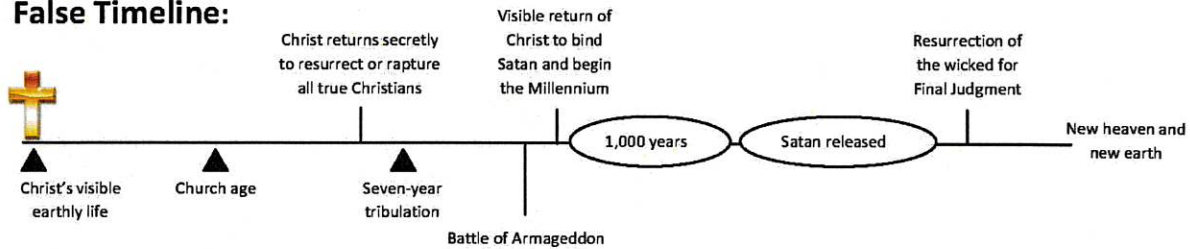


THE END TIMES IN REVELATION

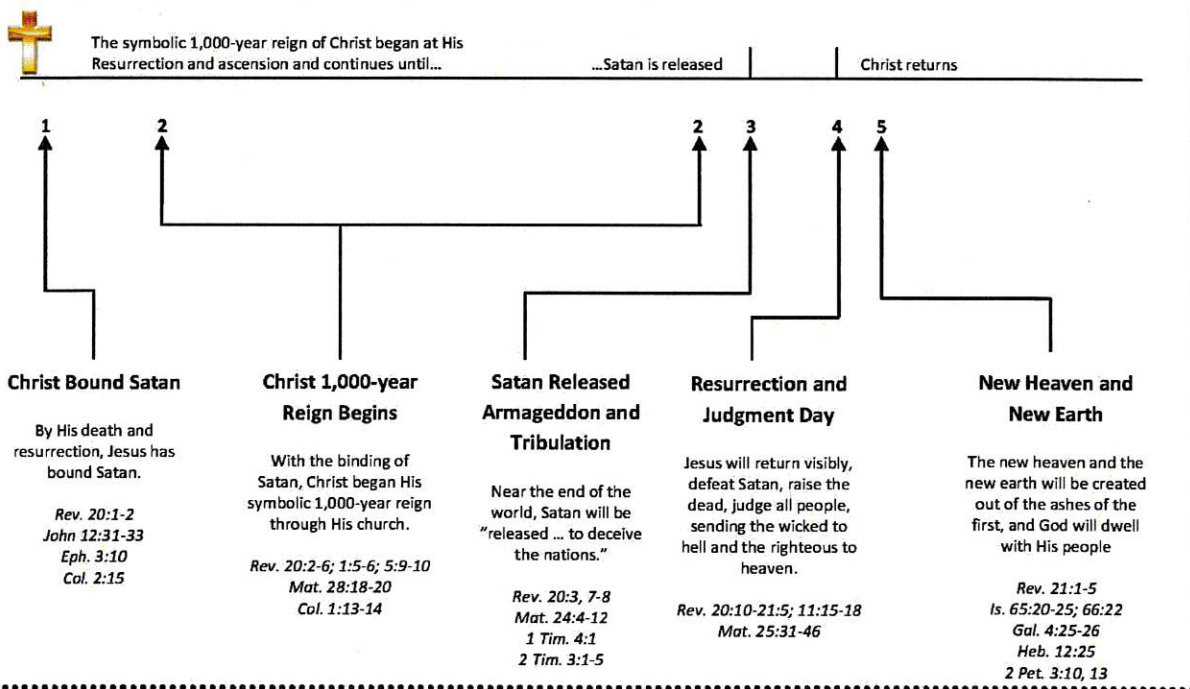
Though Revelation can be difficult to understand because it uses so many symbols, it actually provides a very simple description of the End Times, as the early Christians found out. For example, after reading Revelation and the rest of Scripture, the early Christians summarized the End Times as follows: “[Jesus now] sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead ... We believe in ... the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting” (The Apostles’ Creed). For centuries this simple summary of the End Times—rooted in Revelation—guided Christian teaching.

Today, however, false teachers have created many confusing and complex interpretations of Revelation. They have added false doctrines like the *Rapture* and the *Millennium* to Revelation’s summary of the End Times. As a result, many Christians are confused about what will happen in the future. For a simple, clear understanding of how Revelation differs from modern, false opinions, study the timelines below. Be sure to look up the Bible references and see how Revelation agrees with the rest of God’s Word.

False Timeline:



Revelation’s TRUE Timeline:



Revelation’s simple timeline clearly shows that no Rapture of Millennium must take place before Jesus returns. He could reappear for Judgment Day at any time! Therefore, “Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book” (Rev. 22:7). Study Revelation and joyously look forward to the return of your Savior.

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Beware of Popular Opinions!

The chart on the following pages compares the correct understanding of Revelation with some very popular and misleading opinions. The way you understand Revelation makes a significant difference, as the third column clearly explains.

	Popular Opinions	True Teaching	The Difference It Makes for You
Millennialism	<p><i>Millennium</i> means 1,000. <i>Millennialism</i> thus teaches that the Messiah will return to crush His enemies and establish a 1,000-year earthly kingdom. Frustrated with their domination by the Romans, even before Jesus was born, ancient Jews invented the false teaching of Millennialism. Today, in some form, most Baptists, Pentecostals, and Adventists teach that Jesus will return to destroy His enemies, set up an earthly kingdom, and rule for 1,000 years.</p>	<p>The 1,000 years mentioned in Rev. 20:2 are not literal, but are a symbol which illustrates the New Testament era from the time of Christ up to Armageddon, just before the End. We see this in poetry and prophecies of the Old Testament where 1,000 symbolizes any great amount or long period of time (Ps. 50:10; 84:10; 90:4). Jesus does not need to return to set up an earthly kingdom since He has already established His kingdom among all believers (Matt. 12:28; Jn. 18:36; Rom. 14:17; Rev. 1:5-6).</p>	<p>In believing the heresy that Jesus has yet to establish His kingdom, you deny Jesus' preaching: "the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mk. 1:15), and you remove yourself from the promise that, in Jesus, God has already "delivered [you] from the domain of darkness, and transferred [you] to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom [you] have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:13-14). Reject the heresy that Jesus is yet to establish His kingdom. Instead, live daily in Christ's kingdom and be totally assured of God's complete forgiveness and His total protection from all evil powers (Rom. 8:37-39).</p>
The Rapture	<p><i>Rapture</i>¹ means "to raise up." Many U.S. Protestants believe, teach, and spread to other countries the heretical idea that God will rapture or raise up Christians and thus remove them from the final tribulation described in Revelation. Some also teach that the Rapture will give people a second chance to repent before Jesus returns a second time.</p>	<p>Revelation does not teach a Rapture of Christians. God will not remove Christians from the earth so that they might avoid suffering. Instead, Revelation teaches that God will preserve His people in the face of persecution and suffering (Rev. 3:10; 14:12).</p> <p>Since Christ will resurrect all believers and unbelievers on Judgment Day, there will be no second chance for repentance (Rev. 11:18; 20:11-15).</p>	<p>God's Word does not teach the Rapture. Nowhere does our heavenly Father say He will remove anyone from the tribulation spoken of in Revelation; however, as the End Times occur, your gracious heavenly Father promises to give you all the strength needed to face even the most difficult suffering. "If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:31-32).</p>
The Seven-Year Tribulation	<p>Tribulation means "suffering." Revelation 7:14 warns that God's people will face "great tribulation" before Christ returns. Some</p>	<p>The book of Revelation teaches the great tribulation neither as a future event nor as a seven-year period. Instead, the great tribulations refers to the</p>	<p>So long as you live on this earth, the devil will continually strive to deceive and destroy you (1 Pet. 5:8). But Christ has defeated the devil! Though you may face</p>

	<p>interpreters argue that this great tribulation has not yet started. They teach that the tribulation is a future event that will last only seven years.</p>	<p>persecution and suffering God's people have, and always will, face in this corrupt world (Acts 14:22; Rev. 1:9).</p>	<p>suffering, be fully assured that God will help you through your most difficult times and, when Jesus returns, He will "wipe every tear from [your] eyes," and take you to be with Him in Paradise, forever! (Rev. 7:17)</p>
<p>The 144,000 of Israel</p>	<p>Based on a misunderstanding of Rev. 7:4-8, some Christians assert that a special group of 144,000² Jews will convert to Christianity at the End of Time. They believe that God will seal these Jews by granting them special protection during the tribulation described in Revelation.</p>	<p>The 144,000 sons of Israel are Jews, but all Christians on earth who are baptized and thus sealed by God. This teaching of Revelation harmonizes with St. Paul who refers to all believers and the Christian church as the "new Israel" (see Gal. 6:15-16; "Israel of God" means all who trust in Christ, not just Jews; also Rom. 9:6-8; 11:25-26; Gal. 3:29)</p>	<p>If you have been baptized (i.e., sealed by the Spirit of God) and trust that the Lord forgives your sins, then you are one of God's chosen people (Acts 2:38-39; 2 Cor. 1:22). You are a part of that symbolic 144,000 "sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel" (Rev. 7:4). That means God will preserve you in the days of tribulation that lie ahead and will finally take you to heaven.</p>
<p>Armageddon</p>	<p><i>Armageddon</i> is Hebrew for Mt. Megiddo. Based on a misunderstanding of Rev. 16:16, some teach that Armageddon refers to a war that will start in the Middle East and will cause the end of the world.</p> <p>These false prophets use Middle Eastern military and political events, especially those dealing with the modern nation of Israel, to explain Revelation and predict the end of the world.</p>	<p>Armageddon refers to the last great warfare that the devil will wage against the church of Christ on earth in one last attempt to destroy it. Though causing much suffering for the church, God will destroy the evil hosts arrayed against His saints on earth. And then then the end of the world will come (Rev. 9:13-14; 16:12-16; 20:7-10; cf. Ezek. 38-39; Mk. 13:14-27).</p> <p>Literally, Armageddon is the geographical area east of Mt. Megiddo in northern Israel. Since many ancient battles took place on this site (2 Chr. 35:22; Zech. 12:11), Armageddon became a symbol of horrible suffering and divine punishment.</p>	<p>You cannot prepare for the end of the world by observing world events and using them to interpret the Bible (Matt. 24:4-6). Instead, regularly read Revelation and keep in mind the important Gospel message of this final book of the Bible: that God will give you all the strength you need to overcome all difficulties of this life; and that your heavenly Father will prepare you for that day when Jesus will return to wipe away all tears and make all things new! (Rev. 21:1-7)</p>

