

## 7 Church Ages

Is there any reason to assume that the 7 churches of Revelation are anything other than the visible, local, assemblies (ekklesia)? One would certainly have to force this on scripture.

**Revelation 1:19** <sup>19</sup> Write the things which thou **hast** seen, and the things which **are**, and the things which **shall be** hereafter;

- hast seen – the past
- which are – the present
- shall be hereafter – future
  - We can divide the book into three divisions
    - past – Chp 1
    - present – Chp 2-3
    - Future – Chp 4-22

### 4 Common means of interpretation

Allegorical – look at everything in Revelation and claim it to be an allegory (a story with a meaning)

- The reader has to determine\decide which events are being allegorized
- What people will do is to say “there are certain events in history that John is referring to in the book of Revelation. We will decide which ones these are based on how we see things
  - They may look at the passages where the 7 Seals are opened. As they look at the judgments they will say “this one belongs under Nero and his time of persecution, or this coincides with the events surrounding Hitler.
  - Each one of these things is an allegory and we need to determine which event fits.

Historical – it is saying that these revelations are being fulfilled “right now” amillennialists<sup>1</sup> fit into this group for the most part

- Similar to allegorical except this view says these events are happening right now.

Preterite – Chp 2-3 are 1st century – 4→18 are present history (church age) – 19→22 is prophecy

- Revelation Chp 2-3 were written to the churches in the 1<sup>st</sup> century
  - 1<sup>st</sup> century
- Revelation Chp 4-18 is the church age
  - Present history (current church age)
- 19-21 is the future
  - Prophecy \ future

Futurist – all events from Chp 4 to Chp 22 as yet to be fulfilled (literal view)

- All events from Chp 4-22 as yet to be fulfilled
- May be called the literal view

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<sup>1</sup> Jesus isn't literally coming back to earth, but Jesus will “rule and reign” in our hearts. They deny the 1000 year Millennial reign of Christ

Some modify this view

Chp 2-3 are the church age

Church of Ephesus – represents 1<sup>st</sup> century church

Church at Smyra – represents 2<sup>nd</sup> century → 3<sup>rd</sup> century: persecuted church

Church of Thyatira - represents 4<sup>th</sup> century → : state church of Rome

They say this age is the great missionary age

Which brings us to today and that is Laodecia

- What happens if there is an 8<sup>th</sup> age?
- The coming of the Lord is imminent
- Does that mean Jesus couldn't come until all ages are fulfilled?
  - o If this is your view of Re 1-3 then yes it does
  - o They are in actuality representative of churches in all ages
- Otherwise this destroys the immanency of Christ's return if we have "ages" of the church that must happen in this order
  - o If we are in the Laodecian age we have to watch out as Christ can come back any time
  - o However, this also means he could not come back in any of the previous ages because we would not have the Laodecian age
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Problems \ Issues

Allegorical – there is no reason to suspect John is speaking in this manner

Historical –

Preterite –

Futurist –

We have to look at it in the Futurist view

- Everything from CHP 4-22 is yet to be fulfilled
- We have to do that as it involves the nation of Israel, not the church
- The church is not mentioned after CHP 3
  - Tribulation is Jewish
    - Was given in the OT while the church was still hidden
    - This is why we hold to a pre-millennial rapture
    - All the tribulation is Jewish, it has nothing to do with the church age
- We haven't seen the seal judgments
- We haven't seen the bowl judgments
- We haven't seen the trumpet judgments

**Mark 1:15** And saying, The **time**<sup>2</sup> is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

**Mark 4:12** That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; **lest at any time**<sup>3</sup> they should be converted, and *their* sins should be forgiven them.

**Mark 4:17** And have no root in themselves, and so endure but **for a time**<sup>4</sup>: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

**Mark 6:35** And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the **time**<sup>5</sup> is far passed:

**Mark 10:30** But he shall receive an hundredfold now in **this time**<sup>6</sup>,<sup>2</sup> houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

**Mark 11:13** And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the **time**<sup>2</sup> of figs was not *yet*.

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<sup>2</sup> **TIME - 2540 καιρός** kairos {kahee-ros'}

**Meaning:** 1) due measure 2) a measure of time, a larger or smaller portion of time, hence: 2a) a fixed and definite time, the time when things are brought to crisis, the decisive epoch waited for 2b) opportune or seasonable time 2c) the right time 2d) a limited period of time 2e) to what time brings, the state of the times, the things and events of time

**Origin:** of uncertain affinity; TDNT - 3:455,389; n m

**Usage:** AV - time 64, season 13, opportunity 2, due time 2, always + 1722 + 3956 2, not tr 1, misc 3; 87

**Misc:** For Synonyms see entry 5853

<sup>3</sup> **LEST AT ANY TIME - 3379 μήποτε** mepote {may'-pot-eh} or **μη'ποτε** me pote {may pot'-eh}

**Meaning:** 1) that ... not, lest, whether perhaps, whether or not, in no way, perhaps

**Origin:** from 3361 and 4218;; conj

**Usage:** AV - lest 12, lest at any time 7, whether or not 1, lest haply + 2443 1, if peradventure 1, no ... not at all 1, not tr 1; 25

<sup>4</sup> **FOR A TIME - 4340 πρόσκαιρος** proskairos {pros'-kahee-ros}

**Meaning:** 1) for a season 2) enduring only for a while 3) temporary

**Origin:** from 4314 and 2540; TDNT - 3:463,389; adj

**Usage:** AV - for a while 1, for a time 1, temporal 1, for a season 1; 4

<sup>5</sup> **TIME - 5610 ὥρα** hora {ho'-rah}

**Meaning:** 1) a certain definite time or season fixed by natural law and returning with the revolving year 1a) of the seasons of the year, spring, summer, autumn, winter 2) the daytime (bounded by the rising and setting of the sun), a day 3) a twelfth part of the day-time, an hour, (the twelve hours of the day are reckoned from the rising to the setting of the sun) 4) any definite time, point of time, moment

**Origin:** apparently a primary word; TDNT - 9:675,1355; n f

**Usage:** AV - hour 89, time 11, season 3, misc 5; 108

<sup>6</sup> **THIS - 5129 τούτω** touto {too'-to}

**Meaning:** 1) to this one

**Origin:** dative case singular masculine or neuter of 3778;; pron

**Usage:** AV - this 59, him 10, hereby + 1722 8, herein + 1722 7, misc 5; 89

**Mark 13:19** For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto **this time**,<sup>7</sup> neither shall be.

**Matthew 28:20** Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the **world**.<sup>8</sup> Amen.

**Hebrews 9:26** For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the **world**<sup>8</sup> hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

**Mark 14:41** And he cometh the **third time**,<sup>9</sup> and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

**Mark 14:72** And the **second time**<sup>10</sup> the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.

**Luke 1:10** And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the **time**<sup>5</sup> of incense.

**Luke 1:57** Now Elisabeth's full **time**<sup>11</sup> came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.

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<sup>7</sup> **THIS TIME** - 3568 νῦν nun {noon}

**Meaning:** 1) at this time, the present, now

**Origin:** a primary particle of present time; TDNT - 4:1106,658; adv

**Usage:** AV - now 121, present 4, henceforth 4, this + 3588 3, this time 2, misc 5; 139

**Misc:** For Synonyms see entry 5815

<sup>8</sup> **WORLD** - 165 αἰών aion {ahee-ohn'}

**Meaning:** 1) for ever, an unbroken age, perpetuity of time, eternity 2) the worlds, universe 3) period of time, age

**Origin:** from the same as 104; TDNT - 1:197,31; n m

**Usage:** AV - ever 71, world 38, never + 3364 + 1519 + 3588 6, evermore 4, age 2, eternal 2, misc 5; 128

<sup>9</sup> **THIRD TIME** - 5154 τρίτος tritos {tree'-tos}

**Meaning:** 1) the third

**Origin:** ordinal from 5140; TDNT - 8:216,1188; adj

**Usage:** AV - third 56, thirdly 1; 57

Jn21:17

<sup>10</sup> **SECOND TIME** - 1208 δεύτερος deuterios {dyoo'-ter-os}

**Meaning:** 1) the second, the other of two

**Origin:** as the compare of 1417;; adj

**Usage:** AV - second 34, the second time + 1537 4, the second time 4, again + 1537 2, again 1, secondarily 1, afterward 1; 47

Ac 7:13, 10:15

<sup>11</sup> **TIME** - 5550 χρόνος khronos {khron'-os}

**Meaning:** 1) time either long or short

**Origin:** of uncertain derivation; TDNT - 9:581,1337; n m

**Usage:** AV - time 33, season 4, while 2, a while 2, space 2, oftentimes + 4183 1, not tr 5, misc 4; 53

**Luke 4:5** And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a **moment**<sup>12</sup> of **time**.<sup>11</sup>

**Luke 4:11** And in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, **lest at any time**<sup>3</sup> thou dash thy foot against a stone.

**Luke 8:13** They on the rock *are they*, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in **time**<sup>2</sup> of temptation fall away.

**Luke 8:27** And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long **time**<sup>11</sup>, and ware no clothes, neither abode in *any* house, but in the tombs.

**Luke 9:51** And it came to pass, when the **time**<sup>13</sup> was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,

**Luke 12:56** *Ye* hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this **time**?<sup>2</sup>

**Luke 16:16** The law and the prophets *were* until John: since that **time**<sup>14</sup> the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

**Luke 18:30** Who shall not receive manifold more in this **present**<sup>6</sup> **time**,<sup>2</sup> and in the world to come life everlasting.

**Luke 20:9** Then began he to speak to the people this parable; A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long **time**.<sup>11</sup>

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**Misc:** For Synonyms see entry 5853

<sup>12</sup> **MOMENT** - 4743 **στιγμή** stigme {stig-may'}

**Meaning:** 1) an instant (i.e. a moment) of time

**Origin:** from 4742;; n f

**Usage:** AV - moment 1; **1**

<sup>13</sup> **TIME** - 2250 **ἡμέρα** hemera {hay-mer'-ah}

**Meaning:** 1) the day, used of the natural day, or the interval between sunrise and sunset, as distinguished from and contrasted with the night 1a) in the daytime 1b) metaph., "the day" is regarded as the time for abstaining from indulgence, vice, crime, because acts of the sort are perpetrated at night and in darkness 2) of the civil day, or the space of twenty four hours (thus including the night) 2a) Eastern usage of this term differs from our western usage. Any part of a day is counted as a whole day, hence the expression "three days and three nights" does not mean literally three whole days, but at least one whole day plus part of two other days. 3) of the last day of this present age, the day Christ will return from heaven, raise the dead, hold the final judgment, and perfect his kingdom 4) used of time in general, i.e. the days of his life.

**Origin:** from (with 5610 implied) of a derivative of hemai (to sit, akin to the base of 1476) meaning tame, i.e. gentle;

TDNT - 2:943,309; n f

**Usage:** AV - day 355, daily + 2596 15, time 3, not tr 2, misc 14; 389

<sup>14</sup> **TIME** - 5119 **τότε** tote {tot'-eh}

**Meaning:** 1) then 2) at that time

**Origin:** from (the neuter of) 3588 and 3753;; adv

**Usage:** AV - then 149, that time 4, when 1, not tr 5; 159

**Luke 23:22** And he said unto them the **third time**,<sup>9</sup> Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let *him* go.

**John 1:18** No man hath seen God **at any time**;<sup>15</sup> the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*.

**John 3:4** Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the **second time**<sup>10</sup> into his mother's womb, and be born?

**John 5:6** When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a **long**<sup>16</sup> **time**<sup>11</sup> *in that case*, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

**John 11:39** Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by **this time**<sup>17</sup> he stinketh: for he hath been *dead* four days.

**John 21:14** This is now the **third time**<sup>9</sup> that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.

**John 21:16** He saith to him again the **second time**,<sup>10</sup> Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

**Acts 11:8** But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time<sup>18</sup> entered into my mouth.

**Acts 15:21** For Moses of **old**<sup>19</sup> **time**<sup>20</sup> hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.

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<sup>15</sup> **AT ANY TIME** - 4455 **πῶποτε** popote {po'-pot-e}

**Meaning:** 1) ever, at any time

**Origin:** from 4452 and 4218;; adv

**Usage:** AV - at any time 3, yet never + 3762 1, never 1, never + 3364 1; 6

<sup>16</sup> **LONG** - 4183 **πολύς** polus {pol-oos'}

**Meaning:** 1) many, much, large

**Origin:** including the forms from the alternate pollos; TDNT - 6:536,\*; adj

**Usage:** AV - many 210, much 73, great 59, misc 23; 365

<sup>17</sup> **THIS TIME** - 2235 **ἤδη** ede {ay'-day}

**Meaning:** 1) now, already

**Origin:** apparently from 2228 (or possibly 2229) and 1211;; adv

**Usage:** AV - now 37, already 17, yet 2, even now 1, by this time 1, now already 1; 59

**Misc:** For Synonyms see entry 5815

<sup>18</sup> **AT ANY TIME** - 3763 **οὐδέποτε** oudepote {oo-dep'-ot-eh}

**Meaning:** 1) never

**Origin:** from 3761 and 4218;; adv

**Usage:** AV - never 14, neither at any time 1, nothing at any time + 3856 1; 16

<sup>19</sup> **OLD** - 744 **ἀρχαῖος** archaios {ar-khah'-yos}

**Meaning:** 1) that has been from the beginning, original, primal, old ancient 1a) of men, things, times, conditions

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**Origin:** from 746; TDNT - 1:486,81; adj  
**Usage:** AV - old 8, of old time 3, a good while ago + 575 + 2250 1; 12  
**Misc:** For Synonyms see entry 5816

<sup>20</sup> **TIME - 1074** γένεα genea {ghen-eh-ah'}

**Meaning:** 1) fathered, birth, nativity 2) that which has been begotten, men of the same stock, a family 2a) the several ranks of natural descent, the successive members of a genealogy 2b) metaph. a race of men very like each other in endowments, pursuits, character 2b1) esp. in a bad sense, a perverse race 3) the whole multitude of men living at the same time 4) an age (i.e. the time ordinarily occupied by each successive generation), a space of 30 - 33 years

**Origin:** from (a presumed derivative of) 1085; TDNT - 1:662,114; n f

**Usage:** AV - generation 37, time 2, age 2, nation 1; 42