Walk Through the Book of Revelation
Class Schedule

January 19  Introduction to the Book of Revelation
January 26  Introduction (1:1-8); Greetings and Doxology (1:4-8); The Son of Man Among the Lampstands (1:9-20)
February 2  Out
February 9  The Letters to the Seven Churches (2:1-3:22); To Ephesus (2:1-7); To Smyrna (2:8-11); To Pergamum (2:12-17)
February 16 To Thyatira (2:18-29); To Sardis (3:1-6); To Philadelphia (3:7-13); To Laodicea (3:14-22)
February 23 The Seven-Sealed Scroll (4:1-8:1)
March 2    Ash Wednesday
March 9    C. The Seven Signs (12:1-14:20)
March 16   Spring Break
March 23   The Seven Bowls (15:1-19:10)
March 30   Vision of the Return of Christ & the Consummation of This Age (19:11-20:15)
April 6    Vision of the Return of Christ & the Consummation of This Age (19:11-20:15) pt.2
April 13   (optional because of Holy Week)
April 20   Vision of the New Heaven; New Earth; New Jerusalem (21:1-22:5)
I. Question: Just What is the Bible? Answer: Salvation History

II. The history and make-up of the Bible
A. Structure: 66 Books; 39 O.T. 27 N.T.
   1. O.T. ____ of the law; ____ of history; ____ of poetry; ____ major prophets; ____ minor prophets
   2. N.T. ____ gospels; ____ history; ____ Pauline epistles; ____ other epistles; ____ apocalypse

III. What is the context for the Book of Revelation? The seven major Biblical Covenants
A. Definition of covenant
   1. Contract: Your performance is based on the performance of the other person in the contract.
      If they do not perform their end, you are not bound to perform yours.
   2. Covenant: Your performance is based on your character, your ability to keep your promise,
      regardless of the other person’s performance.
B. The seven major Biblical Covenants
   1. Adamic
   2. Noahic
   3. Abrahamic
   4. Mosaic
   5. Davidic
   6. Christological
   7. The Second Coming
C. The Book of Revelation is about the last of these covenants

IV. What is the genre of apocalyptic literature?
A. Four views
   1. Preterist
   2. Idealist
   3. Historicist
   4. Futurist
B. “We murder when we dissect.” C. S. Lewis
   1. A “fifth” view— not predictive, but “unmasking” or “revealing” the true nature (James K. A. Smith)
## Interpretations of Revelation

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<th>1-3</th>
<th>4-19</th>
<th>20-22</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preterist</td>
<td>Historic churches</td>
<td>Symbolic of contemporary conditions</td>
<td>Symbolic of heaven and victory</td>
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<tr>
<td>Idealist</td>
<td>Historic churches</td>
<td>Symbolic of conflict of good and evil</td>
<td>Victory of good</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historian</td>
<td>Historic churches</td>
<td>Symbolic of events of history: fall of rome, Mohammedanism, papacy, Reformation</td>
<td>Final judgment, millennium (?), eternal state</td>
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<tr>
<td>Futurist</td>
<td>Historic churches and/or seven stages of church history</td>
<td>Future tribulation; concentrated judgments on apostate church and on antichrist; coming of Christ</td>
<td>Millennial kingdom; judgment of wicked dead; eternal state</td>
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## Theological Perspectives on Revelation

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<th>1-3</th>
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<tr>
<td>Postmillennial</td>
<td>Historic churches</td>
<td>Generally historician</td>
<td>Victory of Christianity over the world</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amillennial</td>
<td>Historic churches</td>
<td>Generally historician</td>
<td>Coming of Christ; judgment; eternal state</td>
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<tr>
<td>Premillennial</td>
<td>Historic churches representative of historical stages</td>
<td>Generally futurist</td>
<td>Literal millennial reign; judgment of great white throne; New Jerusalem</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apocalyptic</td>
<td>Historic churches</td>
<td>Generally preterist</td>
<td>Symbolic of heaven and victory</td>
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Walk Through the Book of Revelation

I. Reading Apocalyptic literature
   A. It is NOT:
      1. Allegory
      2. Mythology
      3. Always prophecy (in the traditional sense)
      4. Future history (in the traditional sense)
      5. A secret code (but it does speak in some code: example: the number of the beast is 666)
   B. It is revelation—the attempt to reveal the true nature of things, past, present, and future

II. Section 1—introduction and letters to the 7 churches
   A. Greetings and Doxology—(1:1-8)
      1. … for the time is near
   B. Greeting to the seven churches—(1:4-8)
      1. The Triune nature of God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
         i. The ontology of the Trinity
         ii. The economy of the Trinity
   C. The Son of Man among the Lampstands (1:9-20)
      1. The 7 stars—the “angels” of the churches
         i. What is the “angel” of the church?
      2. The 7 lampstands are the seven churches
         i. What is a lampstand?
         ii. What is “the church”?
            a. The Church universal
            b. The Church particular (local)
            c. Where two or three are gathered in my name
Walk Through the Book of Revelation

The Letters to the Seven Churches (2:1-3:22); To Thyatira (2:18-29); To Sardis (3:1-6);
To Philadelphia (3:7-13); To Laodicea (3:14-22)

I. Background of the Church at Thyatira
   A. What we know from history
      1. On inland trade route 45 miles east of Pergamum
      2. Important through commerce in wool, linen, apparel, dyed stuffs, leatherwork, tanning, and excellent bronzework
      3. An extensive trade guild or labor union network
      4. Each guild had its own patron deity, feasts, and seasonal festivities that included sexual revelries.
      5. Acts 16:14 mentions that Lydia, a proselyte of the gate, came from the Jewish settlement at Thyatira.

II. To the Church at Thyatira, write:
   A. What he has to say positively
      1. He knows their works, they love and faith service and patient endurance
      2. Their latter works exceed the first
   B. What he has against them
      1. They tolerate that “Jezebel” who calls herself a prophetess (implying she is not) and teaches sexual immorality and eating food sacrificed to idols
   C. The remedy
      1. He will (if she refuses to repent) throw her on a sickbed and strike her children dead
      2. He will bring tribulation to those who commit adultery with her unless they repent
      3. Those who have rejected “her”, hold fast until he comes
D. The warning
1. The “day of the Lord” will be a day of judgement. For those who are saved, it will be a good day but for those who have rejected the Lord, it will be a day of judgement (getting what they deserve)

E. The reward
1. For those who persevere, he will give them the morning star (Jesus himself)

III. Background of the church at Sardis
A. What we know from history
1. Sardis was about thirty miles south of Thyatira.
2. Its location commanded the trade of the Aegean Islands and the military road through the important Hermus River valley.
3. The city's topography was notable for the acropolis, the temple of Artemis, and the necropolis.
   i. The acropolis rose about eight hundred feet above the north section was virtually impregnable because of its rock walls. The acropolis became a refuge for the inhabitants in time of siege.
   ii. Only twice in the history of Sardis was its fortress ever captured, though attacks on it were frequent. When Cyrus attacked it in the sixth century B.C., a shrewd Persian soldier observed a
   iii. The temple to Artemis equaled in size the famous temple of Artemis in Ephesus. However, the temple at Sardis was never finished.
   iv. A third feature of Sardis was the impressive necropolis, or cemetery, of "a thousand hills" (modern Bin Tepe), so named because of the hundreds of burial mounds visible on the skyline some seven miles from Sardis.
4. Sardis retained its wealth into the first two centuries of the Christian Era. But its political brilliance as the capital city of Asia for Persia lay in the past. Ramsay aptly remarks, "No city of Asia at that time showed such a melancholy contrast between past splendor and present decay as Sardis"
5. In A.D. 26, Sardis begged the Roman Senate to grant it the coveted honor of building a temple to Caesar. The distinction, however, went to Smyrna.
6. Sardis was a city of peace, not the peace won through battle, but "the peace of the man whose dreams are dead and whose mind is asleep, the peace of lethargy and evasion" (Ramsey). A great wool industry flourished at Sardis, and this may account for Christ's reference to clothing (v. 4).

IV. To the Church at Sardis write:
A. What he has to say positively
1. Nothing

B. What he has against them
1. He knows their works and they have the reputation of being alive, but are dead.

C. The remedy
1. Wake up and strengthen what remains and is about to die. Remember what you have received and heard and keep it.

D. The warning
1. If not, he will come like a thief in the night, but those who have remained faithful will not be forgotten

E. The reward
1. Those who are faithful will have their names confessed before the Father

V. Background for the Church at Philadelphia
A. What we know from history
1. About 25 miles southeast of Sardis in the Hermus River valley
2. A city built on a plateau along the trade route, it became a fortress city
3. Lots of vine growing in the northern area (wine a big export)
4. The city was earthquake prone and an earthquake in 17 AD which destroyed Sardis and 10 other cities, also destroyed Philadelphia
5. In gratitude the citizens renamed it Neocaesarea ("New Caesar"). Later the name was changed to Flavia (A.D. 70-79), and this, along with Philadelphia, continued to be its name through the second and third centuries A.D.
6. Nothing is known about the origin of the Philadelphian church. However, in A.D. 100-160 the church prospered under the ministry of a prophetess named Ammia, who was universally recognized as ranking with Agabus and the four daughters of Philip in her possession of the gift of prophecy (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, 5.17.2). Long after all the surrounding country had succumbed to Muslim control under Turkey, Philadelphia held out as a Christian populace till 1392.

VI. To the Church at Philadelphia write:
A. What he has to say positively
   1. He knows their works (and approves). He has set an “open door” before them which no one is able to shut (the King held the key to the city gates, and no one else). Here, a reference to Philadelphia being a “missionary city”, even though they have “little power.”
B. What he has against them
   1. Nothing
C. The remedy
   1. No remedy needed.
D. The warning
   1. No warning
E. The reward
   1. They will be spared from the “great tribulation” that precedes Jesus’ return
   2. A faithful municipal servant or a distinguished priest was sometimes honored by having a special pillar added to one of the temples and inscribed with his name, so it will be for those from the church in Philadelphia
   3. Remembering how in days past the changes of name their city received (Neocaesarea and Flavia), the Philadelphians would be impressed that God himself (not the emperor) had chosen to identify himself with them and to insure their citizenship in the New Jerusalem

VII. Background of the church at Laodicea
A. What we know from history
   1. About 45 miles southeast of Philadelphia and about 100 miles due east of Ephesus.
   2. The great Roman road stretching to the inland of Asia from the coast at Ephesus ran straight through its center, making Laodicea an important center of trade and communication.
   3. In addition, its wealth came from the production of a fine quality of famous glossy black wool—whether dyed or natural in color is not known.
   4. Known for the city's banking assets. Evidenced by the fact that Cicero cashed huge bank drafts in Laodicea.
   5. Laodicea was so wealthy that after the great earthquake of A.D. 17, which destroyed it, the people refused imperial help in rebuilding the city, choosing rather to do it entirely by themselves.
   6. Laodicea had a famous school of medicine; Zeus, the supreme god, was also worshiped in the city.
   7. Ramsay notes that Laodicea is difficult to describe because no one thing stands out. There
were no excesses or notable achievements to distinguish it. It was a city with a people who had learned to compromise and accommodate themselves to the needs and wishes of others. They did not zealously stand for anything.

8. A six-mile-long aqueduct brought Laodicea its supply of water from the south. The water came either from hot springs and was cooled to lukewarm or came from a cooler source and warmed up in the aqueduct on the way. For all its wealth, the city had poor water. A large and influential Jewish population resided there. As for the church in Laodicea, it may have been founded by Epaphras (Col 4:12-13).

VIII. To the Church at Laodicea write:
A. What he has to say positively
   1. Not much
B. What he has against them
   1. He knows their works and they are neither hot nor cold
C. The remedy
   1. Get zealous and repent! Buy from Him the true gold, and have your garments cleaned white
D. The warning
   1. If not, he will “spit them from his mouth”. “Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline.”
E. The reward
   1. “Behold, I stand at the door and knock.” This passage is one that helps distinguish the fate of the individual person as a Christian, and the corporate “fate” of the church as a collective
I. Review of presuppositions
   A. Four views
      1. Preterist
      2. Idealist
      3. Historicist
      4. Futurist
   B. A “fifth” view— not predictive, but “unmasking” or “revealing” the true nature (James K. A. Smith)

II. Vision of the 7 sealed scroll, the 7 trumpets, the 7 signs, and the 7 bowls (4:1-19:10)
   A. The 7 Sealed Scroll (4:1 – 8:1) - Setting the agenda for the end of Salvation History

III. Chapter 4—Setting the Heavenly scene
   A. The 24 thrones
   B. The four living creatures

IV. Chapter 5—The sealed scroll
   A. The meaning of the scroll
   B. Who is worthy to open it?
   C. The bowls of incense

V. Chapter 6—The scene shifts to events on earth
   A. When are these events taking place?
   B. The four riders
   C. The four “judgements” (or consequences)

VI. Chapter 7—The first “interlude”
   A. The 144,000
   B. The great white multitude

VII. Chapter 8:1
   A. Silence in heaven for about a half an hour