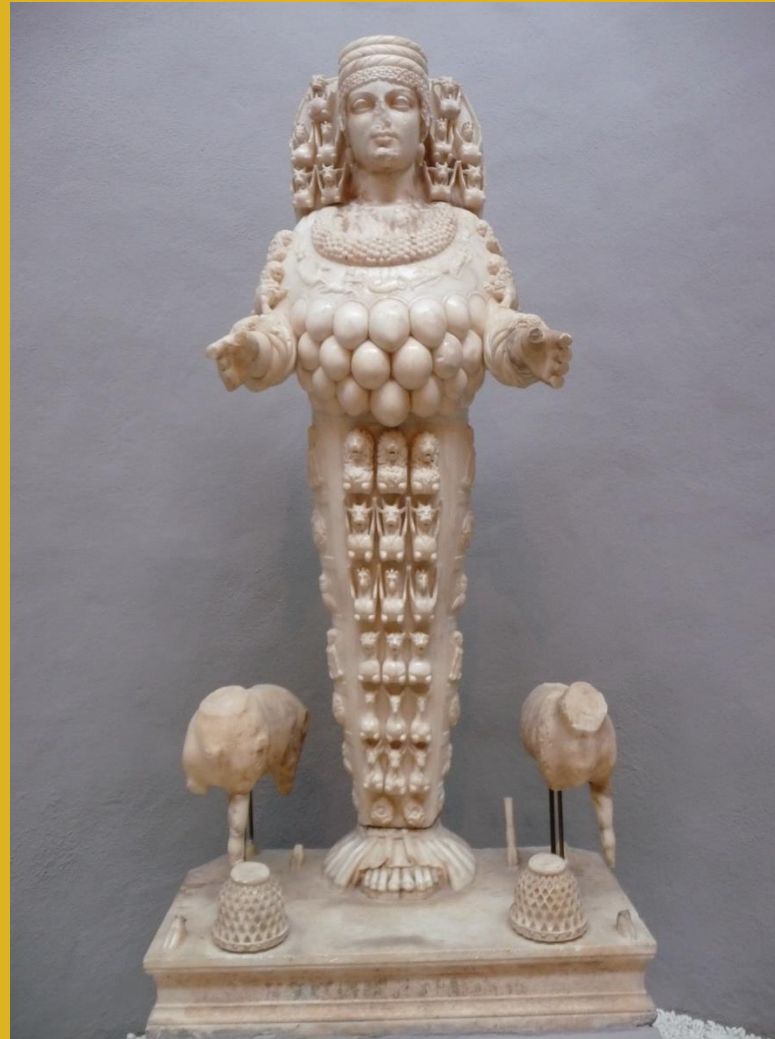
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Biblical Archaeology the Early Church



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Archaeology and the Bible

Church: Church at Ephesus

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Archaeology and the Bible Church: Church at Ephesus

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Letter 2: Church at Smyrna

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Rev. 2:8-11 Smyrna (Site Study) – The Persecuted Church

“And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: ‘The words of the first and the last, who died and came to life.

“‘I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and *the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan*. Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. *Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life*. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.’

Archaeology and the Church at Smyrna

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Archaeology and the Church at Smyrna

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Archaeology and the Bible

Church: Church at Smyrna

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Letter 3: Church at Pergamum

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Rev. 2:12-17 Pergamon (Site Study) – The Compromising Church

2:12 “And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: ‘The words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword.

13 “‘I know where *you dwell, where Satan's throne is*. Yet *you hold fast my name*, and you *did not deny my faith* even in the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. 14 But I have a *few things against you*: you have some there who hold the *teaching of Balaam*, who *taught Balak to put a stumbling block* before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality (Num 22-25). 15 So also you have some who *hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans*. 16 Therefore repent. If not, I will *come to you soon and war against them* with the sword of my mouth. 17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.’

The Nicolaitans had apparently demised by the time of the writing of the Revelation in the last portion of the first century A.D. They were given to sexual immorality and various doctrinal errors, apparently.

Archaeology and the Church at Pergamum

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Temple to Trajan, and Maybe one to Augustus



Archaeology and the Church at Pergamum

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Archaeology and the Church at Pergamum

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Archaeology and the Pergamum

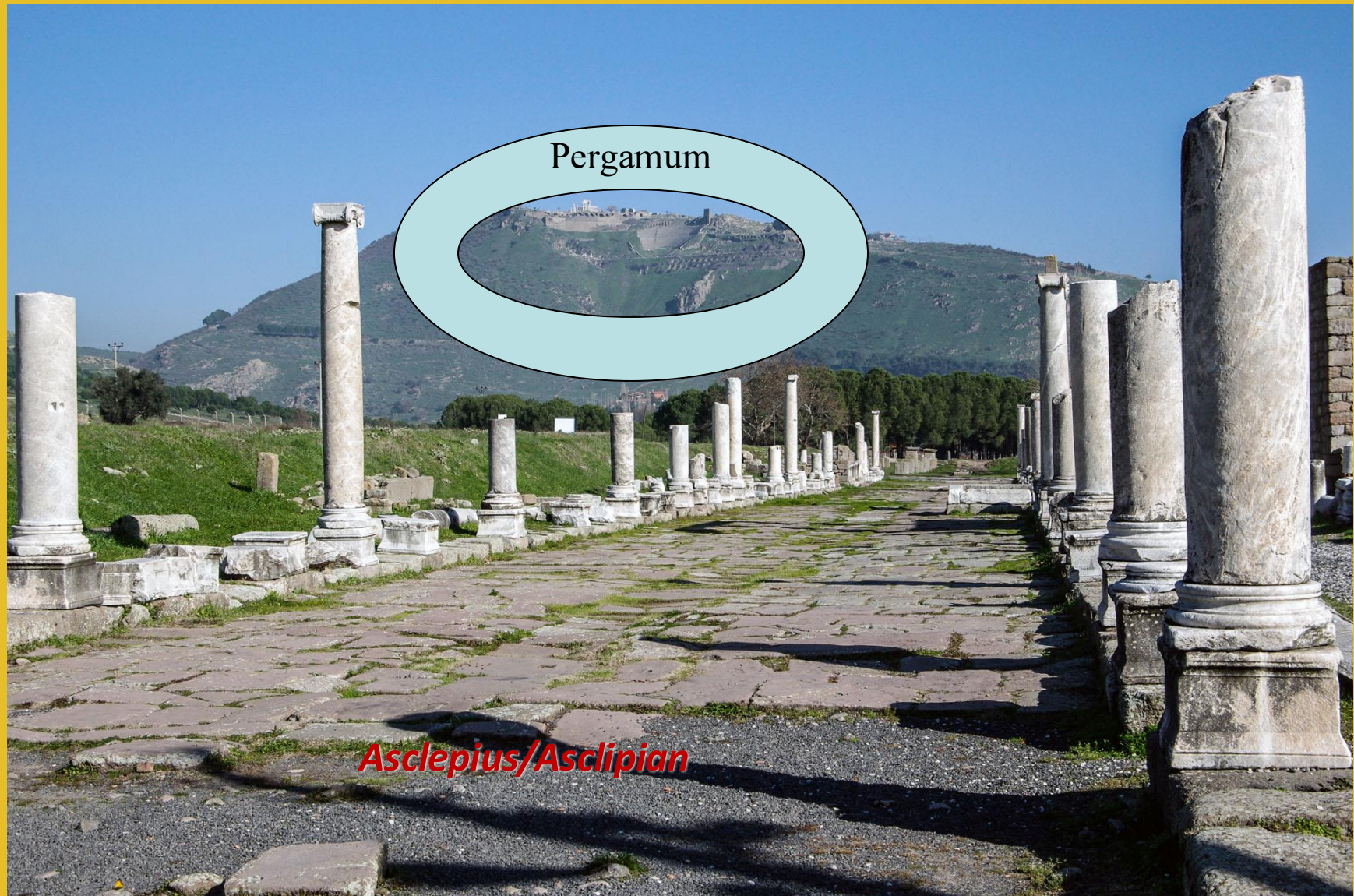
Church at

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Archaeology and the Church at Pergamum

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Former Location of Temple to Zeus



Archaeology and the Church at Pergamum

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Temple to Zeus



Letter 4: Church at Thyatira

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Rev. 2:18-29 Thyatira (Site Study) – The Corrupt Church

2:18 “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write,

‘These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass: 19 “I *know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience*; and as for your works, the last are more than the first. 20 Nevertheless I have a *few things against you*, because you allow that *woman Jezebel*, [1 Kgs 16:31-33] who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and *seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols*. 21 And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. 22 Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. 23 I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.

The reference to the woman **Jezebel** relates to **1 Kings 16:31-33**:

“And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him. 32 Then he *set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal*, which he had built in Samaria. 33 And Ahab made a wooden image. Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him.”

Letter to Church at Thyatira, cont'd

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Rev. 2:18-29 Thyatira (Site Study) – The Corrupt Church cont'd

24 “Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as **many as do not have this doctrine**, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, **I will put on you no other burden.** 25 But hold fast what you have till I come. 26 And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—

27 “He shall rule them with a rod of iron;

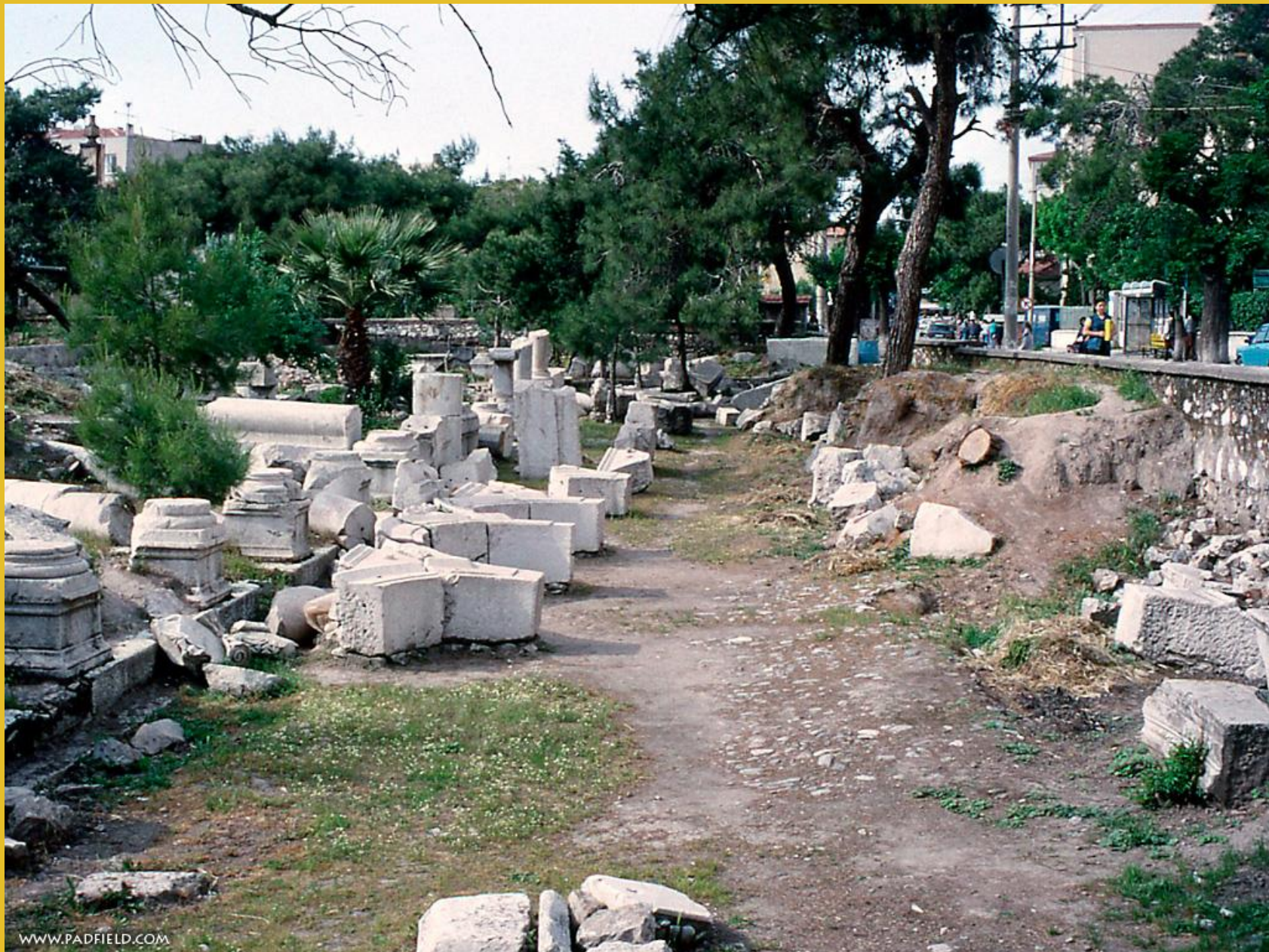
They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels’—as I also have received from My Father;

28 and I will give him the morning star.

29 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’

Archaeology and the Church at Thyatira

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Archaeology and the Church at Thyatira

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Letter 5: Church at Sardis

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Rev. 3:1-6 Sardis (Site Study) – The Dead Church

3:1 “And to the angel of the church in Sardis write,

“These things says He who has the *seven Spirits of God and the seven stars*: ‘I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. 2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for *I have not found your works perfect before God*. 3 Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, *I will come upon you as a thief*, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. 4 You have a *few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments*; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. 5 He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

6 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’

Isaiah 11:2 speaks about the "seven spirits" of God. This passage may relate to the the Isaiah passage and thus describes the Messiah as being endowed with the **Spirit of the Lord, wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, and the fear of the Lord**. These are often interpreted as representing the sevenfold ministry of the Spirit.

Archaeology and the Church at Sardis

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Artemis (Diana)



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Archaeology and the Bible

Church: Church at Sardis

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Temple to Artemis (Diana)



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Temple to Artemis (Diana)



Archaeology and the Bible

Church: Church at Philadelphia

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Rev. 3:7-13 Philadelphia (Site Study) – *The Faithful Church*

3:7 “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write,

“These things says He who is holy, He who is true, ‘He who has the **key of David**, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens’: 8 “I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. 9 Indeed I will make those of the *synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not*, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. 10 Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will *keep you from the hour of trial* which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. 11 Behold, I am *coming quickly*! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. *He who overcomes*, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.

13 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’

Letter 6: Church at Philadelphia

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Church: Church at Philadelphia

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Archaeology and the Bible

Church: Church at Laodicea

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Rev. 3:14-22 Laodicea (Site Study) – The **Lukewarm Church**

3:14 “And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write,

‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the **Beginning of the creation of God**: 15 “I know your works, that you are **neither cold nor hot**. I could wish **you were cold or hot**. 16 So then, **because you are lukewarm**, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. 17 Because you say, “I am *rich*, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—*and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked*— 18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and *white garments*, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and *anoint your eyes with eye salve*, that you may see. 19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. 20 , I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, *I will come in to him and dine with him*, and he with Me. 21 To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

22 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’ ’ ”

Letter 7: Church at Philadelphia

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Hierapolis (Pamukkale)



Archaeology and the Bible

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Colossae



Rev. 4:1—22:32 The Rest of the Book

Rev. 4:1—22:21 The Rest of the Book

“*After these things* I looked, and behold, a door *standing* open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like *the sound* of a trumpet speaking with me, said, “**Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things.**”” (Rev 4:1 NAS95)

Significant Theology of the Book

Eschatology

Revelation is, at heart, a **book about the end times**. Although some see it as recounting the distant past (from our vantage point), the best interpretation of it is that it describes events surrounding the end of time. Revelation tells the end of the story – that God ultimately triumphs. Even as **many times in the Old Testament**, including the **first prophecy** of the Deliverer in Genesis 3:15, and the time of Abraham (Gen 12), in which **events far into the future** are predicted (2 Pet 3:1b-14), so the Revelation of John speaks of events, though not likely known to John, that would transpire **many centuries after the prophecies**; yet they are beneficial for the current people of God (2 Pet 3:11-13).

One must remember in approaching the Revelation of John, that it is patterned after another **apocalyptic-prophetic book** that included a **combination of historical narrative, predictions, angelic activity, and many symbols**. Though this is so, a number of future events become clear in the book, such as the rise and demise of future kingdoms, and even the presentation of the divine Son of Man, and the kingdom that would be established by Him.

Significant Theology of the Book

Distinction between Persecution and Tribulation

Dan 2:28 “But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days.”

Dan 7:13 “I was watching in the night visions,
And behold, **One like the Son of Man**,
Coming with the **clouds of heaven**!
He came to the Ancient of Days,
And they brought Him near before Him.

14 Then to Him was **given dominion and glory and a kingdom**,
That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him.
His dominion is an **everlasting dominion**,
Which shall not pass away,
And His kingdom the one
Which shall not be destroyed.

Significant Theology of the Book

Jesus the Messiah

In Revelation Jesus is shown as the **Glorified Son of Man** (1:12-16), the King of Kings and Lord of Lords (19:16) who rules the earth (20:4-6). Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension are also recounted (1:5; 12:5) and given as the means by which sinners are offered redemption and eternal life (22:14, 17).

Significant Theology of the Book

The “Soon” Coming of Jesus

One of the problems that one encounters in the Revelation is the reference to Jesus coming “soon.” If this is so, why did He not come during the period of the first century, or a few years thereafter? The problem is a misunderstanding of the word soon. Let us look at some examples in the Revelation first.

- 1) The events “must **shortly** (ταχύς) take place.” (1:1)
- 2) “For the time is *near*.” (ἐγγύς)(1:3)
- 3) “I am coming to you **quickly** (ταχύς).” (2:16)
- 4) “I am coming **quickly** (ταχύς).” (3:11)
- 5) “The third woe is coming **quickly** (ταχύς).” (11:14)
- 6) “The things which must **shortly** (ταχύς) take place.” (22:6)
- 7) “Behold, I am coming **quickly** (ταχύς).” (22:7)
- 8) “For the time is *near*.” (ἐγγύς) (22:10)
- 9) “Behold, I am coming **quickly** (ταχύς).” (22:12)
- 10) “Yes, I am coming (ταχύς) (22:20)

Significant Theology of the Book

The “Soon” Coming of Jesus

The word ταχύς is defined in BDAG as “*speed, quickness*.” The issue is whether the adverb is one of “*time*” or “*manner*”—“*when*” or “*how*.”

The Septuagint (LXX) uses ταχύς in texts that conservatively could not have occurred for hundreds, if not thousands of years.

For example,

Isaiah 13:22: “. . . her (Israel) fateful time also will *soon come*. . . .” This was written circa 700 B.C., foretelling of the destruction of Babylon in 539 B.C.

Isaiah 5:26 speaks of the *manner*, not the time frame, by which the Assyrian invasion of Israel “will come with speed *swiftly*.”

Isaiah 51:5 says, “My righteousness is *near*, My salvation has gone forth, and My arms will judge the peoples; the coastlands will wait for Me, and for My arm they will wait expectantly.”

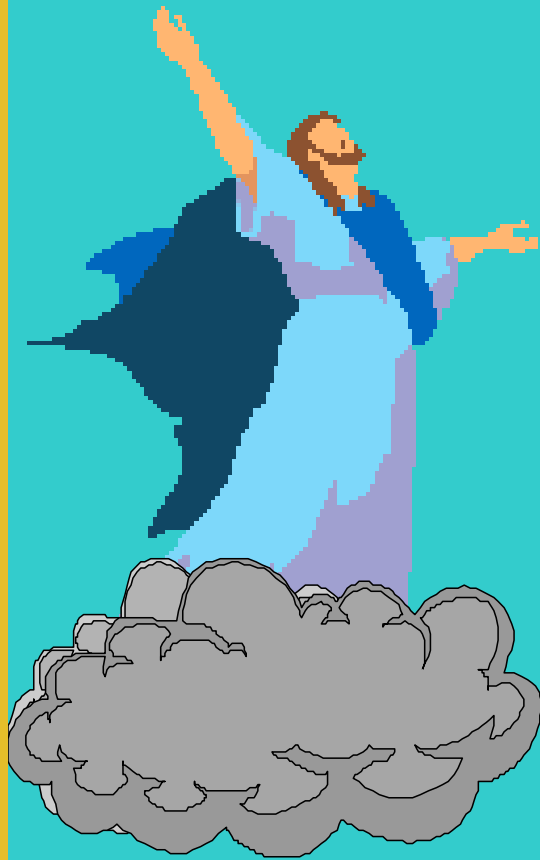
This passage *probably will be fulfilled in the millennium*, but no interpreter would place it sooner than **Christ's first coming**, at least 700 years after it was given.

Isaiah 58:8 speaks of Israel's recovery as “*speedily spring(ing) forth*.” If it is a “timing passage,” then the earliest it could have happened is 700 years later, but most likely it has yet to occur. Many other citations in the Septuagint from the *táchos* family can be noted in support of the futurist interpretation of the usage in Revelation.

The Apostle John and the Book of Revelation

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FUTURE THINGS

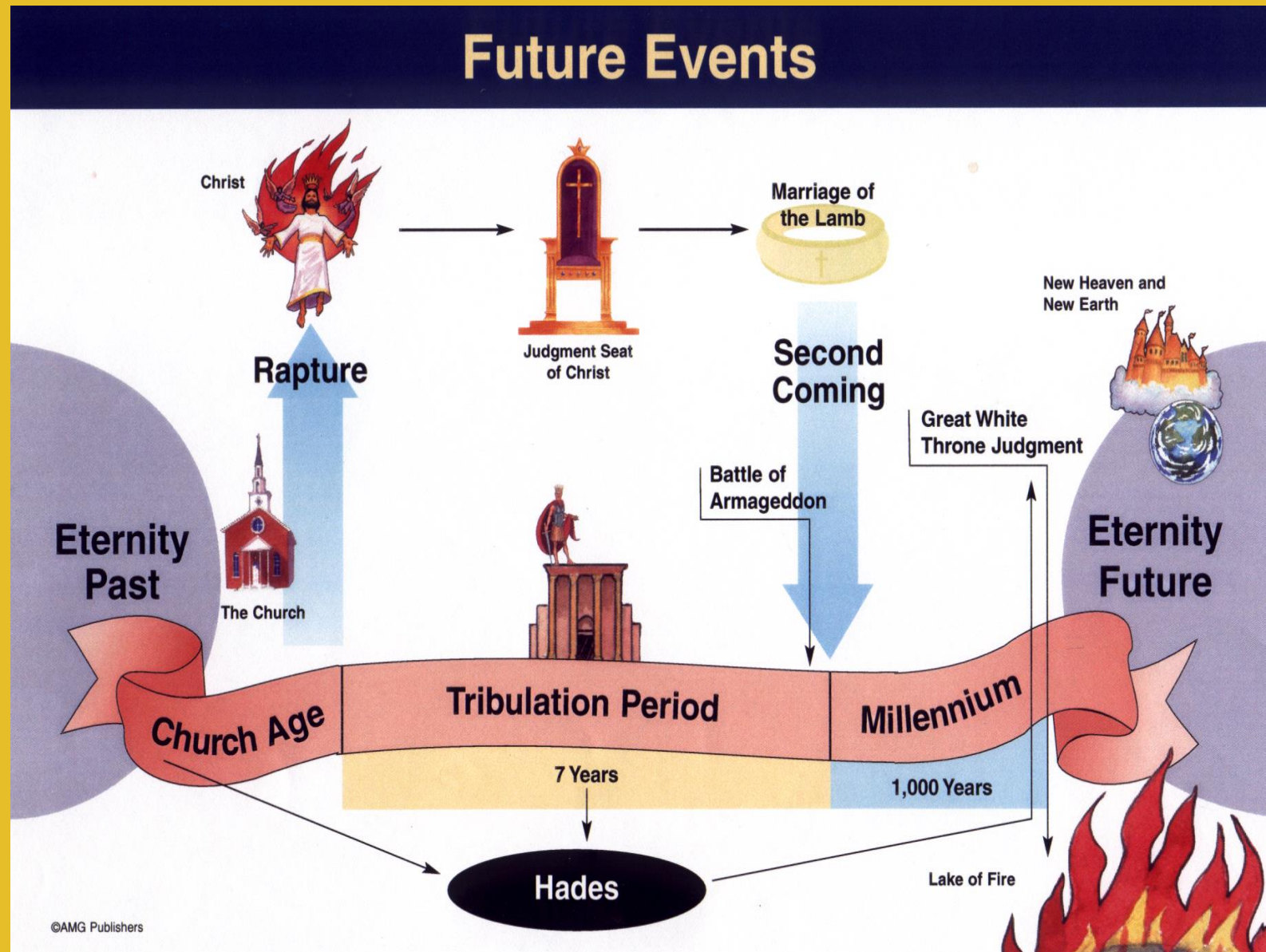


*After these things I looked,
and behold, a door standing
open in heaven, and the first
voice which I had heard, like
the sound of a trumpet
speaking with me, said,
“Come up here, and I will
show you what must take
place after these things.”*

—Revelation 4:1

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Interpretation of the Book

The book of the Revelation of Jesus the Messiah is different from any other book of the New Testament, though not different from portions of the New Testament such is found in Matthew 24 and Mark 13, or the teaching of Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5 and 2 Thessalonians 2, the teaching of Peter in 2 Peter 3, or major prophetic portions of the Old Testament, particularly the book of Daniel. The book is not merely an apocalyptic work. It has apocalyptic elements (primarily much symbolic and figurative language) but it is also a prophecy, and also includes historical accounts of the churches in Asia. The normal method of interpretation works well with the Revelation, as well as a very good familiarity with the Old Testament and the Gospel accounts. His imagery largely comes from these portions of the Bible, and elucidates the meaning of the text. The rule of thumb with all biblical interpretation, as well as other literature, is “when the Scripture makes sense, seek no other sense, lest it be nonsense.”

One should not avoid the book because it is a difficult book. St. **Dionysius of Alexandria** said that

The darkness of this book does not prevent one from being astonished at it. And even if I do not **understand everything** in it, that is only because of my **incapability**. I cannot be a judge of the truths which are contained in it or measure them with the **poverty of my mind**, being **guided more by faith** than by understanding. I find them only surpassing my understanding.

Interpretative Constructs of the Book

There are **primarily four ways in which the events of the Revelation have been understood through the centuries**, namely, the Preterist, Idealist, Historicist, and Futurist approaches. I will present these views by means of a chart that I included in my *Chronological and Background Charts of the New Testament*

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From a study of the book there are also four primary theological perspectives that have been developed, namely, Postmillennial or Preterist, Amillennial or Idealist, Premillennial, and Apocalyptic. The following chart from my charts book explains how the different theological methods understand the book:

H. Wayne House, "Interpretations of Revelation," *Chronological and Background Charts of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 152.

H. Wayne House and Randall Price, *Charts of Bible Prophecy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 88-158.

H. Wayne House, *Last Things: Four Views of Revelation* (Kindle)

Interpretative Constructs of the Book

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Theological Perspectives on Revelation			
	1–3	4–19	20–22
Postmillennial or Preterist	Historic churches	Generally historicist	Victory of Christianity over the world
Ammillennial or Idealist	Historic churches	Generally historicist	Coming of Christ; judgment; eternal state
Premillennial	Historic churches representative of historical stages	Generally futurist	Literal millennial reign; judgment of great white throne; New Jerusalem
Apocalyptic	Historic churches	Generally preterist	Symbolic of heaven and victory

H. Wayne House, “Theological Perspectives on Revelation,” *Chronological and Background Charts of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 152.

STOP