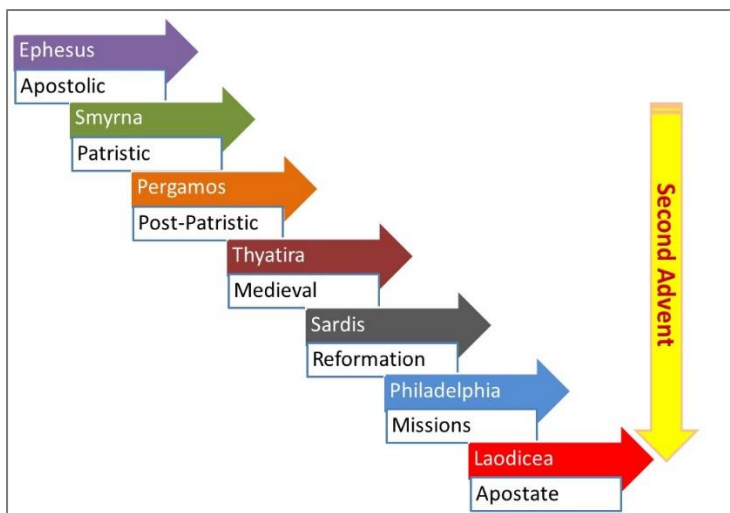


UNVEILING APOCALYPSE, PART 1.

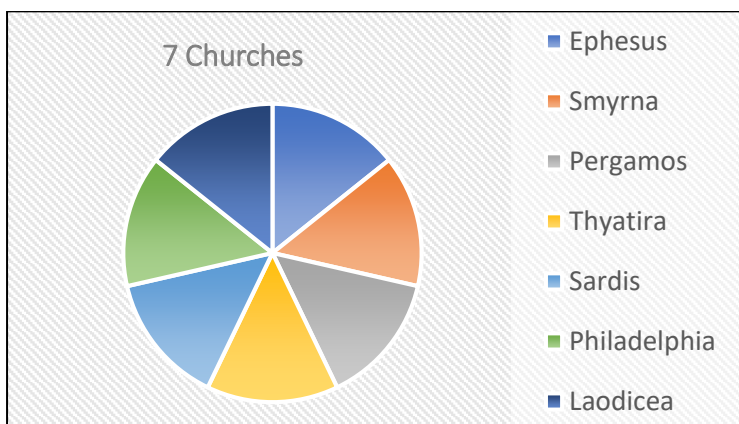
Wann Fanwar, 2019

The book of Revelation is a principal concern of many believers and a much-used source by the film industry. In our haste to grapple with the contents of the book, we usually end up micromanaging the book to such an extent that we get lost within its variegated materials.

The most common way of dealing with Revelation is to read it against real-time history and attempt to articulate its message that way. For instance, in chapters 2-3 we read about the Seven Churches and somewhere along the way we decide they must refer to and match up with specific periods of history. Therefore, the Church of Ephesus is the so-called Apostolic period followed by six other periods of history. The diagram below illustrates a very common approach adopted by Revelation students. Unfortunately, the view is too linear and the Churches do not really fit the time scale assigned to them. To return to the Church of Ephesus, Christ's condemnation of the Church is that it had lost its first love. This does not fit the Apostolic Era where tens of thousands died as martyrs for their faith.



A pie-view of the Churches may actually offer a more adequate reading which fits both the symbolic use of the number 7 and the reality of the Church throughout the ages as illustrated in the following diagram.



While this is not to dismiss the linear view altogether, it does allow us to do something we often neglect—look at the big-picture!

A macro view reveals that there are basically three types of materials in the book: (1) Materials pertaining to the rule and kingdom of God, (2) Materials pertaining to a counterfeit system whose sole aim is to overthrow God's kingdom, and (3) Materials about how God deals with the challenge of the counterfeit.

What we actually see is this. God is presented as a heavenly Three whose kingdom comprises angels and humans, while the Counterfeit is an unholy three also consisting of angels and humans. The Dragon impersonates the One on the Throne, the Sea Beast Impersonates the Lamb (the most used title of Jesus in Revelation), the Land Beast impersonates the work of the Holy Spirit and the Prostitute is the counterfeit of the Celestial Woman (God's people). God's actions against the Counterfeit is presented in a sevenfold series of judgements culminating in the eradication of sin and the re-creation of the world. This somewhat cursory view may also be illustrated by a diagram.



This macro view enables us to come to terms with a cosmic struggle which involves both the earth and its inhabitants as well as the universe. The close resemblances of the various imposters caution us against a reading that concentrates on the minutiae. Instead, we see that the book is (as its name implies) an unveiling of the titanic struggle between God and Satan which has raged for millennia. The unveiling does show that in the end, God will triumph and his people will be able to live eternally in a newly created world.

However, is this the real unveiling? To many, Revelation is like a road map to end times or a series of GPS co-ordinates to heaven. If this is what we do with Revelation, then we miss the actual unveiling. I contend that the book is not an unveiling of last day events even though these may serve as road signs. There is a more significant unveiling that is actually taking place but which, I fear, is far too often bypassed in our haste to get there. In the next episode of this brief journey, we will delve a little bit longer into the true unveiling of the book and discover the message that is so often missed.