



# The Revelation of Jesus

THE HOPE WE HAVE THROUGH HIS APOCALYPSE

## Revelation is a BLESSING

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“Revelation” in Greek is *apocalypse*. While in 21st Century America, this means “end of the world”, in the 1st Century it meant “unveiling” or “revealing”. Think of it like when a curtain is drawn back to show something WONDERFUL! Many people avoid studying Revelation because it can be *scary* and *confusing*. But consider these words: *Everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort.* — 1 Corinthians 14:3

And then consider Jesus’ own words: *Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.* — Revelation 1:3

## THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS ADVANCING BY WAY OF THE GOOD NEWS, AND WHEN THAT MISSION IS COMPLETE, THEN THE END WILL COME.

Jesus said: “And this GOOD NEWS of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and THEN the end will come...” — Matthew 24:14.

## PW’s Principles of Interpretation

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### Jesus is God’s Word. Not the Bible.

1. This will strike some Christians as unsettling. But always remember:
  - a. A book didn’t come from heaven. **JESUS DID!**
  - b. If we somehow lost all the books (print & digital!), God’s Word would persist!
  - c. Those who cannot read or do not have Bibles still have and testify to God’s Word!

### God’s Word is then **spoken, written, sung, eaten, drank, splashed & sprinkled, and lived out by, for and through humans.**

2. Jesus didn’t write any books, instead He made His dwelling among us!
  - a. As He lived, He brought in the words of what we call the Old Testament. But He didn’t just teach them or talk about them, He FULFILLED THEM! This carrying and fulfilling of the Old Testament combined with the record of Jesus’ life, death, resurrection, created, for us, a *shared vocabulary*: The **true story** of our universe, where it came from, and where it is going!
  - b. Indeed, Jesus’ followers collected this shared vocabulary, this true story, into THE BIBLE!
  - c. It is read aloud. It is preached by preachers, but also (more importantly!) shared by a mother to her hurting child, experienced by two friends over a meal, whispered at a graveside, demonstrated by one who shares generously with another. **God’s Word is unleashed by humans!** For humans! THROUGH HUMANS! This reality is a mystery to be sure, but it is according to Jesus and by His command. He promises us it is the MEANS by which His grace and love—His Kingdom—comes!

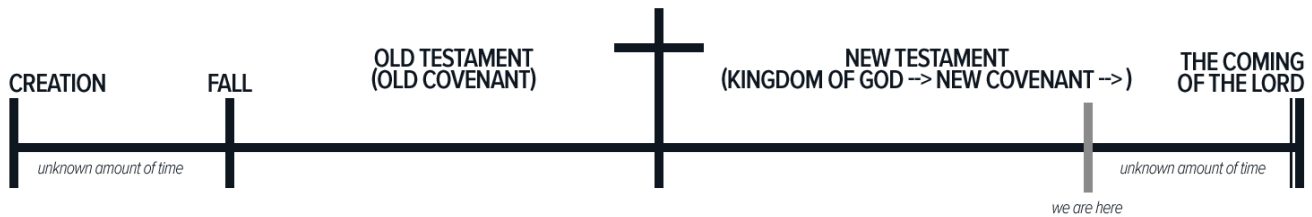
### Scripture Interprets Scripture

3. When we encounter passages that we don’t understand, we lean on the ones we DO! Put another way, difficult passages should always cause us to KEEP READING rather than to stop.

# The Big Picture

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This chart represents the general timeline of Scripture:



Note that the **Coming of the Lord** (*parousian tou kyriou* in Greek, or simply “**Parousia**”), as seen in the passages below is NOT something for Jesus followers to fear!

Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. According to the Lord’s own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till **the coming of the Lord**, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. **Therefore encourage each other with these words.** — 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Note these passages where “Parousia” is used:

- **Matthew 24**:3, 27, 37, 39 (Utilize all of chapter 24, noting especially verses 6, 8, 14 & 23-27!)
- **1 Corinthians 15**:23 (Utilize all of chapter 15!)
- **1 Thessalonians** 2:19, 3:13, 4:15, 5:23 (but always remember 24!!!!)
- **2 Thessalonians** 2:1, 8, 9 (Utilize all of chapter 2, but also see 3:1-5, noting especially 3:3!!!!)
- **James 5**:7-8 (but note how James proceeds through the end of the book!!!!)
- **2 Peter** 1:16; 3:4, 12 (Here we see how Jesus’ **first coming** and **second coming** are related)
- **1 John** 2:28 (And include the context all the way through 4:2!!!!)

# The End Times

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The phrases such as “the end times” or “the last days” come from the Greek word *eschatos* which is found 52 times in the New Testament. It literally means “the end” or “the last”. This is why the study of the end times is called “eschatology”.

*In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.* — Hebrews 1:1-2

“These last days” (when read in context with passages such as Daniel 7, Isaiah 6, 9, 11 & 40-55, Matthew 1-3, et al.), demonstrates that **with the FIRST coming of Jesus, the “end times” began.**

- Read **Daniel 7:13-14** together with **Mark 13:23-27** and **Acts 1:6-9**. See also Acts 2 where Peter, carried by the Holy Spirit, interprets the prophesy of Joel 2:28-32 as having been *fulfilled at Pentecost*.

\* Important! When you start to feel overwhelmed, or ill equipped to “handle” this, take a deep breath, **take a step back and look at Jesus, look at the cross, look at the empty tomb.** Read **1 Corinthians 2:1-5** and **Revelation 1:3**.