

# Is the entire book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ for the church, or only the first three chapters?

by  
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A common teaching, adopted from Dispensational theologians who believe that God has a separate covenant, separate promises, and a separate plan of salvation for those Jews of the end times who will experience the final seven years of tribulation (Daniel's "70<sup>th</sup> week"), argue that the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, given to the apostle, John, has no application for the church after the third chapter.

The claim that the church does not appear in the prophecy after the Lord's letter to the seven churches supports their claim of a pre-tribulation resurrection-"rapture" of church only saints.

But the scriptural evidence reveals that the primary application of the Revelation of Jesus Christ is for the church.

The purpose of this short commentary is to reach those who have adopted the popular Dispensational teaching about the irrelevancy of Revelation beyond chapter 3 to the church without thoroughly examining the evidence with a Berean spirit.

## Revelation 1:1:

***The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants...(the church)...the things which soon must take place...(which includes the entirety of the final seven years of tribulation)...; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant, John. Revelation 1:1 NASB*** (inserts and emphasis are the author's)

To whom was the revelation intended to be shown? To His bond-servants. And who were His bond-servants at the time of the revelation? The church. Not national Israel, and not racial Jews, other than those who have been grafted back into the Olive Tree.

And why would He show the church the things which soon must take place if it has little application for them?

The Lord clearly tells us that the book concerns the things John had seen, "things which **are**, and the things that **will take place** after these things." (Revelation 1:19) The things that "are" at the time of the message includes the seven churches in what now constitutes the country of Turkey to whom He wrote the letters.

These seven churches were not the only churches in existence at the time of His letters and His revelation, and we can conclude that these seven real churches also represent seven “types” of churches, which we can also assume are a part of “things that will take place.”

Only two of the churches, the church at Smyrna and the church at Philadelphia, received a pass, and only the church at Philadelphia received a promise relative to the final seven years.

***Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come on the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. Revelation 3:10 NASB***

***Because you have guarded and kept My word of patient endurance [have held fast the lesson of My patience with the expectant endurance that I give you], I also will keep you [safe] from the hour of trial (testing) which is coming on the whole world to try those who dwell upon the earth. Revelation 3:10 Amplified***

We can assume that this promise was to a “type” of the Philadelphian church as it will exist at the time of the “hour of testing,” because no such “hour” of testing took place during the life of the church as it existed at the time of the letter. We can also assume that the qualifications for this type of church (the church of brotherly love) include persevering in obedience to the revelation of His will under extreme trial and persecution.

But we cannot assume that this promise to a now non-existent church in Turkey somehow applies to the church universal. If it was meant to apply to the church universal, then He would have applied it to all seven types at the time of His letter.

**Therefore, the church universal has no such promise.**

There are two aspects of this promise to what is a rare “type” of church today that need to be examined. The first is an examination of the word “keep” transliterated as *tereo* (Strong’s #5083) which means to carefully guard or watch over, and “from” transliterated as *ek* (Strong’s #1536) which means separation from, but not necessarily, removal in the sense of exiting from earth.

Two events in Revelation demonstrate God’s supernatural “watching over” and “separation from” the hour of trial without removal in the sense of a “rapture” or resurrection. These are the 144,000 who are “sealed” for protection (Revelation 7:3) and the woman (Israel) who flees to the wilderness where she is protected by Michael.

This is not an argument for or against the church being “spiritual Israel.” I am merely demonstrating that the promise to some real church at the time of the seven final years of tribulation can be to keep them safe during the “hour” of testing without removing them from the earth.

Nor is there any scriptural evidence that God would remove the Philadelphian church by “rapture” before the final seven years of tribulation and leave all the other types of the church behind (i.e. partial “rapture” theory).

If He did so today, 99.9% of the church in America, including the author, would be among those left behind. So those of you who are hoping to be included in a pre-tribulation “rapture” of the Philadelphian type of church had better become missionaries to some part of the world where Christians are routinely martyred for their faith, and,

even then, you will need to make sure that you are in obedience to all that the original church at Philadelphia was commended for.

For a list of these countries go to: [www.persecution.org](http://www.persecution.org), and, if you go, may you go with His blessings.

The next astonishing passage near the end of Revelation that seems to be overlooked by Dispensational theologians is Revelation 22:16 NASB:

***I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things **for the churches...*****

Consider this:

1) the revelation of Jesus Christ was given word for word to John, an apostle of the church;

2) it was given to John, who described himself as a bond-servant, to show to the Lord's other bond-servants (the church);

3) it is included in the Christian Bible to be read and heeded by Christians;

4) the message includes a promise of protection to the Philadelphian "type" of church during the "hour" of testing, which "hour" is then described in detail;

5) the charge to repent applies primarily to the Sardis and Laodicean "types" of church predominant today, and tribulation is intended to produce repentance;

6) the Lord specifically states that the purpose of this revelation is "for the churches," not for national Israel or for racial Jews who are not now or do not become Christians at the time;

7) we who read the revelation of Jesus Christ are solemnly instructed and warned not to take away from or add to the words of this testimony.

Denial of these very clear facts **is** to take away from or add to the Lord's revelation for the churches, and that is a dangerous thing to do.

Likewise, the promised blessings to those who read and heed the message are to those whose spiritual eyes and spiritual ears are not darkened and deafened by those who deceive and are, themselves, deceived by the false teaching that only the first three chapters of the Revelation of Jesus Christ apply to the church.

***Blessed is he...***(the bond-servant of Jesus Christ)...***who reads...***(with the eyes of his heart)... ***and those...***(bond-servants of Jesus Christ)... ***who hear...***(with spiritual ears)... ***the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it...("for the churches")***...***for the time is near.*** Revelation 1:3 NASB (inserts and emphasis are the author's)

Now, with opened eyes concerning the relevancy of the entire book of Revelation to the church, the Olivet prophecy (Matthew 24 and 25, Mark 13, Luke 21), Daniel 7-9, Ezekiel 38 and 39, Joel 2 and the prophetic passages in the epistles will dovetail perfectly into each other as we begin to complete the puzzle of end times prophecy appropriately..

**May He grant you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you examine scripture to find out if what has been written here is true or not.**