

What the book of Revelation is about | Rev. 1:1

- Revelation is ἀποκάλυψις [apokalypsis], which is an *unveiling* or *revealing*.
- What is revealed?
 - *NOT* the future.
 - Grammatically, it is Jesus Christ who is revealed.
 - This is not a revelation *by Jesus* but *of Jesus*. The form of the noun is the same as in the **birth of Jesus** (Matt. 1:18) or the **word of Jesus** (Matt. 26:75) or the **cross of Jesus** (John 19:25).
- The same word (apokalypsis) is used in 1 Cor. 1:7, **waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**.
- This **revelation of Jesus Christ** is the subject of the entire book, and it was **signified...by his angel unto his servant John**.
- Question to ponder: *if the book of Revelation is about the unveiling of Jesus Christ, why would chapters 2 and 3 be about the church age?*
 - It is a question which should cause us to have an open mind.
 - The answer to the question doesn't solidly confirm anything...yet.

Where John is when he writes | Revelation 1:10

Does this mean that John was in a spiritual ecstatic experience on Sunday? Or that he was "spiritually (not physically) taken to the Lord's day?"

- Concerning "in the Spirit" or "in spirit," compare to Mat. 22:43 and John 1:24 for a meaning which simply implies "non-physical."
 - Note that there is no definite article (which is often implied in Greek, so may or may not be inserted into the English translation). Either interpretation is possible.
 - Note also that KJV is inconsistent when compared to Rev. 4:2, 17:3, and 21:10, which are the only other times the phrase is used in Revelation. The reader should always beware of capitalization for Deity in any English translation.
- Concerning "on the Lord's day," most translators (and some translations) make the assumption that this is speaking of Sunday.
 - Using the principle of allowing Scripture to interpret itself, this is suspicious.
 - There is no reference to Sunday as "the Lord's day," but many references to "the day of the Lord," which is that period of judgment at the end of days.
 - It is my belief that this verse tells us that John was spiritually (not physically) taken forward in time to the Day of the Lord, which is given by God to Jesus, and John is going to record what happens, in advance.

Is Revelation 1:19 an outline of the book?

I think v. 19 has often been made to say more than it says.

- A typical interpretation:
 - **the things which thou hast seen** – chapter 1
 - **the things which are** – chapters 2-3
 - **the things which shall be** – chapters 4-22
- Consider v. 2, which says that John wrote "all things that he saw." So, unless John is referring to his previous work of the Gospel of John, then John is telling us that he wrote this introduction (chapter 1)

AFTER he had seen all these things and written about them. Thus, as is commonly done, the intro was written LAST.

- If this is an accurate assumption, then "the things which thou has seen" are words spoken in summary, after John had actually seen something.
- The "things which are" are actually the things revealed in the Revelation.
- Another translation could be "write the things which you've seen, even which are and are to come."
- Or, it could even be "write the things which you have seen, what they are, and are to come."
- The question becomes: Is John to write about three things or one thing? Grammatically, it could go either way.
- In light of Rev. 1:1, it seems that one thing is in order.

What happens when you apply Revelation 2-3 today?

A few problematic passages

- The Church at Ephesus
 - *Rev 2:5 - Strange language for the church at Ephesus, whose blessings are "in the heavenlies," especially in light of Romans 11:29. However, if this is a future Jewish assembly, then this makes sense.*
 - *Rev. 2:7 - From a church perspective, this is somewhat problematic. From a futurist perspective, it is perfectly in harmony. See Rev. 21:7.*
- The Church at Smyrna
 - *Rev. 2:10 - In a non-futurist presentation the interpreter is left to speculation as to what this refers to. The instruction to be **faithful unto death** fits better with the tribulation period, such as Matt. 10:22.*
 - *Rev 2:11 - This statement is problematic in a non-futurist interpretation of the letters to the churches.*
- The church at Thyatira
 - *Rev. 2:22-23 - This passage is problematic except with a futurist view, since it threatens **great tribulation** on all except those who repent.*
 - *Rev. 2:26 - Under what circumstances does this fit for the Age of Grace? It is only fitting for the Jewish age, prior to the mystery of the church, and after the church's rapture.*
- The Church at Sardis
 - *Rev. 3:2 – **I have not found thy works perfect** - This is problematic in the age of Grace, in which we are complete in Christ, and our sufficiency is in Christ. Works are a response to grace not a requirement of grace.*
 - *Rev. 3:4 - Yet another statement that is incompatible with the age of grace, in which our worthiness comes through Christ.*
 - *Rev. 3:5 - To align this with the age of grace requires verbal gymnastics.*
- The Church at Philadelphia
 - *Rev. 3:10 - This is a clear reference to the tribulation, and clearly teaches that the protection of God will come because of keeping **the word of my patience**. This is incompatible with the church age which is **delivered...from the wrath to come** by Jesus.*
- The Church at Laodicea
 - *Rev. 3:16 - If this is written of the church age, can anyone have assurance?*
 - *Rev. 3:21 - As in the Gospels (before Paul), the right to reign with Christ comes from sacrifice.*