

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF REVELATION AND THE ISLE OF PATMOS



John wrote this letter from exile on the Isle of Patmos. He was exiled there “on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus” (1:9). He was likely part of the persecution that occurred under the reign of the Emperor Domitian (AD 81-96). It was this suffering that allowed him to identify with his audience as a “brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus.”

He also wrote specifically to the churches in 7 cities in Asia Minor, noted on the map above. These 7 churches were meant to serve as representatives for the church as a whole. They were located in the cities of:

Ephesus	2:1-7	Sardis	3:1-6
Smyrna	2:8-11	Philadelphia	3:7-13
Pergamum	2:12-17	Laodicea	3:14-22
Thyatira	2:18-29		

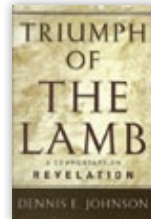
RECOMMENDED RESOURCES (AVAILABLE AT OUR BOOKSTORE)

Below are several resources that will be helpful to you in your own studies of Revelation.



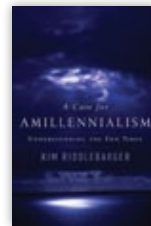
The Returning King
Vern Poythress

This book is a great, practical, and well-written introduction to the consecutive chapters of Revelation, suitable for pastors who want the basic themes, a Sunday School class, or college and seminary students.



Triumph of the Lamb
Dennis Johnson

Johnson guides us through questions about interpretations of Revelation, what it meant to its original audience, and how it equips us today. A mighty expression of Christ’s victory and glory.



A Case for Amillennialism
Kim Riddlebarger

A Case for Amillennialism presents an accessible look at the crucial theological question of the millennium in the context of contemporary evangelicalism. This study defends amillennialism as the historic Protestant understanding of the millennial age.



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THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST



Growing in our understanding
of the reigning Christ

presented by Crossway Church

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

The Book of Revelation is one of the least read and most misunderstood books in the whole Bible. Its symbolism is foreign and seemingly bizarre. Its references seem strange to 21st century Americans. But the Apostle John had a clear intention in his writing: he wanted to encourage Christians with a vision of Jesus' ultimate triumph. He especially wanted to comfort and embolden those who are currently suffering in this fallen world. Revelation 14:12 offers us an explicit statement of this purpose:

Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.

In this book we gain a picture of Jesus that is unparalleled in expressing his majesty, his sovereignty and his divinity. He is the crucified Lamb, but that Lamb has triumphed! He reigns over death and hell, and he will see that all of his purposes are fully accomplished. Join us as we explore the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

REVELATION AT A GLANCE

1:1-20	Prologue
2:1-3:22	Messages to 7 churches
4:1-5:14	Vision of heaven
6:1-8:5	7 seals
8:6-11:19	7 trumpets
12:1-14-20	7 signs
15:1-16:21	7 bowls
17:1-20:15	Triumph of Almighty God
21:1-22:5	A new heaven and a new earth
22:6-21	Epilogue



HOW TO READ APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE

The title of the book comes from the Greek word, ἀποκάλυψις (apokalupsis), which means unveiling or disclosing. So the purpose of John's writing is to reveal Jesus Christ to his audience. This is also the ultimate purpose of every number, every dramatic symbol and every disconcerting image. Everything is pointing to Jesus as Lord of history.

We cannot read Revelation the way we might read Romans. The language and style have more in common with OT prophecy than NT epistles. In fact, understanding of and familiarity with the OT is vital for properly understanding the book of Revelation. Allusions to OT imagery are everywhere.

To read the book of Revelation, then, is to place oneself within the Biblical storyline. It is to breathe biblical air, to view biblical pictures, to experience biblical justice, and so to see the fulfillment of all of God's purposes in Jesus Christ. Revelation shows us who Jesus is and how God is bringing the world to its appointed ends through the work of his Son.

MILLENNIAL VIEWPOINTS

One of the most famous interpretative issues in Revelation revolves around our understanding of the millennium (1,000 years) as found in 20:1-6:

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

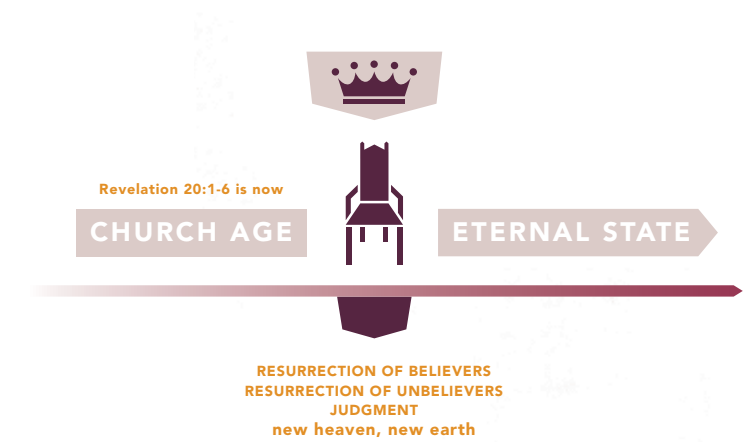
Historically, four primary perspectives have been advanced:

1. Classical Premillennialism
2. Pretribulational Premillennialism
3. Postmillennialism
4. Amillennialism

At Crossway Church, we stand squarely within the Reformed tradition in affirming the Amillennial viewpoint. In brief, Amillennialism teaches that the 1,000 years of Revelation 20 are best understood as a symbolic figure (like many numbers in Revelation) that refers to the entire period of time from Jesus' resurrection to his Second Coming. During this present age Satan has been bound that the gospel may go forth and that God's church might be established.

AMILLENNIALISM

NO FUTURE MILLENNIUM



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