

OCCASION AND PURPOSE: *Why do we read Revelation?*

- Persecution has come. *Jesus comforts the afflicted!*
 - Persecution has already fallen on some (1:9; 2:9,13) and more is coming. (2:10; 13:7-10)
 - But while persecution threatens from without, the Lord stands within the church. (1:13-14; 2:1)
 - Believers, therefore, should take courage since he also suffered persecution and triumphed and his victory secures their own. (1:17-18; 5:9-10; 12:10-11)
 - The great tribulation that believers must endure now can't compare with the eternity they will one day enjoy if they persevere and don't succumb to the temptation. (2:10; 13:10)
- Compromise has occurred. *Jesus afflicts the comfortable!*
 - The threats faced by the church are not only governmental persecution but also theological apostasy.
 - Christians must not tolerate false teaching. (2:6,15,20-25)
- Revelation is a letter from Christ to his church. It is a call to faithful perseverance. He suffered for us, is risen for us, dwells even now with his people, and will one day come for us to establish his eternal reign, shared with all who have remained faithful in the face of persecution and false teaching.

LITERARY GENRE: *How do we read Revelation?*

- **Apocalypse** (1:1)
 - From John Collins:
 - Narrative framework
 - Revelation from an "otherworldly being"
 - Disclosing a transcendent reality that is both *temporal* (it makes sense of history) and *spatial* (there's more to reality than just earth).
 - Function: comfort believers during severe trials and challenge believers to adopt a new (heavenly) reality.
 - Characteristics:
 - Discloses God's ultimate purposes in history.
 - Unveils a transcendent, God-centered perspective on reality. Not just alternate visions of earth *and* heaven, but earth *from* heaven.
 - The narrative centers on OT images.
 - The symbols unveil the reality.
 - Persecution and suffering seem to cast doubt on the prophecies, but the images remind us that God is sovereign and history is moving to a climax.

- **Prophecy** (1:3, 22:6,18-19)
 - Present realities and future hope. (“*what is and what is to come*”; “*the time is near*”; “*what must soon take place*”)
 - Oracles and visions. (“*The first woe has passed and behold the second woe is to come*”; “*Then I saw*”; “*At once I was in the Spirit*”)
 - Divine disclosure and ethical response. (“*Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints*”)
- **Epistle** (1:4-6; Ch. 2-3)
 - Author
 - Salutation
 - Recipients
 - Greeting
 - Closing benediction

STRUCTURE: *How does Revelation unfold?*

- Prologue & Epilogue (from Tabb)

Revelation 1:1-8 God sent his angel (v.1) The things that must soon take place (v.1) John bore witness to all that he saw (v.2) Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy...who keep what is in it. (v.3) Behold he is coming with the clouds (v.7)	Revelation 22:6-8 The Lord sent his angel (v.6) What must soon take place (v.6) John heard and saw these things (v.8) Blessed is the one who keeps the prophecy of this book. (v.7) And behold I am coming soon (v.7)
--	--

- Four series of 7
 - 7 churches addressed
 - 7 seals opened
 - 7 trumpets blown
 - 7 bowls poured out

- Broad Outlines
 - From 1:19
 - What you have seen (1:12-20)
 - What is (2:1-3:22)
 - What is to come (4:1-22:5)
 - 4 Visions (1:19-22:15) - *“In the Spirit”*
 - [*“The things that are.”*]
 - Of Christ in His Church (1:19-3:22)
 - [*“The things that will take place after this.”*]
 - In Heaven (4:1-16:21)
 - In the Wilderness (17:1-21:8)
 - On a Mountain (21:9-22:15)