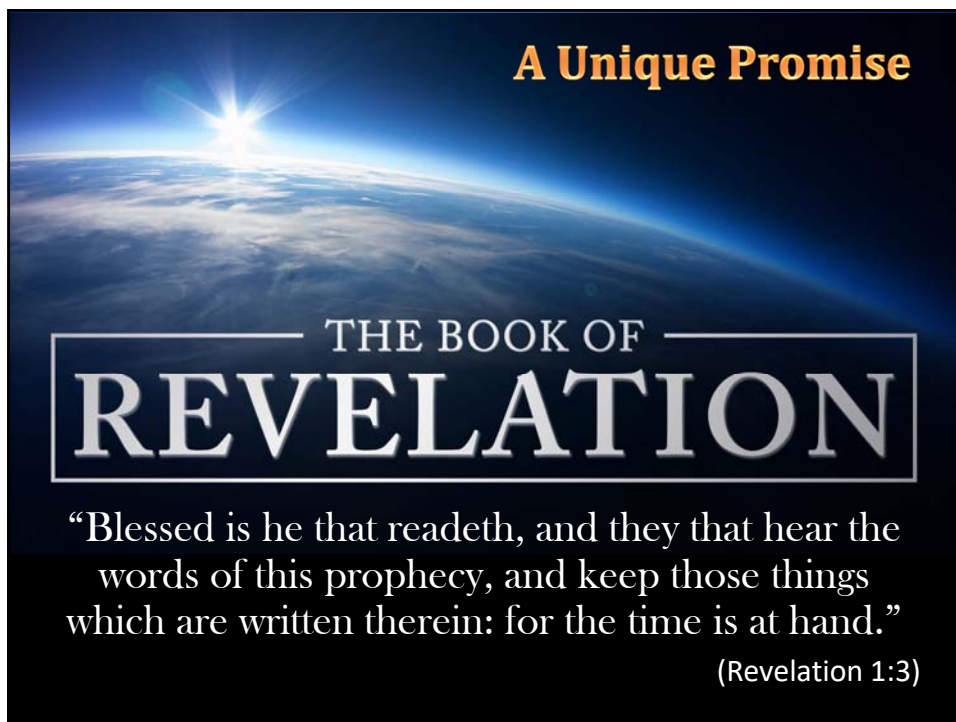


WHAT THE
BIBLE
Is ABOUT

WHAT THE
BIBLE
Is ABOUT

9
SESSION NINE



A Unique Promise

THE BOOK OF
REVELATION

“Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.”
(Revelation 1:3)



Revelation's Big Ideas

GOD REIGNS

- Satan's fight against God is futile.
- Heaven's reality will triumph over this earthly existence.
- Catastrophe and great distress will precede Christ's return.
- Salvation is available to everyone who repents and follows Christ.
- Christians can evaluate the present in light of prophesied future events.
- At the end of this age, God will dwell with His people in the New Jerusalem and all the benefits lost at Eden will be restored.

Interpreting the book of Revelation

God means what He says and says what He means.	The Bible is an integrated whole: Every detail is there by design. <small>(Matthew 5:17,18)</small>
Nothing is trivial: all things are for our learning. <small>(Romans 15:4)</small>	Use the Bible to interpret the Bible.

What starts in Genesis finishes in Revelation

GENESIS

- 1** Catastrophic end-crisis of our present age
- 2** Spectacular reappearance of the King of Kings in His global empire
- 3** Internment of Satan in the *Abouso*
- 4** Millennial earth-reign of Christ
- 5** Final insurrection and the abolition of sin
- 6** New Heaven and New Earth

REVELATION

“He (Holy Spirit) Shall Glorify Me” (John 16:14)

Old Testament	Christ in Prophecy	“Behold, He Comes!”
Gospels	Christ in History	“Behold, He Dies!”
Acts	Christ in the Church	“Behold, He Saves!”
Epistles	Christ in Experience	“Behold, He Lives!”
Apocalypse	Christ in coming Glory	“Behold, He Reigns!”

When Jesus cries, “It is finished,” He is closing out the Levitical requirements of the Torah.

The Divine Outline of the book of Revelation

¹⁹Write the things which thou hast seen,

The Vision of Christ Chapter 1

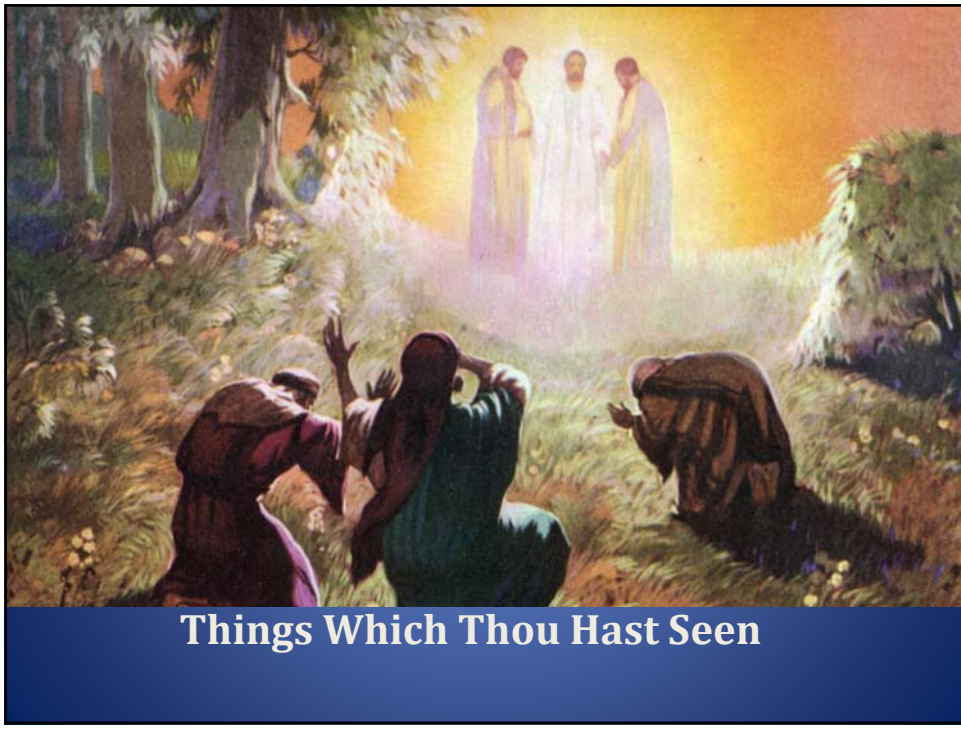
and the things which are,

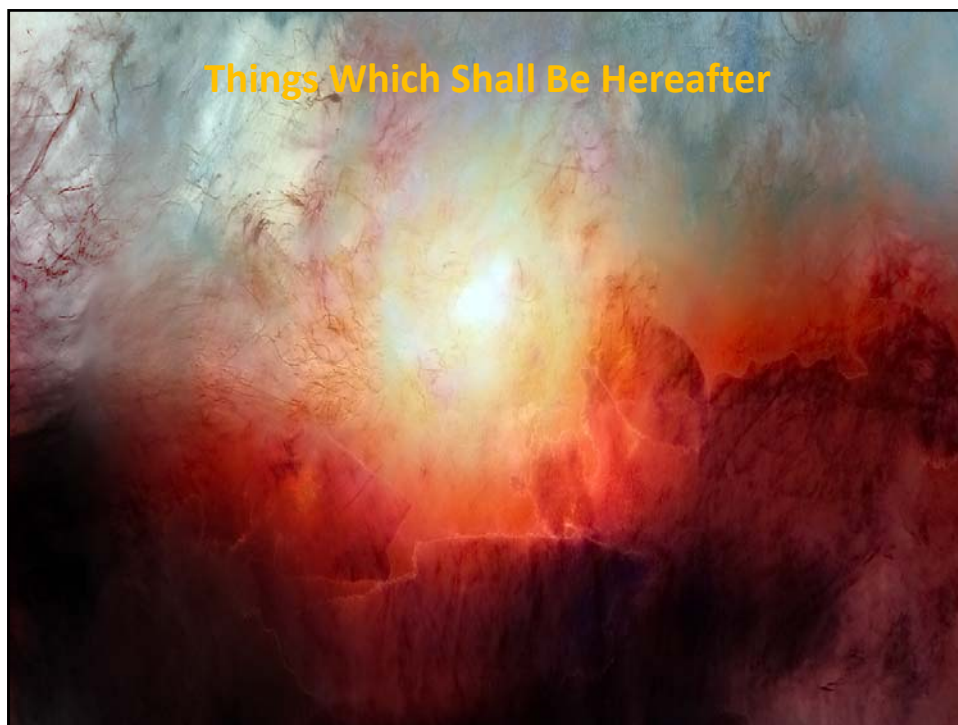
The Seven Churches Chapters 2,3

and the things which shall be hereafter,

What follows after the Churches .. Chapters 4-22

(Revelation 1:19)





1 Chapter 1. The things which John has seen in his vision.

- Heavenly Christ and
- Earthly churches

2 Chapters 2-3. Current situation: things are not alright on earth.

- Corrupted world
- Compromised church

3 Chapters 4-5. Things are alright in Heaven.

- God is on the throne (all of history)
- Christ is in charge (end of history)

4 Chapters 6-18. Things will get much worse before they get better.

- For the world: war, bloodshed, famine, disease, natural disasters, many deaths
- For Israel: 3.5 years of “peace” followed by 3.5 years of strife by unholy trinity
- For the Church: depends upon your view of Eschatology

5 Chapters 19-22. Things will get much better after they get worse.


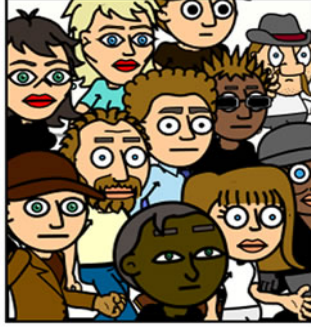

Return of Christ to earth; 1,000 year reign of Christ on earth; people still sin; Day of judgement (heaven or lake of fire); new heaven and new earth; New Jerusalem; Bride of Christ

Per David Pawson's "Outline of Revelation"

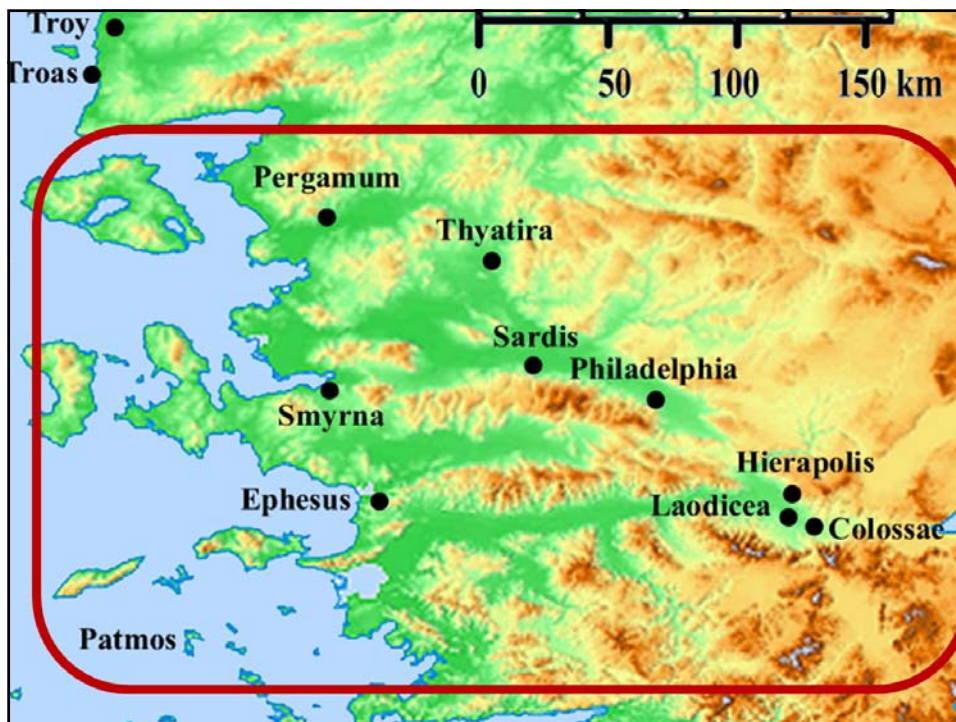


Why does any of this need to happen?

THREE (OF MANY) ALTERNATIVES BY RAY SARLIN

<p>WHAT CAN A JUST GOD DO WITH A REBELLIOUS PEOPLE?</p> 		
<p>1. INDULGE IT AND LET IT GO ON!</p> <p>BUT ALL THE CRUELTY, INJUSTICE, HATRED, PAIN, AND DEATH THAT NOW PREVAIL ON THE EARTH WILL GO ON FOREVER, TOO. GOD DOES NOT WANT THAT AND NEITHER DOES MAN.</p>	<p>2. FORCE MANKIND TO OBEY!</p> <p>REMOVING OUR FREE WILL WOULD ALSO TAKE AWAY OUR CAPACITY TO GIVE OUR LOVE TO GOD FREELY. LOVE CANNOT BE FORCED.</p>	<p>3. WITHDRAW FROM THOSE WHO REFUSE HIS LOVE!</p> <p>THROUGH GRACE, FREELY OFFER SALVATION BUT LET THEM WHO REFUSE HAVE THEIR OWN WAY FOREVER - WITHOUT HOPE!</p>

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The Seven Churches

1. Written to active churches addressing their current physical and spiritual states.
2. Letters meant to be read by all churches.
3. Actual history of each city/region was known and alluded to by Jesus.
4. Prophetic allusions (recurring patterns) for individuals, cities and regions.
5. Some say that each church describes a period of Christian history.
6. Each letter can be applied our own lives (we are the temple of the Holy Spirit).

Important Observations



-  Salvation doesn't come from church attendance
-  Promises are made to individual overcomers!
-  But overcomers can come from any church

The name of each church is relevant

Ephesus (“Desired One” or “Darling”)

Smyrna (“Myrrh”, “Suffering” or “Death”)

Pergamos (“Mixed marriage” or “Serpent”)

Thyatira (“Semiramis” or “Daughter”)

Sardis (“Red Stone” or “Remnant”)

Philadelphia (“Brotherly love”)

Laodicea (“Rule of the people”)

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Why these seven?

Why not Rome?
Jerusalem?
Lystra? Antioch?
Iconium?
or many others?

Seven Parts of Each Letter

1. Name of church: "To the Angel in..."

2. Title of Christ: "These are the words of Him who..."

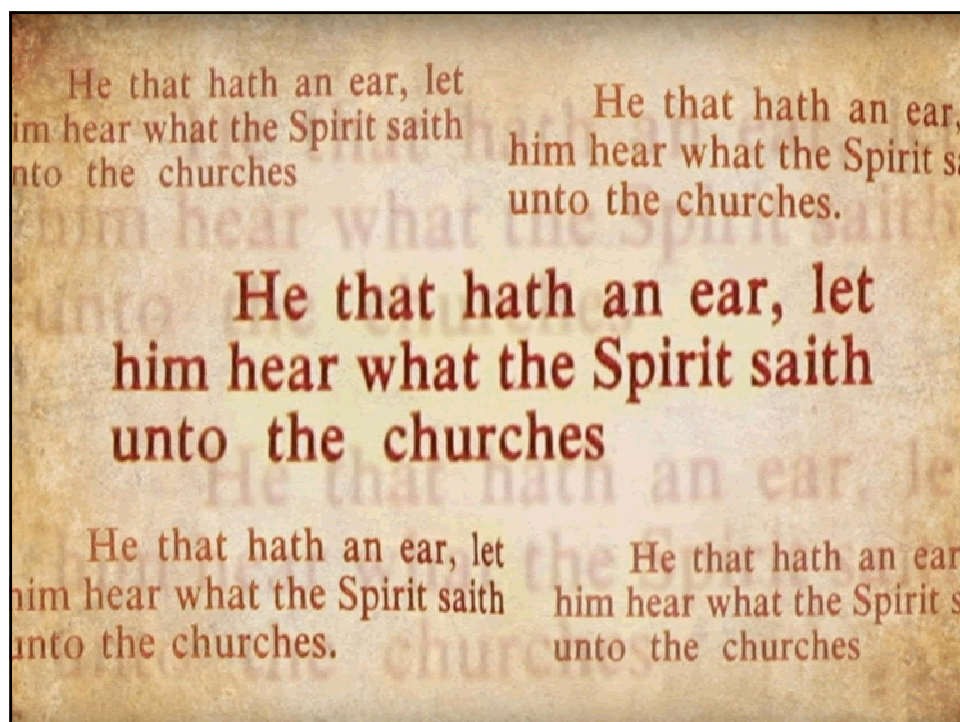
3. Commendation: "I know your deeds..."

4. Concern: "Yet I hold this against you..."

5. Exhortation: "... or I will come ..."

6. Appeal: "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

7. Promise to the overcomer:
"To him who overcomes I will ..."



	<i>Ephesus</i>	<i>Smyrna</i>	<i>Pergamos</i>	<i>Thyatira</i>	<i>Sardis</i>	<i>Philadelphia</i>	<i>Laodicea</i>
Name	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Title	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Commendation	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-
Concern	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	-	✓
Exhortation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Promise (in text)	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
Appeal	"He that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the churches"						
Promise (post-script)	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-

Jesus' report cards to ALL congregations

Each was surprised by its report!

Those thinking they **were** doing well, **weren't**.

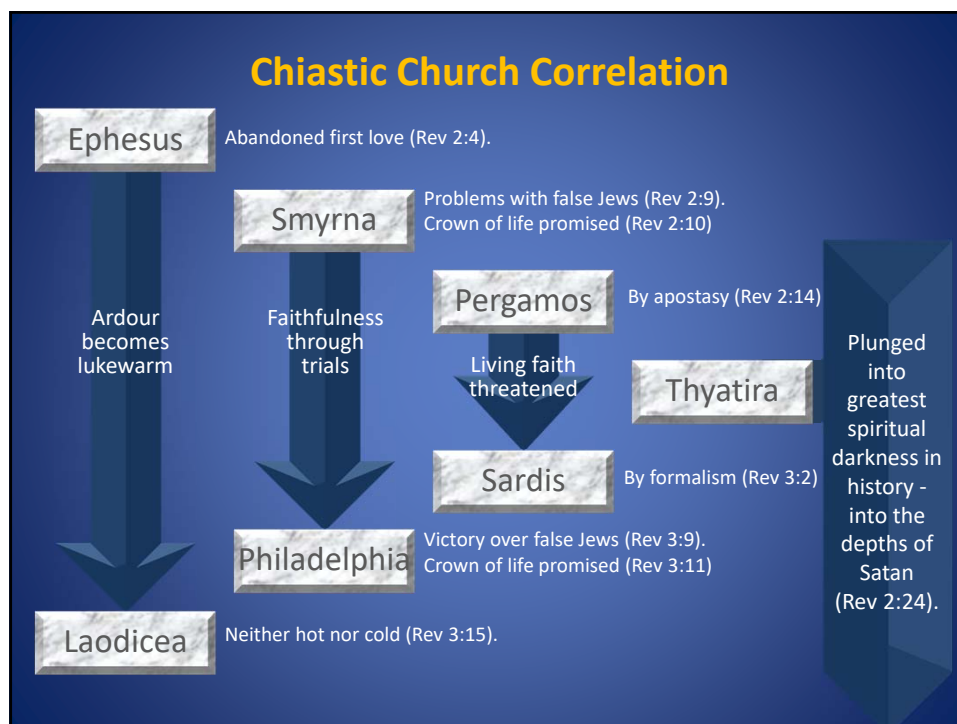
Those thinking they **weren't** doing well, **were**.

Why?

The reports are through **God's eyes**, not Man's!

"For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the LORD."

Isaiah 55:8



Expectation

● Ephesus	Early church	Return
● Smyrna	Persecuted church	Remain
● Pergamos	Married church	Reclaim
● Thyatira	Corrupt church	Remove
● Sardis	Dead church	Reborn
● Philadelphia	Obedient church	Reward
● Laodicea	Lukewarm church	Repent

Promises to the Overcomer

- **Ephesus** Eat of the Tree of Life
- **Smyrna** Not hurt of second death
- **Pergamos** Manna, Stone, Name.
- **Thyatira** Power over nations.
- **Sardis** Walk with Him in white; name not blotted out.
- **Philadelphia** Pillar in Temple, name of God, His city, new name.
- **Laodicea** Sit with Him on His throne.

Each letter NAILED the specific congregation

- **Ephesus** ➤ Devotion, not just doctrine
(“Desired One” or “Darling”)
- **Smyrna** ➤ Endure persecution
(“Myrrh”, “Suffering” or “Death”)
- **Pergamos** ➤ Stand fast against the world
(“Mixed marriage” or “Serpent”)
- **Thyatira** ➤ Abandon pagan practices
(“Semiramis” or “Daughter”)
- **Sardis** ➤ Watchfulness, diligence
(“Red Stone” or “Remnant”)
- **Philadelphia** ➤ Outreach; faithfulness
(“Brotherly love”, “Church of Love”)
- **Laodicea** ➤ Prosperous compromise
(“Rule of the people”, Lukewarm”)

Each letter applies to ALL congregations

- **Ephesus** ➤ Devotion, not just doctrine
(“Desired One” or “Darling”)
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(“Myrrh”, “Suffering” or “Death”)
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(“Rule of the people”, Lukewarm”)

Each letter applies to YOU AND ME individually

- **Ephesus** ➤ Neglected priorities
(“Desired One” or “Darling”)
- **Smyrna** ➤ Satanic opposition
(“Myrrh”, “Suffering” or “Death”)
- **Pergamos** ➤ Worldly compromise
(“Mixed marriage” or “Serpent”)
- **Thyatira** ➤ Flee pagan practices; the Word
(“Semiramis” or “Daughter”)
- **Sardis** ➤ Watchfulness, diligence
(“Red Stone” or “Remnant”)
- **Philadelphia** ➤ Loyal Ambassadorship
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Rewards are **not** for
congregations,
religions, churches,
or denominations...

... but for

overcomers!

Who is an “overcomer”?

⁴ For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

⁵ Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

(1 John 5:4,5)

Promises to the Overcomer

- **Ephesus** Eat of the Tree of Life
- **Smyrna** Not hurt of second death
- **Pergamos** Manna, Stone, Name.
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- **Sardis** Walk with Him in white; name not blotted out.
- **Philadelphia** Pillar in Temple, name of God, name of His city, new name.
- **Laodicea** Sit with Him on His throne.

The seven Kingdom parables

Revelation Chapters 2 & 3

- **Ephesus**
("First", "Desired One" or "Darling")
- **Smyrna**
("Myrrh", "Suffering" or "Death")
- **Pergamos**
("Mixed marriage" or "Serpent")
- **Thyatira**
("Semiramis" or "Daughter")
- **Sardis**
("Red Stone" or "Remnant")
- **Philadelphia**
("Brotherly love", "Church of Love")
- **Laodicea**
("Rule of the people", "Lukewarm")

Matthew Chapter 13

- The Sower and the Four Soils
Matthew 13:3-9
- The Tares and the Wheat
Matthew 13:24-30
- The Mustard Seed
Matthew 13:31-32
- The Woman and the Leaven
Matthew 13:33
- The Treasure in the Field
Matthew 13:44
- The Pearl of Great Price
Matthew 13:45-46
- The Dragnet
Matthew 13:46-50

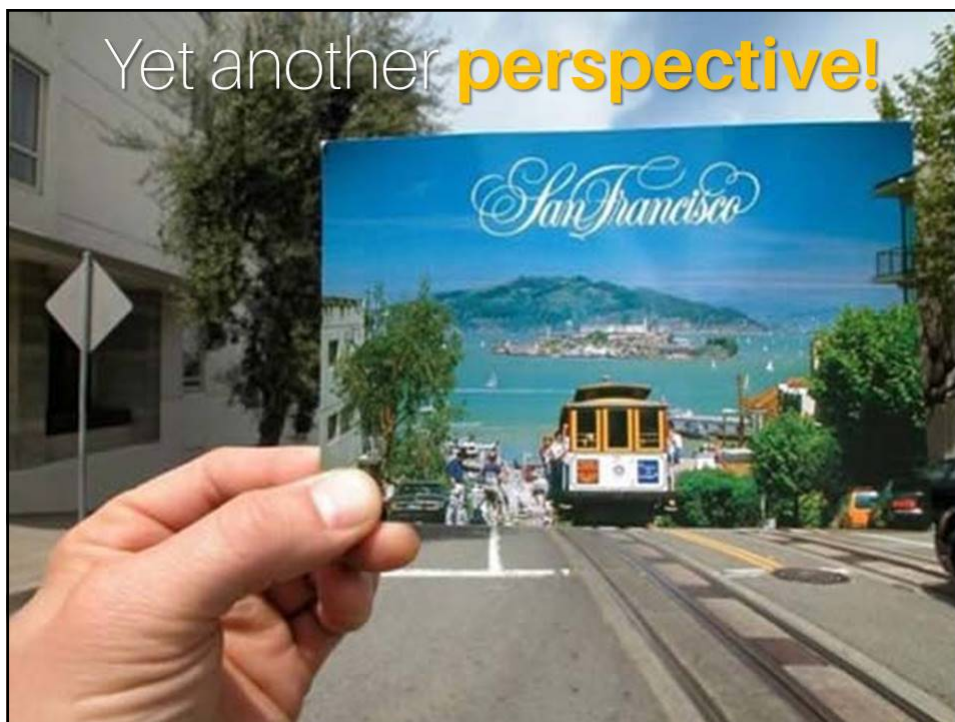
Revelation 2 & 3 versus Paul's Epistles

Revelation Chapters 2 & 3

- **Ephesus**
("Desired One" or "Darling")
- **Smyrna**
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("Rule of the people", "Lukewarm")

Paul's 7 epistles

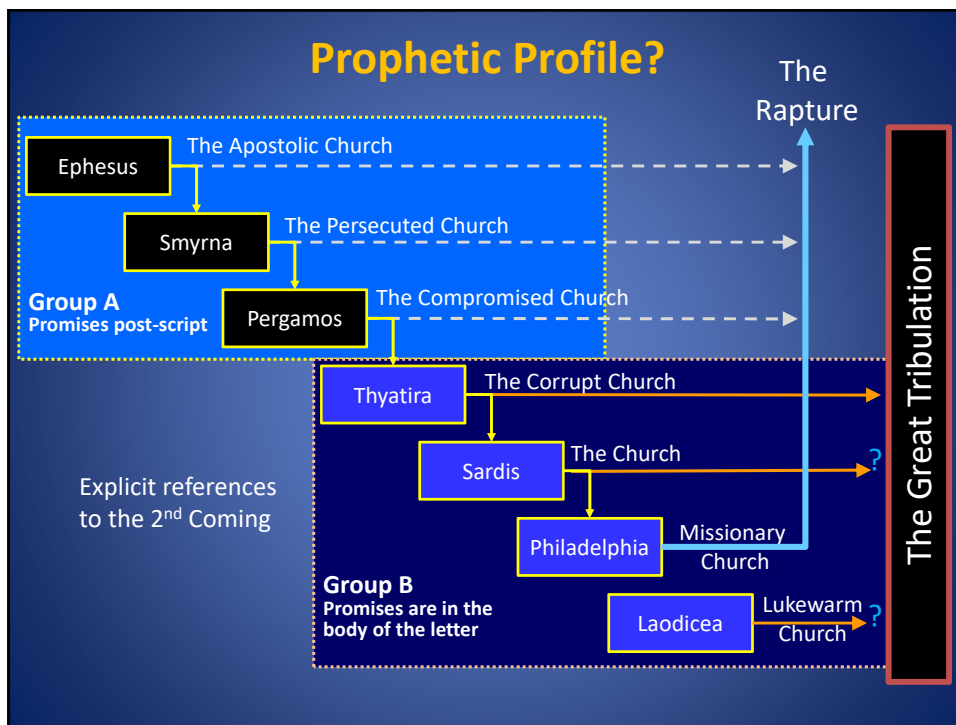
- Ephesians
- Philippians (joy through suffering)
- Corinthians (marriage to the world)
- Galatians (religious externalism)
- Romans (Paul's definitive doctrine)
- Thessalonians (the raptured Church)
- Colossians (A few km away from Laodicea; instructed to trade letters with Laodicea; Greek phrases unique to these letters).



Is Rev 2 & 3 prophetic of the church age?

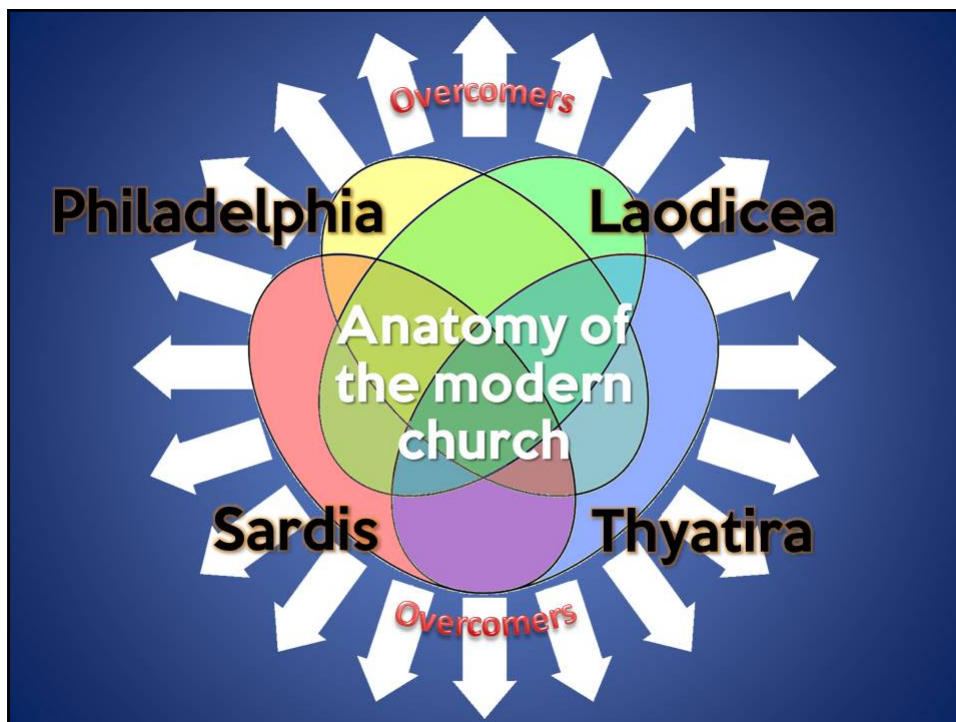
- Many conservative scholars suggest that these seven churches foreshadow seven different periods in the history of the Church.
- The seven historic periods represent the successive chronological history of professing Christendom in the West. It is a history of moral deterioration, apostasy and progressive decline.

The Church Age						
AD 30-100	100-313	313-600	600-1517	1517-1648	1649-1900	1900-Present
Ephesus	Smyrna	Pergamos	Thyatira	Sardis	Philadelphia	Laodicea
First, desirable, darling	Myrrh, suffering, death	Above all, mixed marriage	Daughter, incense, Semiramis	Remnant, red stone	Brotherly love	Rule/justice of the people
Apostolic Church	Persecuted Church	Married Church	Medieval Church	Reformation Church	Missionary Church	Lukewarm Church



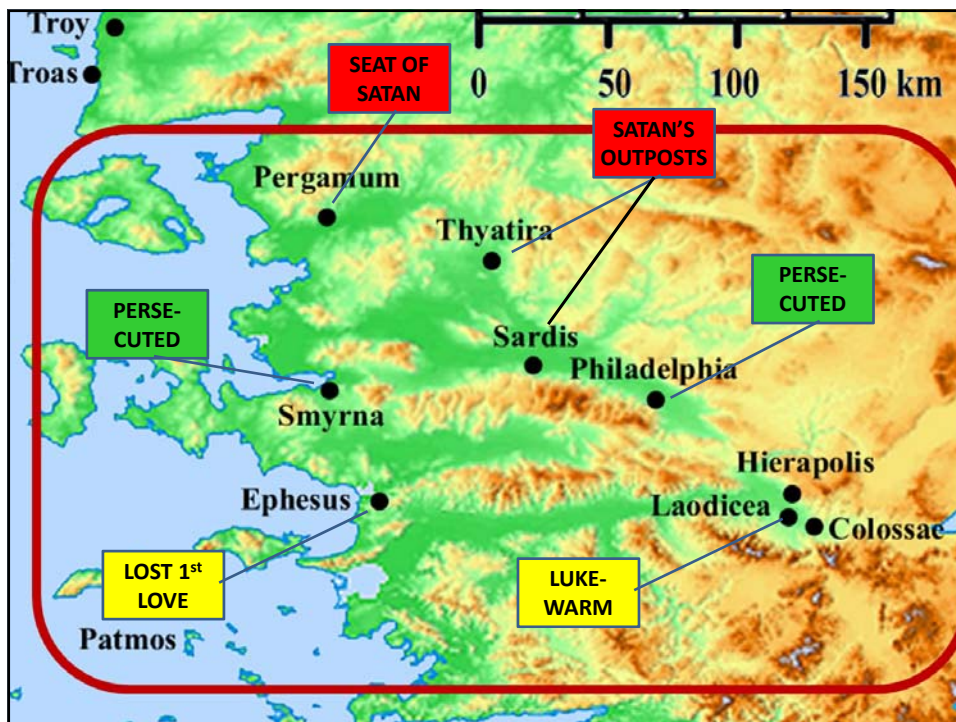
Summary of the Church Age

Church Age	Brief description
Ephesus	the period during the lives of the apostles
Smyrna	the pagan persecution until Constantine became Emperor of Rome and the Edict of Milan
Pergamos	marriage of the Christian church to the State. A transition during which the papacy rose to power
Thyatira	the medieval rule of the apostate church as a queen, living deliciously with the kings of the earth
Sardis	the Catholic Counter-reformation and ongoing destruction of the Protestant movement
Philadelphia	the growing missionary outreach (e.g., Asia, Africa)
Laodicea	the nominal (lukewarm) modern (Western) church



Old Testament vs 7 churches		
Adam affection for Eve superseded his first love (God); expelled from Eden.	Ephesus	As with Adam, Ephesus lost its first love. Overcomers will be restored to Eden.
Trouble for Israel in Egypt up to the 10 plagues. Passover lamb saved faithful.	Smyrna	Tribulation in Smyrna (10 days). Faithful promised not hurt of second death.
From Exodus through Judges, did right in their own eyes. Balaam/Balac. Manna.	Pergamos	Did right in own eyes, married idolatry. Balaam/Balac. Promised hidden manna.
People wanted king. Kingdoms peaked w/ Solomon; declined through Jezebel.	Thyatira	Parallels Israel becoming kingdom with imperial papacy. Jezebel.
Remnant escape Nebuchadnezzar and remain faithful after AD 606.	Sardis	Sardis (meaning "remnant") survive through conquest.
Under Cyrus open door to return to Israel and rebuild Temple. Homeland in Israel.	Philadelphia	Small faithful remnant spared severe hour of trial; Open door. Homeland w/ Jesus.
Spiritual Israel blind to Christ despite John the Baptist. Jerusalem destroyed AD70.	Laodicea	Spiritual Laodicea blind to Christ ("Stand outside and knock.") Jesus offers grace.

	<i>Ephesus</i>	<i>Smyrna</i>	<i>Pergamos</i>	<i>Thyatira</i>	<i>Sardis</i>	<i>Philadelphia</i>	<i>Laodicea</i>
Name	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Title	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Commendation	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-
Concern	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	-	✓
Exhortation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Promise (in text)	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
Appeal	"He that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the churches"						
Promise (post-script)	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-





**PROPHECY
IS
PATTERN**

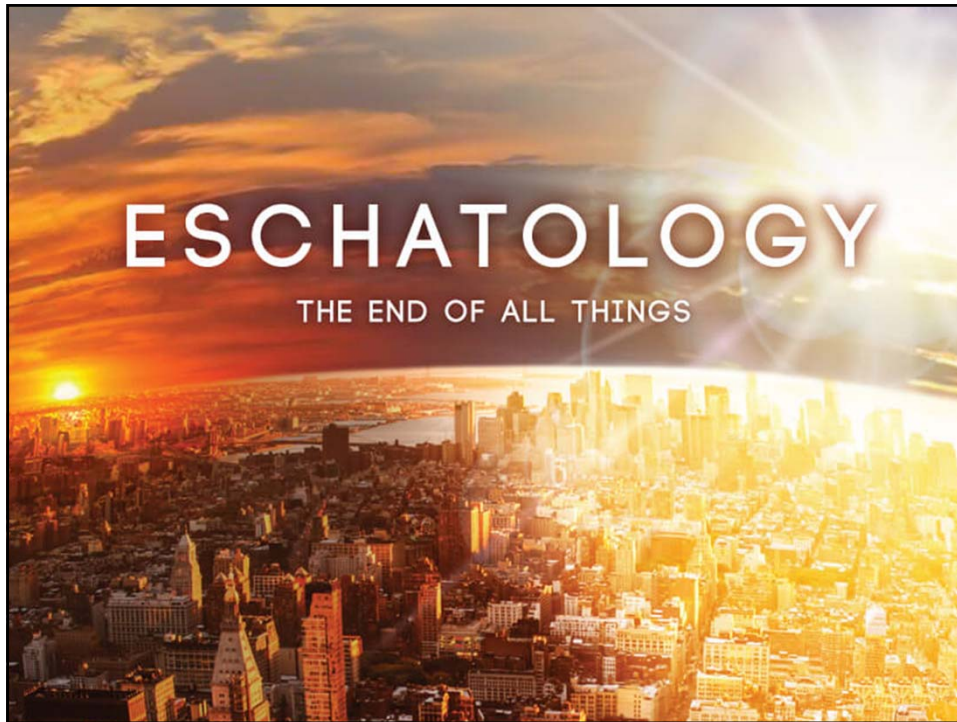
Keys to Understanding Revelation

Revelation means “unveiling,”
not mystery.

The Revelation is from God
through Jesus, not from John.

Revelation is prophecy,
not history (after Chapter 3)

**WHAT
IS
PROPHECY?**



eschatology

noun. [ess-cat-[tol]-a-jee].

1. The branch of theology that is concerned with the end of the world or of humankind.
2. The study of last things.

Four main views
of

PROPHECY

IDEALIST

Interperts Revelation symbolically,
as **nonliteral depiction** of
the **cosmic battle** between
God and the satanic forces of evil.

PRETERIST

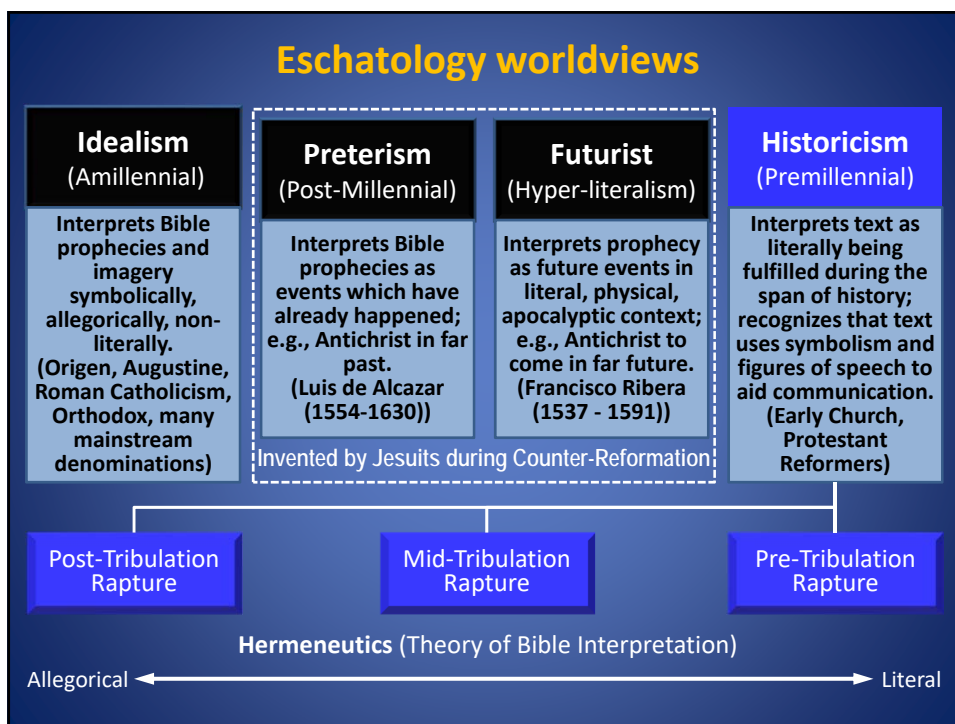
View the Book of Revelation as an
overview of **past** church history,
describing various times of
persecution and tribulation
that have already happened.

FUTURIST

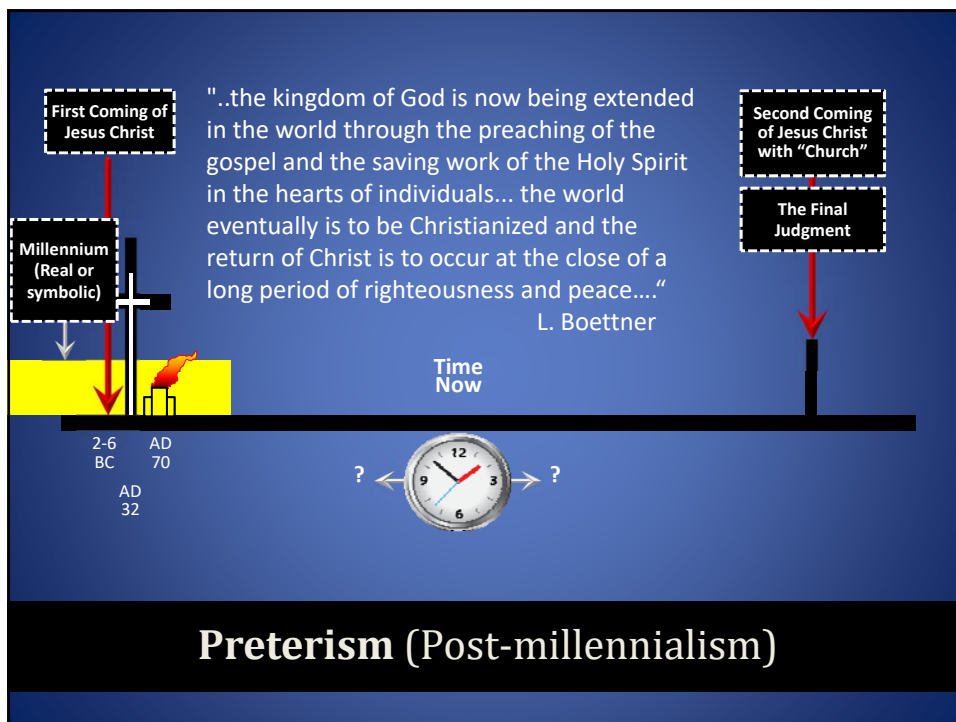
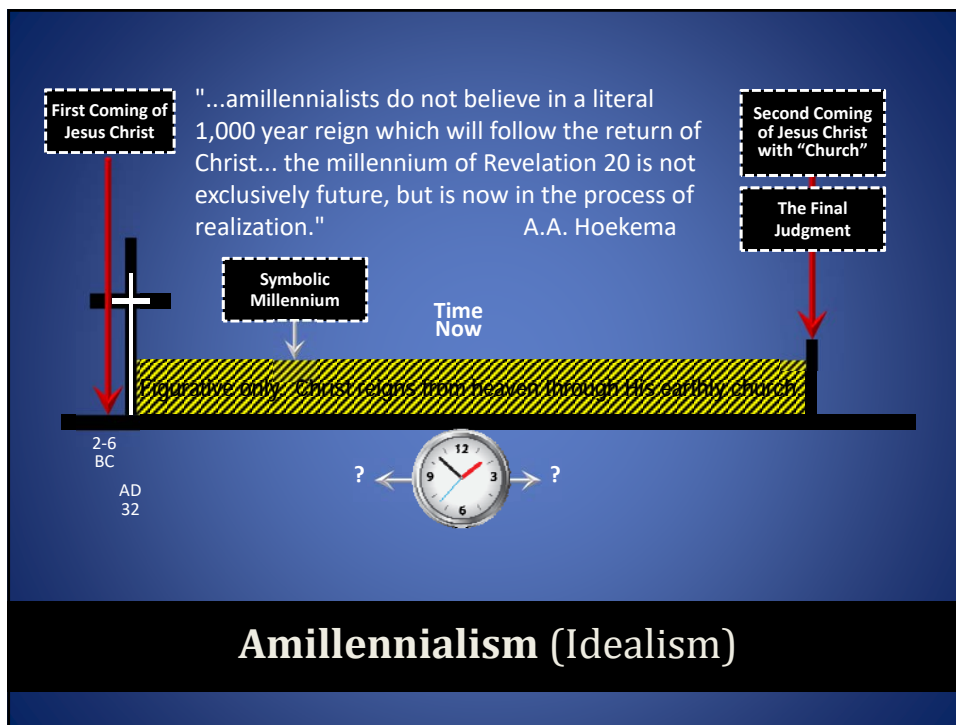
Understand Revelation 4-22 as a **hyper-literal prophetic account** of actual **future events**, specifically focused on the end of this age.

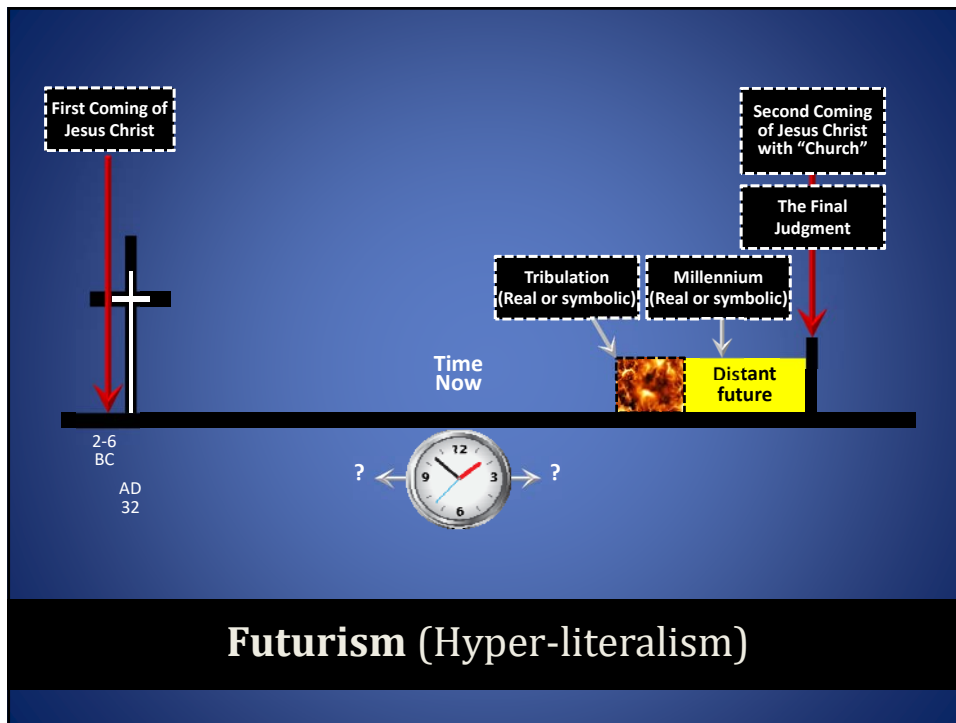
HISTORIST

Interprets prophecy as **actual events during current span of history** (some fulfilled, some yet to be fulfilled), acknowledging some text as symbolic, **emphasis on literal interpretation.**

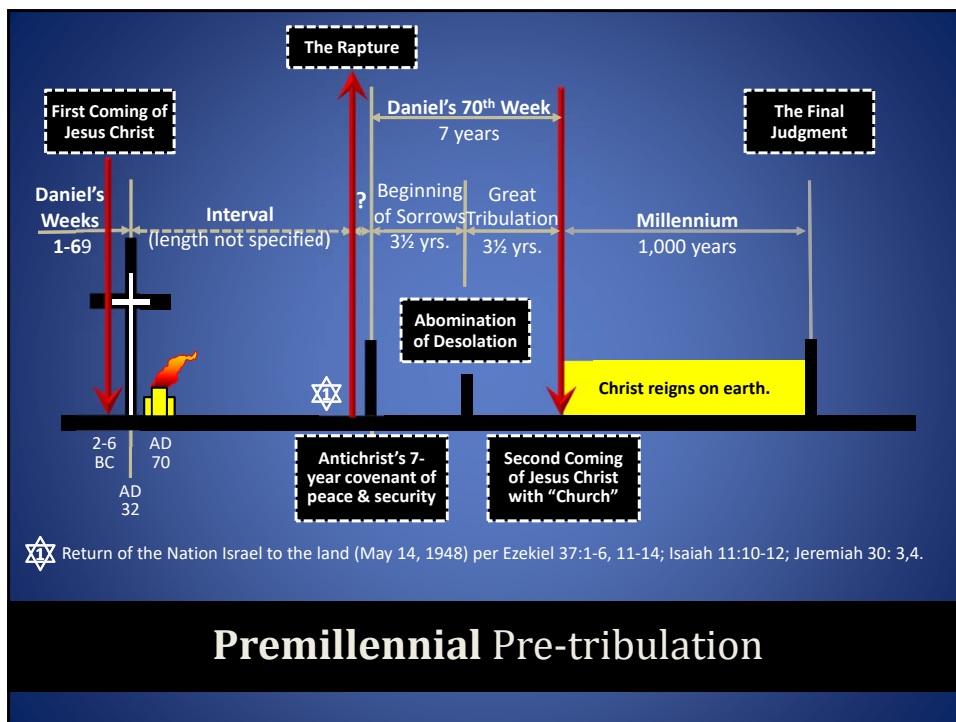


Let's look at what each teaches about what the Bible says



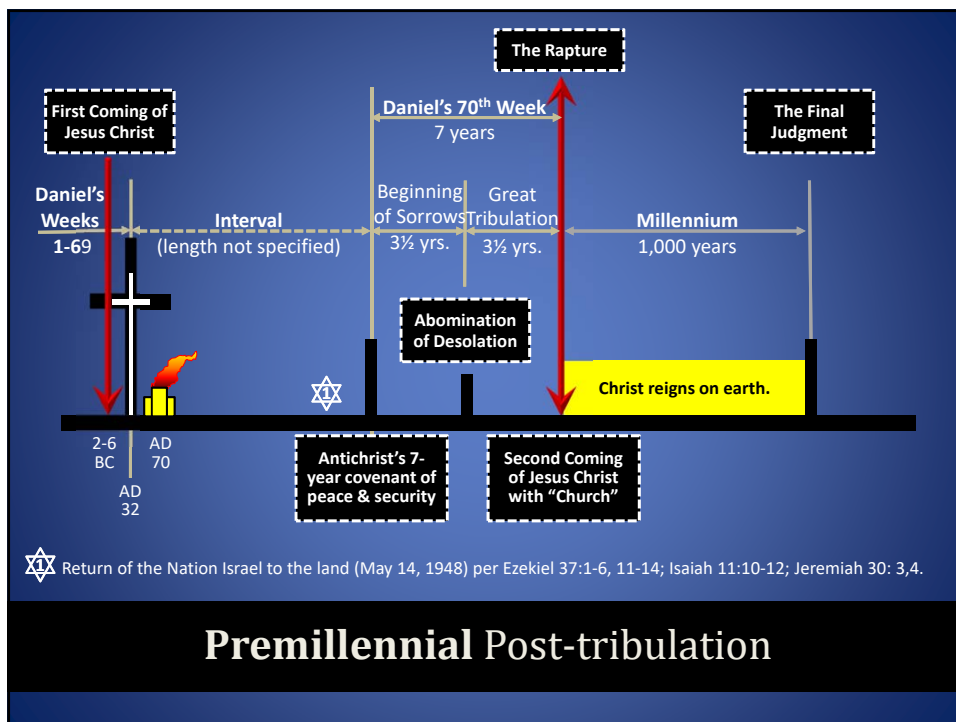
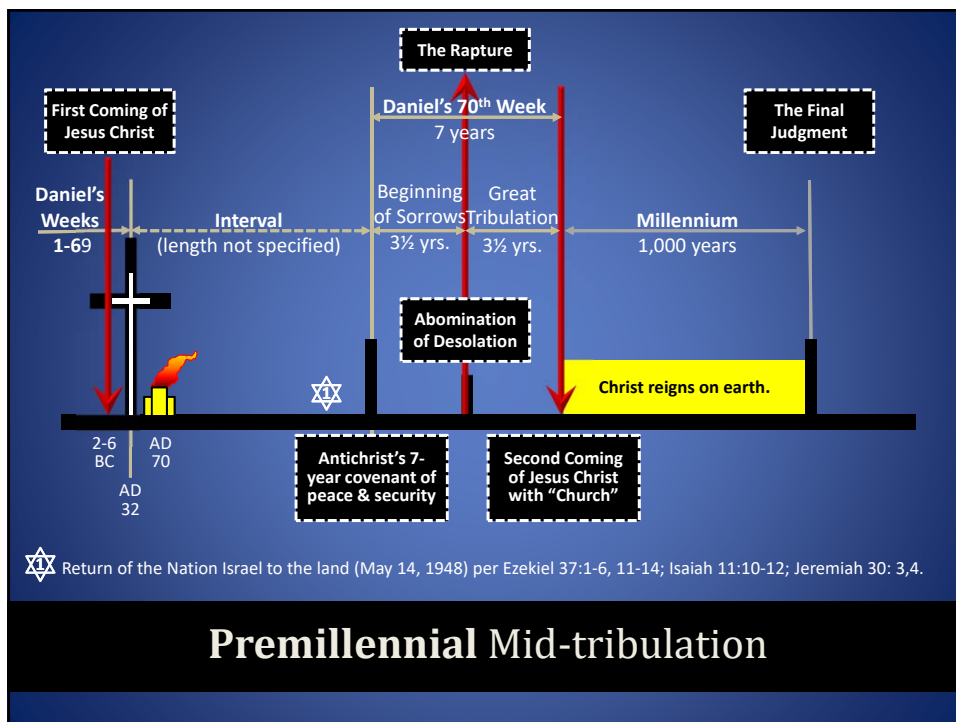


Futurism (Hyper-literalism)



Return of the Nation Israel to the land (May 14, 1948) per Ezekiel 37:1-6, 11-14; Isaiah 11:10-12; Jeremiah 30: 3,4.

Premillennial Pre-tribulation



All positions agree that:

1. Jesus Christ was **crucified** per Scriptures, **buried**, and **rose again** the 3rd day per the Scriptures (*see 1 Corinthians 15:3-4*),
2. The Bible is the **inspired and authoritative word of God** (*see 2 Timothy 3:16*), and
3. Jesus came in the First Century and **He will come again** in a personal, visible, glorious, and objective second advent.

Some major differences

	Amillennial	Preterist	Futurist	Premillennial
Hermeneutics of the book of Revelation	Progressive parallelism in Revelation (earth's history repeated 7 times). Context determines whether literal or figurative.	Interpret in terms of meaning to 1st century church-reassures Christ will prevail over Roman persecutors. Liberal hermeneutic.	Revelation 4-22 and parts of Daniel are future events in a literal, physical, global, apocalyptic context.	Read Revelation as written, literally where possible. Context determines whether literal or figurative.
The Millennium	Figurative (symbolic) only. Has to do with the "church age" between Christ's First and Second coming, in which Christ rules from heaven. We are in its last days.	Tribulation over. We are in a figurative "golden age" on earth where nations gradually adopt Christendom until the earth is filled with the glory of the Lord.	Whether literal or figurative, the tribulation will happen in the future under a future Jewish supernatural figure (not the pope).	A literal 1,000 year reign of Christ on earth as spoken of throughout the Bible, after the Tribulation (yet to occur) and before the End of All Things.
Israel and the "Church"	Old Testament Israel is the nation. New Testament Israel is the "Church"; Israel no longer has any spiritual significance.		Futurists exclude Jews from the New Covenant and remove salvation through faith from Jews. .	Israel and "Church" are separate entities with separate destinies in God's plan. Israel remains God's chosen.
Satan	Satan was bound at the Cross and is no longer able to deceive the nations.		.	Satan is real and rampant in the world.

	Amillennial	Preterist	Futurist	Premillennial
The Kingdom	Spiritual. Came with Jesus' ministry on earth.	Spiritual. Came with Jesus' ministry on earth.	Spiritual. Came with Jesus' ministry on earth.	Literal. Two kingdoms: kingdom of God eternal; kingdom of Heaven is Christ's reign on earth.
Rapture	No. A crazy idea.	No.	Generally, yes.	Of course! Read your Bible.
First Coming	Real and physical.	Real and physical.	Real and physical.	Real and physical.
Second Coming	Once to judge the earth and establish new heavens and new earth	Once to judge the earth and establish new heavens and new earth	Once to judge the earth and establish new heavens and new earth	Twice: comes in clouds to rapture saints and 7+ years later to reign.
Judgments	One judgment (White Throne) at the end.	One judgment (White Throne) at the end.	One judgment (White Throne) at the end.	1. Raptured believers. 2. Sheep and Goat at Millennium start. 3. White Throne at Millennium end.
History	Origen, later Augustine and embraced by Roman Catholic (Western) church by 400 AD. Mainstream Protestant churches today.	Tychonius (AD35) early proponent; revived by Jesuit Luis de Alcazar (1554-1630) to counter Reformation premillennialism. Replacement theology.	Jesuit Luis de Alcazar (1554-1630) developed to counter Reformation premillennialism. Refined by Jesuit Cardinal Roberto Bellarmino (1542-1621).	1. Earliest believers 1 st -4 th Centuries). 2. Isolated persecuted remnants. 3. Reformers (including Reform, Anabaptist, Baptist, etc.

**If you believe in God...
... you must take one of two views**

The Bible is a **human production**,
albeit a great and sacred one,
which was written
to tell people **how to live**.

The Bible was written by **divinely inspired men** as the final **authority**
on spiritual matters, which was written
to tell people **who God is**.

**If you believe in God...
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IDEALIST - AMILLENNIAL

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inspired men** as the final **authority**
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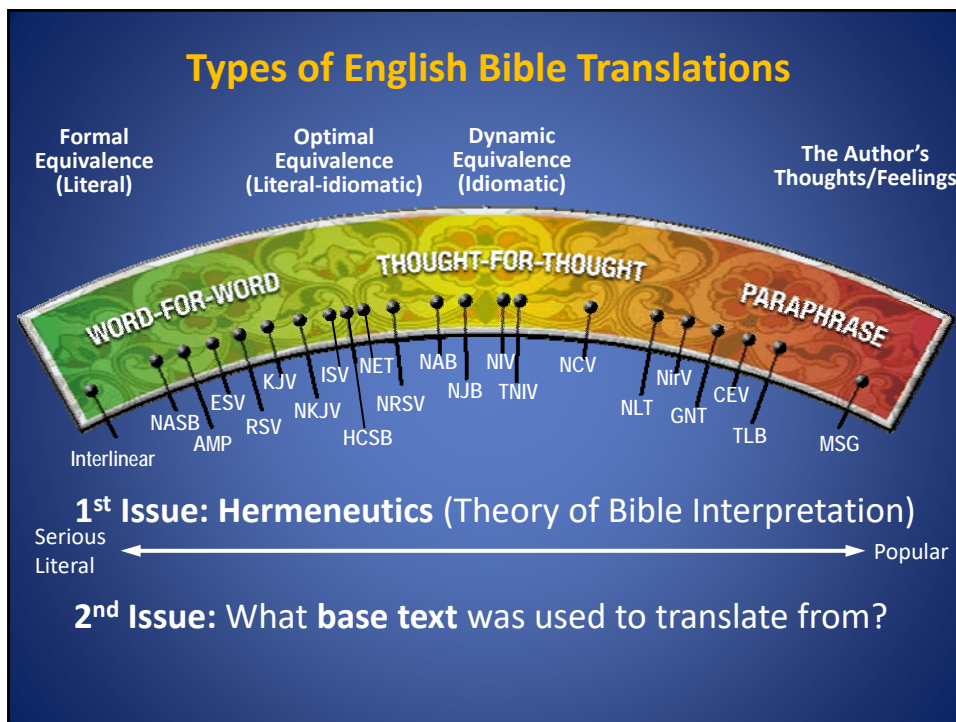
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albeit a great and sacred one,
which was written
to tell people **how to live**.

IDEALIST - AMILLENNIAL

The Bible was written by **divinely
inspired men** as the final **authority**
on spiritual matters, which was written
to tell people **who God is**.

FUTURIST - PREMILLENNIAL



Bible Translations Referenced (Not in order)

AMP	Amplified Bible	MSG	The Message	NJB	New Jerusalem Bible
CEV	Contemporary English Version	NAB	New American Bible	NKJV	New King James Version
ESV	English Standard Version	NASB	New American Standard Bible	NLT	New Living Translation
GNT	Good News Translation; Good News Bible	NCV	New Century Version	NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
HCSB	Holman Christian Standard Bible	NET	New English translation	RSV	Revised Standard Version
ISV	International Standard Version	NirV	New International Reader's Version	TLB	The Living Bible
KJV	King James Version	NIV	New International Version	TNIV	Today's New International Version