

Student Notes

Understanding the book of Revelation



What the book of Revelation really says.

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Student Notes

UNDERSTANDING THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Course outline.

Before the course read through the whole of Revelation at least once. Before each Monday read the section of Revelation we will be covering and study the charts in the notes that will be distributed early (do not fill in the blanks).

Week 1: Monday May 3rd

Revelation 1-3

Part One: Rightly Reading Revelation.

Part Two: Letters From Jesus.

Week 2: Monday May 10th

Revelation 4-7

Part Three: The Scroll Opener.

Part Four: The Seven Seals.

Week 3: Monday May 17th

Revelation 8-11,16

Part Five: Trumpets and Bowls.

Part Six: Are You Rapture Ready?

Week 4: Monday May 24th

Revelation 12-13

Part Seven: The Woman and the Dragon.

Part Eight: The Two Beasts.

Week 5: Monday May 31st

Revelation 14-15,17-18

Part Nine: The God Signs.

Part Ten: The Fall of Babylon.

Week 6: Monday June 7th

Revelation 19-22

Part Eleven: The End of All Wickedness.

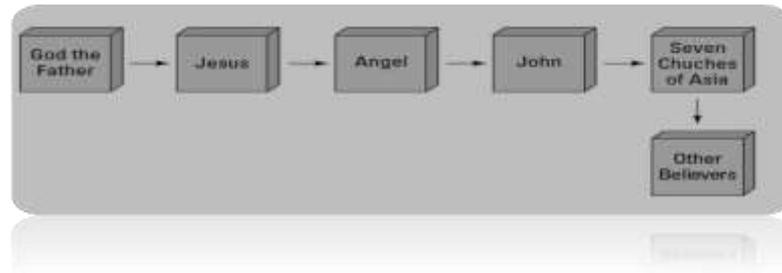
Part Twelve: All Things Made New.

PART ONE: RIGHTLY READING REVELATION

1. Introduction:

Revelation is a _____ letter (Rev 1:1-2)

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants-- things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.” Revelation 1:1-2 (NKJV)



Author and Place of Writing: _____ Date of Writing: _____

External Evidence:

Internal Evidence:

2. Overview:

a. Views on Revelation

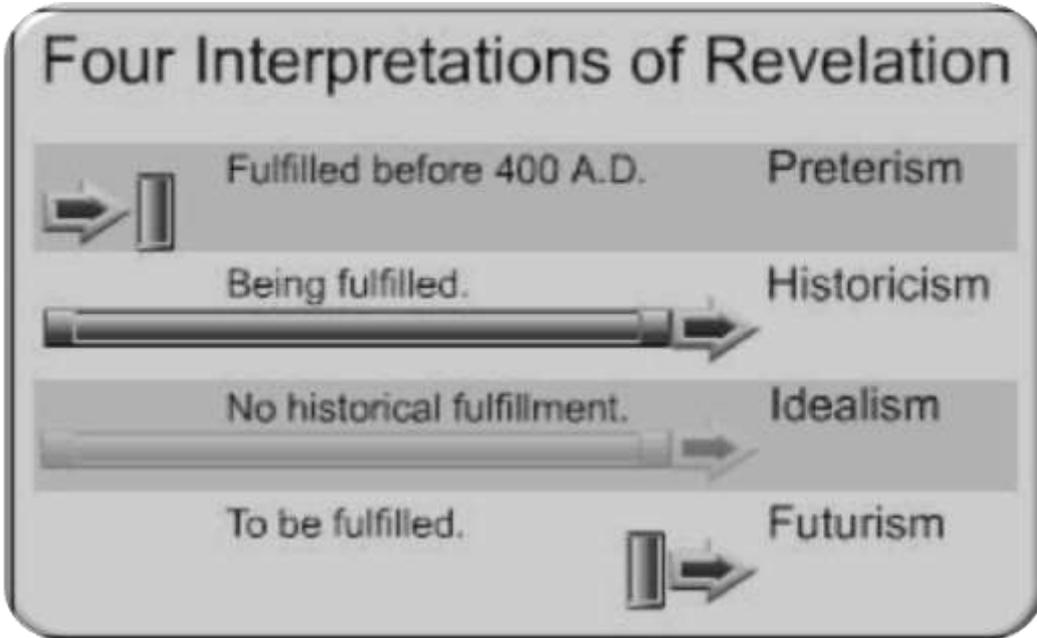
i. _____ View

Special blessing: *“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.”* Revelation 1:3 (NKJV)

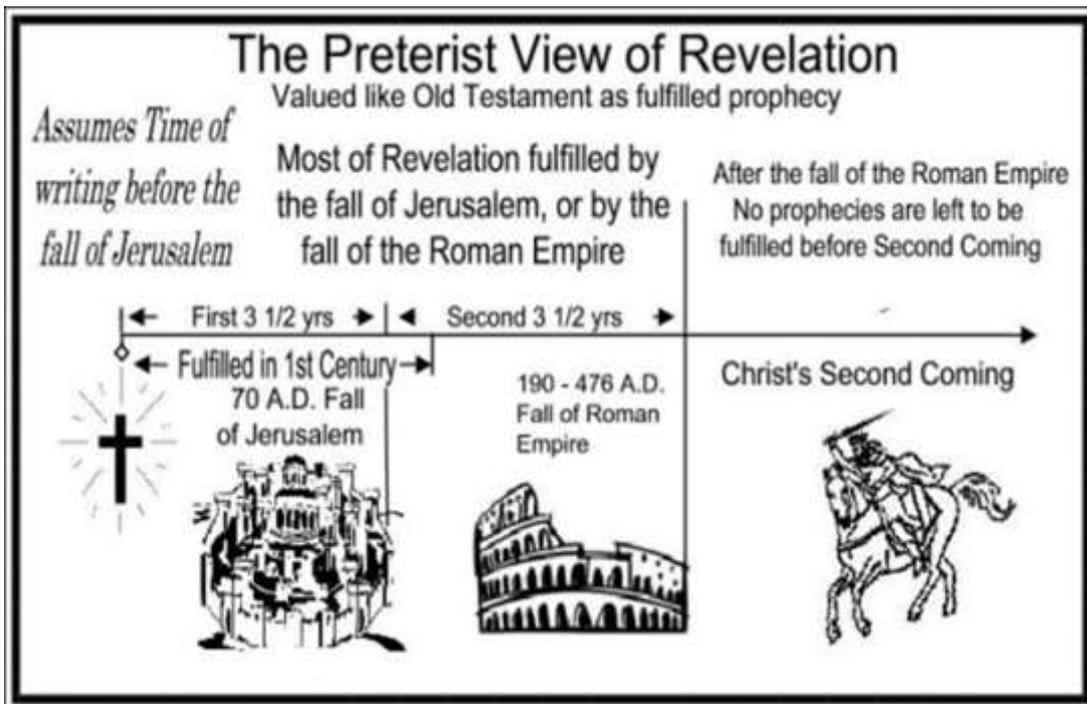
Special curse: *“and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”* Rev 22:19 (NKJV)

ii. _____ View

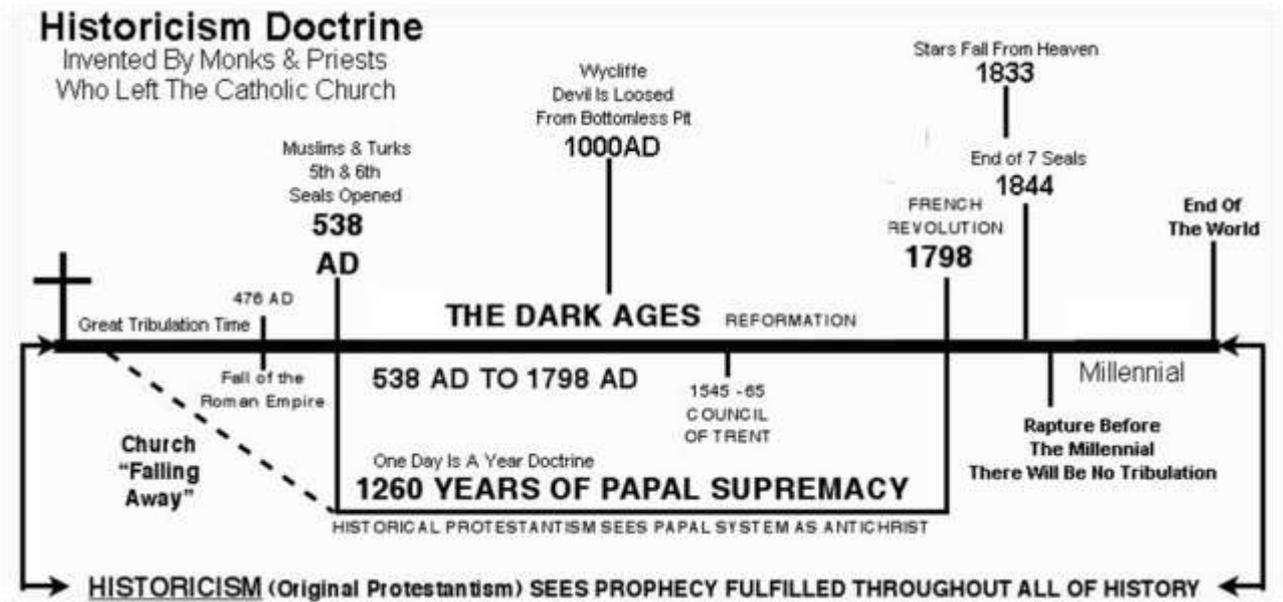
iii. _____ View



PRETERISM:

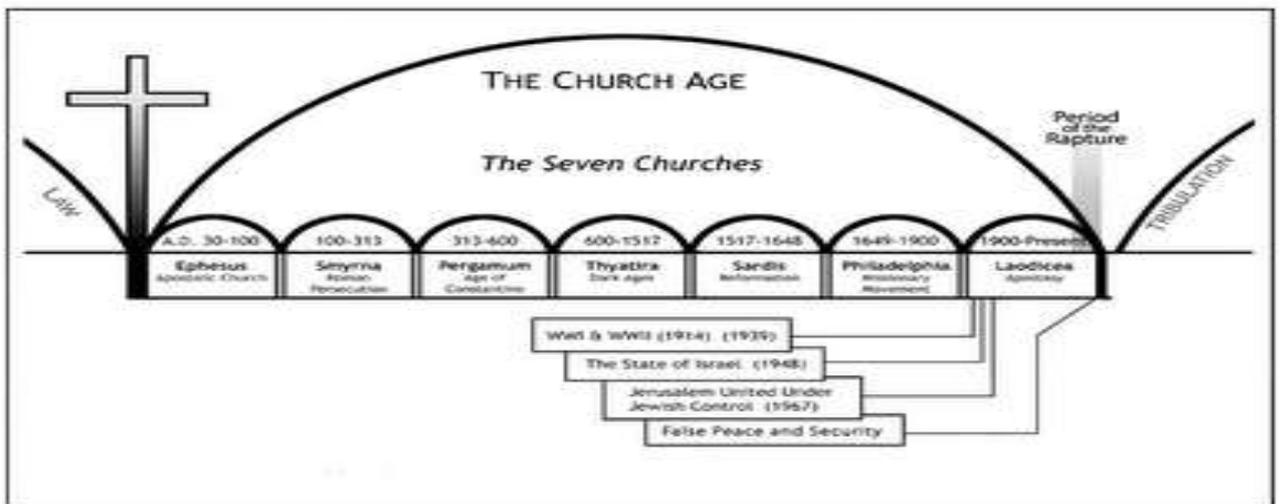


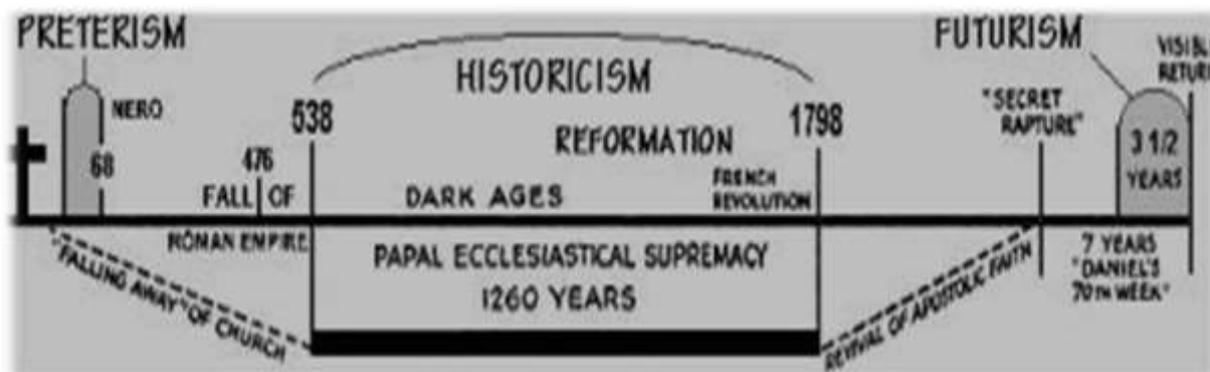
HISTORICISM:



IDEALISM:

FUTURISM:





INTERPRETING THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Over the centuries, four main approaches to interpreting the book of Revelation have developed. Each approach has had capable supporters, but none has proved itself the only way to read this book. However, the most basic application question for each approach can be summarized by asking yourself, "Will this help me become a better follower of Jesus Christ today?"

Approach	Description	Challenge	Caution
Preterist View	John is writing to encourage Christians in his own day who are experiencing persecution from the Roman Empire.	To gain the same kind of encouragement John's first readers gained from the vivid images of God's sovereignty	Do not forget that most biblical prophecy has both an immediate and a future application.
Futurist View	Except for the first three chapters, John is describing events that will occur at the end of history.	To see in contemporary events many of the characteristics John describes and realize that the end could come at any time	Do not assume that we have "figured out" the future, since Jesus said that no one will know the day of his return before it happens.
Historicist View	The book of Revelation is a presentation of history from John's day until the second coming of Christ and beyond.	To note the consistency of human evil throughout history and recognize that names may change but the rebellion against God has not	Be careful before identifying current events or leaders as fulfilling aspects of the book of Revelation.
Idealist View	The book of Revelation is a symbolic representation of the continual struggle of good and evil. It does not refer to any particular historical events. It is applicable at any point in history.	To gain insight into the past, to prepare for the future, and to live obediently and confidently in the present	Do not avoid the book because it is difficult. Try to understand Revelation within its broader literary context.

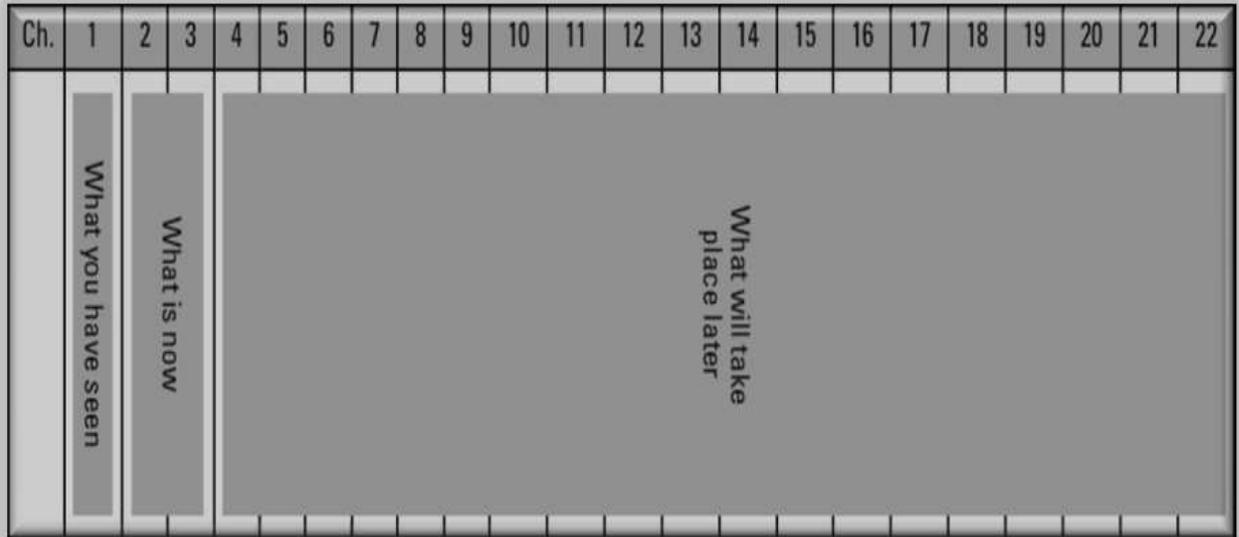
Seven Tips for interpreting Revelation:

1. Read Revelation with humility.
2. Try to discover the message to the original readers.
3. Do not try to discover a strict chronological map of future events.
4. Take Revelation seriously, but do not always take it literally.
5. Pay attention when John identifies an image.
6. Look at the Old Testament and historical context.
7. Focus on the main idea and do not get lost in the details.

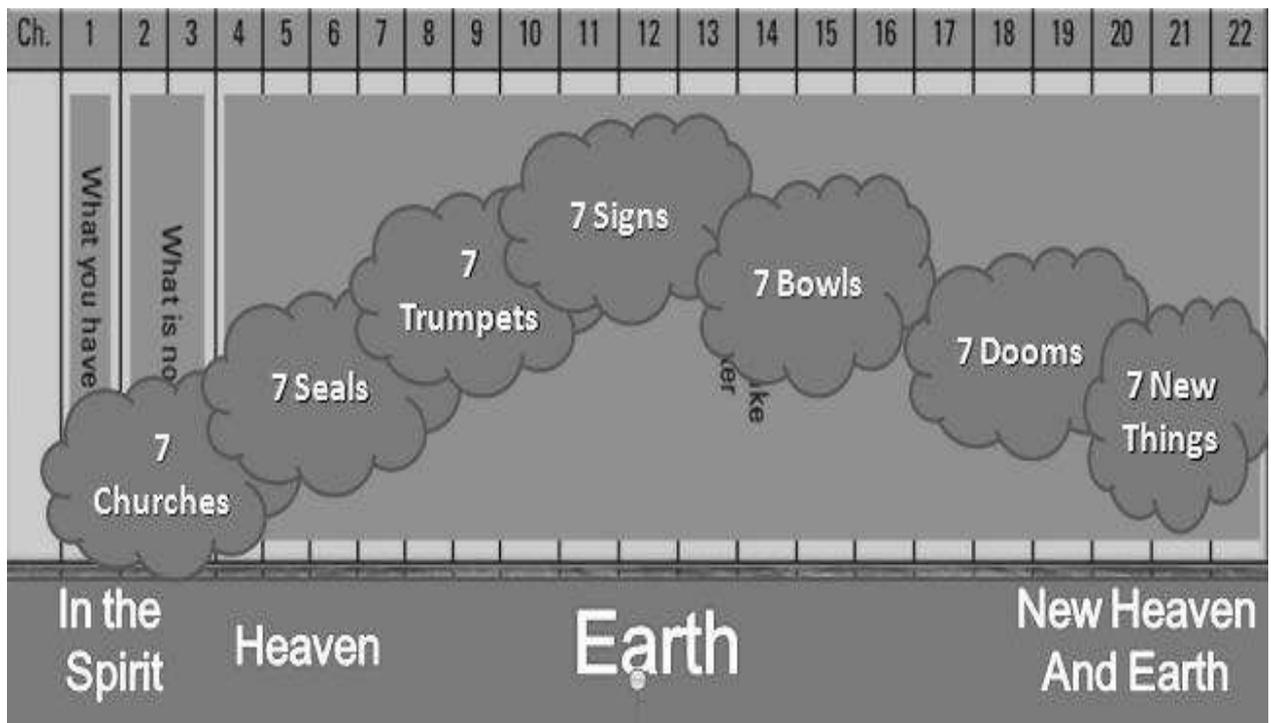
b. Vista of Revelation

“Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.” Rev 1:19 (NKJV)

The verse gives the natural _____ of the Revelation.



This is the outline I will be using during this series, looking at the 7 Churches, 7 Seals, 7 Trumpets, 7 Signs, 7 Bowls, 7 Dooms and 7 New Things.



c. Value of Revelation

Revelation is very valuable to us as it:

i. Is ultimately a revelation of _____ Himself.

a. He is righteous _____ (Revelation 1:12-15)

“Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.”

We should _____ Him.

b. He is the sacrificial _____ (Revelation 5:6)

“And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.”

We should _____ Him.

c. He is the almighty _____ (Revelation 15:3-4)

“And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, “Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations! Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.”

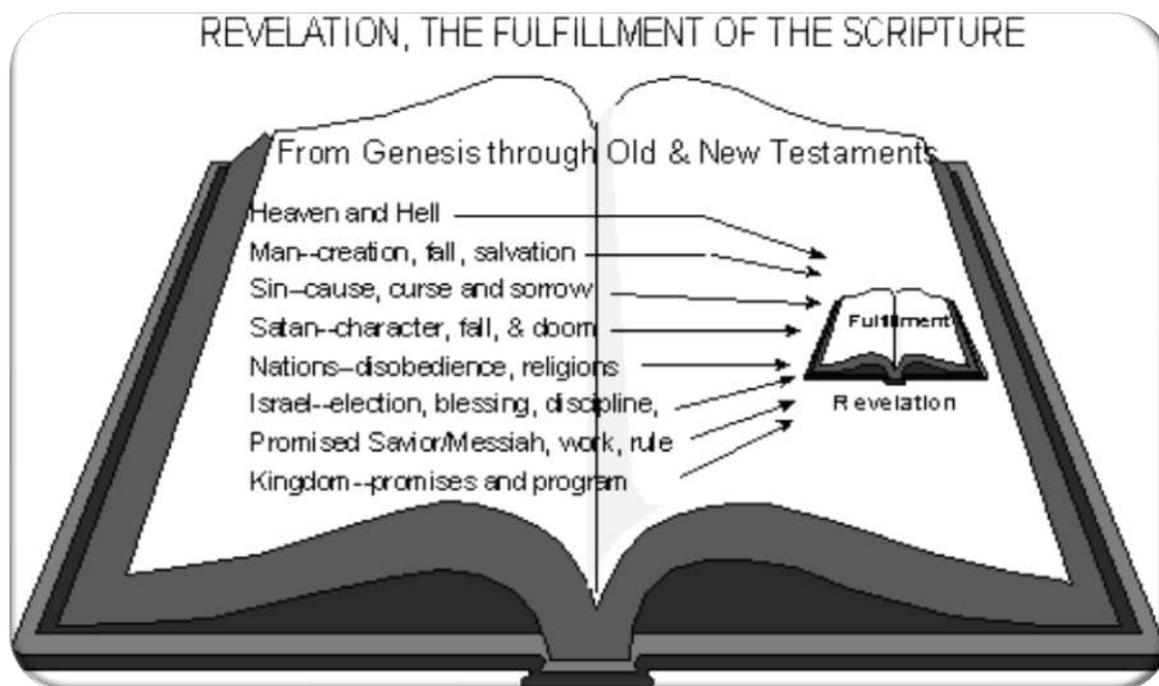
We should _____ Him.

d. He is the kingly _____ (Revelation 19:7-10)

“Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’” And he said to me, “These are the true sayings of God.” And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

We should _____ Him.

ii. Was written to show us the _____ of all things.



iii. Was written for _____ people.

iv. Was written to fill people with _____ so they will be motivated to holiness.

“Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” Rev 14:12 (NKJV)

v. Is a Call for Christians to _____ to the end as over comers.

“And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations.” Rev 2:26 (NKJV)

3. Conclusion

The main message of Revelation can be summed up by the two words:

_____ and _____.

PART TWO: LETTERS FROM JESUS

1. Introduction:

“John, to the seven churches which 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, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen” Revelation 1:4-6 (NKJV)



Revelation is first and foremost a _____.

Revelation 1:9-20 is the awesome revelation of _____ that the church needs to have to endure the tribulation to come (like Daniel 7:9-10; Daniel 10:5-6). The judge first walks among the churches – judgment comes first to the house of God before it comes upon the world (1 Peter 4:17). He comes to make sure the lamps are burning brightly in all the churches because this will need to be the case for them to endure the trials to come.

Jesus sees the churches as they really are not as they _____. Some of the churches that appeared so alive in man's estimation (such as Sardis) were dead in God's eyes.

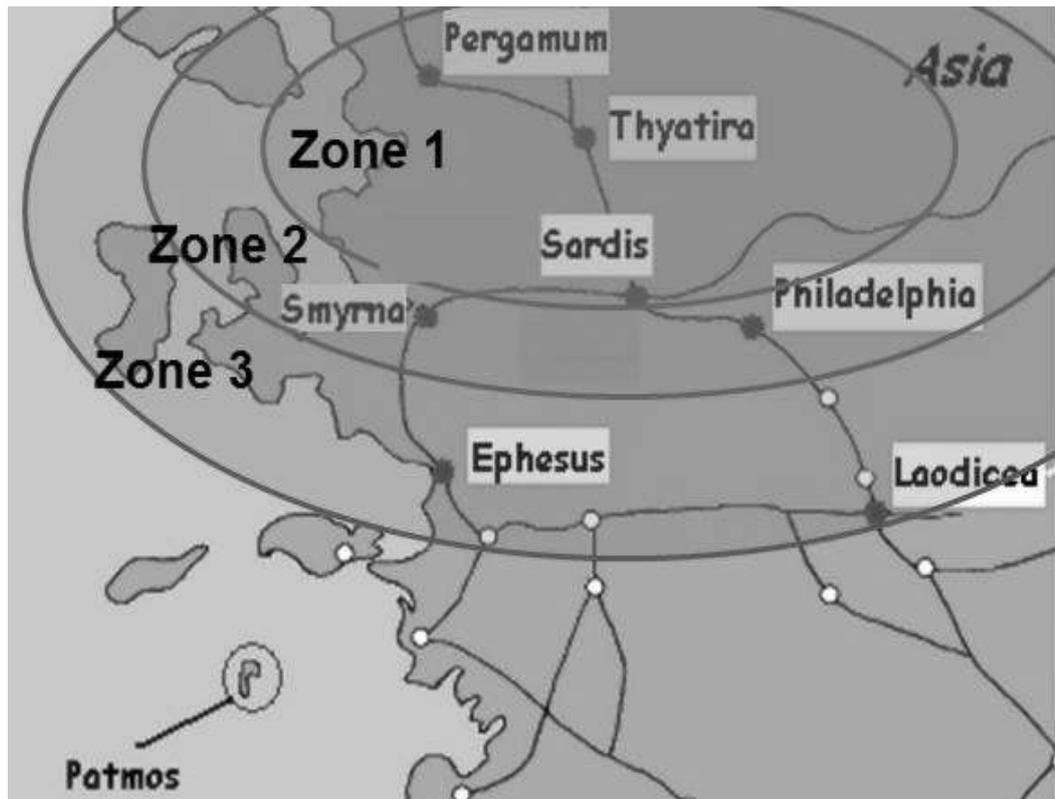
2. Seven Letters to Seven Churches:

a. What was so special about these churches that Jesus Himself dictated special letters to them?

- i. This was a key area for the _____.
- ii. This area was an important centre of _____.
- iii. It was an important centre of _____.



iv. Satan's _____ was here in _____.



Zone 1 (closest to Satan's base) – Pergamum, Thyatira and Sardis

Churches here were corrupt from _____ by idolatry and _____

Zone 2 (further away from Satan's base) – Smyrna and Philadelphia

Churches here were suffering _____ from _____ (Jews).

Zone 3 (furthest away from Satan's base) – Ephesus and Laodicea

Satan not bothered as these churches are _____ themselves.

b. Seven parts to each letter.

1. A _____ – Who the letter is addressed to. In this case the addressees are the seven churches that John ministered to.
2. A _____ – Who the letter is from. In every case this is Jesus but He revealed one aspect or name that they most needed.
3. A _____ – Jesus speaks words of encouragement and approval (if there are any) before moving into accusation.
4. A _____ – Jesus does not mince His words but shows things as they really are, revealing the true state of each church.
5. A _____ – Jesus does not accuse without giving a solution. He gives practical advice of how to overcome the problems.
6. A _____ – Jesus gives beautiful assurances to those who overcome at the end of each letter.
7. A _____ – Each letter end with an appeal to "*he who has ears*" to really hear His message and act upon it.

c. What's Repeated for each Church?

d. Summary of each Church

Church	Summary	What to do?
EPHESUS	THE LOVELESS CHURCH: <i>Loyal but Loveless</i>	Remember and Repent .
SMYRNA	THE PERSECUTED CHURCH: <i>Afflicted but Affluent</i>	Do not Fear, be Faithful
PERGAMUM	THE COMPROMISING CHURCH: <i>Faithful but Flawed</i>	Repent from false Religion (Balaam and Nicolaitans)
THYATIRA	THE CORRUPT CHURCH: <i>Committed but Compromised</i>	Repent from false Religion (Jezebel)
SARDIS	THE DEAD CHURCH: <i>Dynamic but Dying</i>	Repent from dead Religion
PHILADELPHIA	THE FAITHFUL CHURCH: <i>Small but Significant</i>	Hold Fast to what you Have
LAODICEA	THE LUKEWARM CHURCH: <i>Crowded but Christless</i>	Be Refined and Repent .

The Seven Churches of Revelation							
THE 7 CHURCHES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
SCRIPTURE REFERENCE	EPHESUS	SMYRNA	PERGAMOS	THYATIRA	SARDIS	PHILADELPHIA	LAODICEA
	REV. 2:1-7	REV. 2:8-11	REV. 2:12-17	REV. 2:18-29	REV. 3:1-6	REV. 3:7-13	REV. 3:14-22
CHRIST'S TITLE AS JUDGE	"Walks In Midst of Candlesticks"	"Which Was Dead And Is Alive"	"He Which Hath The Sharp Sword"	"The Son Of God"	"He That Hath The Seven Spirits"	"He That Is Holy And True"	"The Faithful Witness"
GOOD POINTS	NONE	Endured Tribulation	The Faith Not Denied	Faith & Patience	A Name That It Lived	Kept The Word	NONE
FAULTS	Left First Love	NONE	Balaam's Doctrine, Idolatry	Ruled By "Jezebel"	But Dead Spiritually	NONE	Lukewarm
REWARD TO OVERCOMERS	"Paradise"	The First Resurrection	"A White Stone"	Reign With Christ	"Name Confessed"	"The New Jerusalem"	"With Christ On David's Throne"

Put a tick or cross or both under each church to illustrate Jesus' assessment.

Notice that Jesus introduces Himself to each church with the name that they most need –
Ephesus: Jesus comes as the one who *“walks in the midst of the Candlesticks”* as they most need His loving presence.

Smyrna: Jesus comes as He *“which was dead and is alive”* as they need comfort in the face of persecution and death.

Pergamum: Jesus comes as *“He which has the sharp sword”* as they need the double edged sword of the Word against false doctrine.

Thyatira: Jesus comes as *“The Son of God with eyes of fire and feet of brass”* because they need a Judge.

Sardis: Jesus comes as *“He that has the seven spirits”* as they need the life of the Spirit of God.

Philadelphia: Jesus comes as *“He that is holy and true”* as then need to keep on in holiness and truth.

Laodicea: Jesus comes as *“the faithful witness”* as they need to be faithful witnesses.

e. Real Places, Real Issues

Place	Insights
Ephesus	
Smyrna	
Pergamum	
Thyatira	
Sardis	
Philadelphia	
Laodicea	