

"The Unveiling of Jesus Christ"

An Introduction to the Book of Revelation

Text: Revelation 1:1–3, 19



Introduction

The Book We Avoid

Few Christians name Revelation as their favorite book — it's the one we skip, leave to prophecy conferences, and fear because of dragons, bowls of wrath, and a beast with seven heads.

God Wants Us Studying this Book

This is the only book in the Bible that opens with a specific blessing promised to those who simply read it, hear it, and heed it. God wants us to study this book — not *intimidated*, *confused*, or *avoiding it*, but **blessed** by it.

A Promised Blessing

"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." (Rev 1:3)

A Premillennial Conviction

Revelation should be read according to its plain, normal sense — and when we do, we arrive at a premillennial understanding: Christ will return before He establishes a literal, earthly, thousand-year kingdom (Rev 20:1–6).

I. Revelation Calls Us to Submit to the Lord of History



"The Revelation of Jesus Christ"

Apokalypsis — an **unveiling**. Not a puzzle to be decoded, but a portrait of Jesus: His glory (ch. 1), His worthiness (ch. 5), His wrath (chs. 6–19), and His reign (chs. 20–22).

"Which God gave Him"

The chain of transmission: **God** → **Christ** → **angel** → **John** → **the churches** → us. This book is revelation, not human speculation.

"To show to His bond-servants"

God did not give this book to conceal but to show. The audience is not an elite class of mystics, but ordinary slaves of Christ — **every believer**.

"The things which must shortly take place"

"Must" (*dei*) = divine necessity. "Shortly" (*en tachei*) = swiftly, not necessarily immediately. Once the end begins, **it will unfold rapidly**.

- ❏ Come to this book the way John received it — **as a bond-servant**, not a detective. Your goal should not be to win an argument about the timeline, but to see Christ more clearly and submit to Him more fully.

II. Revelation Gives Hope to the Suffering Christian

A REAL SHEPHERD WRITING TO HIS FLOCK

John — The Last Apostle

John — the Apostle, author of the Fourth Gospel and three epistles — was an old man, the last surviving apostle, exiled to the island of Patmos **"because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus"** (1:9).

Irenaeus placed the writing of Revelation near the end of Domitian's reign, around **AD 95–96**. This means the churches of Revelation 2–3 were mature congregations — some cooling in their first love (2:4), some compromising with pagan culture (2:14–15, 20), some merely going through the motions (3:1–2, 15–16).

- ❏ Don't assume decades of church attendance immunize you from the drift these churches experienced. Maturity is a season for self-examination, not exemption from it.



II. Revelation Gives Hope to the Suffering Christian

A MOTIVATION TO FAITHFULNESS

The Pressure They Faced

The churches of Asia Minor faced the Roman imperial cult — burn incense and declare "Caesar is Lord," or face marginalization, economic hardship, or worse (cf. Antipas, "My faithful one, who was killed among you," 2:13).

God's Urgent Purpose

God sends a book with one urgent purpose: to unveil the risen, glorified Christ who is sovereign over history, so that His suffering people would remain faithful to the end.

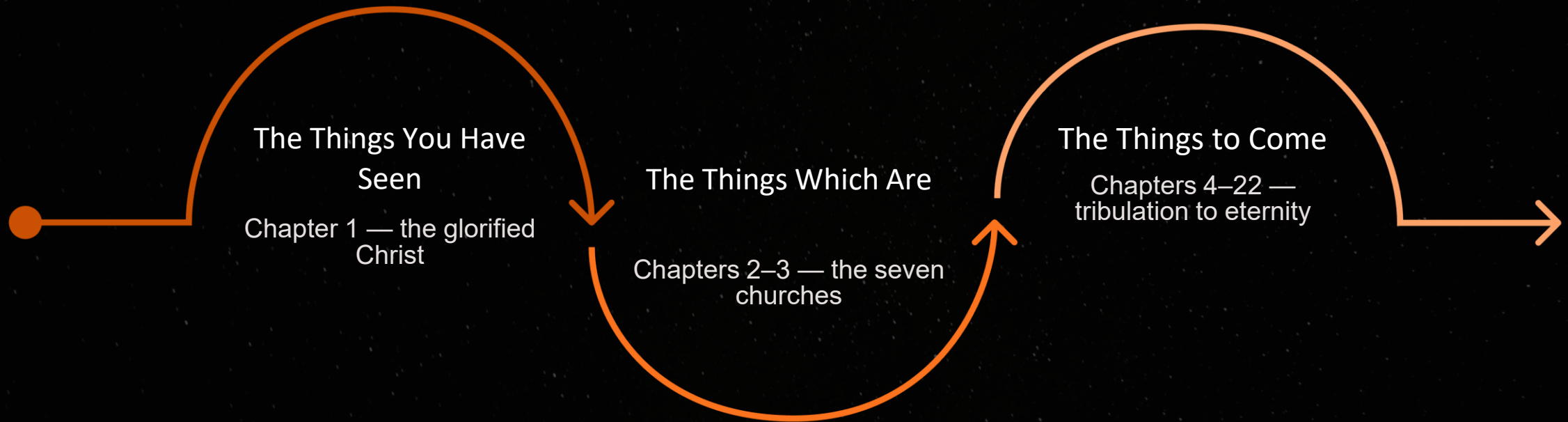
The Resounding Answer

Every plague, every judgment, every terrifying beast answers one question: *Is Jesus really in control? Will evil really be judged? Will faithfulness really be rewarded?* Revelation answers with a resounding **yes**.

📖 If you are facing pressure to compromise, let Revelation's original purpose reach you: God writes hope for exactly this kind of pressure. Don't let the fear of marginalization move you one inch off of faithfulness to Christ.

III. Revelation Unlocks the Keys to Eschatology

📖 A CLEAR STRUCTURE — OUR ROADMAP (V. 19)



📖 You are not wandering through a maze of random images — you are following a clearly marked path from where the church stands today, through what is still to come, to where it all ends: the kingdom and reign of Christ.

III. Revelation Unlocks the Keys to Eschatology

A CASE FOR PREMILLENNIALISM — LITERAL HERMENEUTICS



→ Interpret Literally

Revelation should be interpreted literally wherever the text and context allow, recognizing that it communicates literal truths through highly symbolic imagery. Symbols point to real, historical, future realities — not merely abstract ideas.

→ A Thousand Years — Six Times

Six times in Revelation 20, John tells us Christ and the martyred saints will reign for a thousand years (20:2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7). The burden of proof lies with those who would spiritualize away the number.

→ The Sequence

Tribulation → second coming → millennium → final judgment → eternity. This is the order in which John actually receives and records the visions, following the timeline Christ gave him in 1:19.

- Hold your eschatology with conviction, but hold your fellow believers with charity. Resist dismissing prophecy as unimportant speculation, and resist turning it into a test of fellowship.

IV. Revelation Will Spur Us on to Greater Obedience to Jesus

Revelation 1:2–3

"Who testified to the word of God"

John uses courtroom witness language. He is not spinning a fictional tale; he is bearing faithful testimony to what was actually shown to him.

"Blessed is he who reads and those who hear"

The first of seven beatitudes in Revelation (1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7; 22:14). Revelation stands in the line of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel as genuine predictive prophecy.

"And heed the things which are written in it"

The Greek *tereo* means to keep, guard, or obey. This book was meant to be obeyed — to reshape how God's people worship, endure suffering, resist compromise, and live in light of Christ's coming kingdom.

"For the time is near"

The appointed season of God's redemptive plan is near at hand. Every generation of believers is rightly called to live in readiness for the tribulation, return, and kingdom.

❏ Whatever obedience, reconciliation, or repentance you have been putting off "for later," let the nearness of the time move you to deal with it now — heeding, not just hearing, what this book calls you to.

Conclusion: Why Study Revelation?

01

A Promised Blessing

It is the one book that promises a blessing simply for engaging it (1:3). God attaches His favor to the simple act of taking this book seriously.

02

The Clearest Vision of Jesus

It gives you the clearest, highest vision of Jesus Christ in all the Bible — not primarily about the beast or a prophecy chart, but **"the Revelation of Jesus Christ"** (1:1).

03

History Is Going Somewhere

It anchors your hope in the certainty that history is going somewhere. God has already written the last chapter.

04

Self-Examination Before Speculation

It calls the church to self-examination before it ever calls us to speculation — Christ examines seven real churches before the throne room, the seals, or the millennium (chs. 2–3).

05

Urgency and Endurance

It fuels urgency for the lost and endurance for the suffering. Whatever we face today is light and momentary compared to the glory that is coming.

Why We Don't Need to Be Afraid of This Book

Revelation was written for ordinary believers in ordinary churches — people not so different from us — to strengthen their faith, purify their worship, and fix their hope on the return and reign of Jesus Christ.

This is why we don't need to be afraid of this book, or leave it to specialists and chart-makers. **It was written for us.**

