

good  
NEWS BIBLE

The book of  
REVELATION

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# Contents

Welcome to the Good News Bible	4
Introduction	9
Chapter 1	10
Chapter 2	12
Chapter 3	16
Chapter 4	20
Chapter 5	22
Chapter 6	24
Chapter 7	26
Chapter 8	27
Chapter 9	29
Chapter 10	32
Chapter 11	33
Chapter 12	36
Chapter 13	38
Chapter 14	40
Chapter 15	44
Chapter 16	45
Chapter 17	47
Chapter 18	50
Chapter 19	53
Chapter 20	56
Chapter 21	58
Chapter 22	61
Where to find ...	64

# Welcome to the Good News Bible

Welcome to this dyslexia-friendly edition of the book of Revelation, using text from the Good News Bible.

If you are dyslexic, you may find most Bibles very difficult to read, because of their small type, long paragraphs and thin paper. This book has been specially designed with the British Dyslexia Association's style guide in mind, so it has the following features:

- Thicker paper, so that type does not show through
- Cream-coloured paper
- Matt paper
- Plain font
- Larger type
- Wider line spacing
- Short paragraphs
- Bold headings

The Good News Bible is a clear, easy-to read translation of the Bible. It uses ordinary, everyday language so that as many people as possible can read and understand it. This has made it a very popular translation, selling over 150 million copies in the UK alone.

## **About the Bible**

The Bible isn't one book but a collection of books. These books were written at different times by different people. They include many types of writing, such as history, poetry, stories, laws, letters, visions, songs and prayers.

The Bible has two main sections, known as the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament contains the story of God's relationship with the Israelites, over hundreds of years. It was written mainly in the Hebrew language, with some parts in a language called Aramaic.

The New Testament continues the story. It tells us about Jesus Christ and how his first followers began to spread the Christian message across the world. It was written in Greek, a language spoken through most of the Roman empire. Revelation is the very last book in the New Testament.

Even the newest parts of the Bible are about 2,000 years old, and many parts are much older. This means that everyone who reads it today will find some parts of it hard to understand. It might be helpful if you try to imagine what life was like for the people who first read it. Then think about what the words might mean for us today. If you focus on the parts you do understand, not the parts you find difficult, there will always be something interesting to learn.

## **Finding your way around the book of Revelation**

Revelation brings the story of the Bible to its end. It consists of a series of visions that are hard for all readers to understand. They describe events in heaven and on earth that lead to the final judgement of humankind. The final two chapters paint a picture of a new creation in which there is no more pain or suffering.

If you're reading the book of Revelation on your own, it's a good idea to try reading it from beginning to end. This will give you an idea of how the events of the 'last times' build to their climax. However, if you are in church or at a study group, someone might ask you to look up the reference for a verse or short passage.

References are always given in this order – book title, chapter title and verse number. For example, Revelation 5.6 means the fifth chapter of Revelation, and the sixth verse of that chapter.

In this book, the chapter numbers are in very large type on a separate line. The verse numbers are the very small numbers that you can see as you read the story.

You can also follow the chapter and verse numbers through the book by looking at the reference at the top of each page.

## **Enjoy reading!**

It is all too easy to assume that we know exactly what a Bible story says, especially if it's a famous one or we have heard it many times before. If this book helps you to read Revelation for yourself more easily, you might find that you understand it in a new way.

Don't be afraid to ask questions about what you are reading. What excites you? What confuses you? Which are your favourite verses or stories? Write notes for yourself, or draw pictures, or memorise the words so that you can think further about them later.

Why not get together with other people to read the book of Revelation? We all bring our own experiences and thoughts to the Bible, so it can be helpful to talk about it together and find out how other people understand it.

If you've enjoyed this book, the following books of the Bible are also available in a dyslexia-friendly version.

- Genesis
- The Psalms
- Mark's Gospel
- John's Gospel
- Romans

Go to our website, [www.biblesociety.org.uk](http://www.biblesociety.org.uk), to find out more.





# Revelation

## **The end of all things**

**What's it about?** This book of apocalyptic writing contains visions of beasts, humans, enemies of God, angels and more. It can be a confusing and disturbing book.

**Who wrote it?** Possibly the same as the writer of the Gospel of John – John the disciple of Jesus – though some people wonder if it was John the elder, who would have been well known in the early Church.

**Why read it?** Despite there being much in the book that is difficult to interpret and understand, Revelation tells us that death and suffering will be a thing of the past, and that God will deal with the powers of evil once and for all. We end the Bible as we started it – with people and God living together.

**What's special about it?** The seven letters to the churches at the start, and the final passages about God living with his people, are challenging and inspirational. The visions of worship in heaven and the final defeat of evil are very different from anything else in the Bible.

# Chapter 1

<sup>1</sup>This book is the record of the events that Jesus Christ revealed. God gave him this revelation in order to show his servants what must happen very soon. Christ made these things known to his servant John by sending his angel to him, <sup>2</sup>and John has told all that he has seen. This is his report concerning the message from God and the truth revealed by Jesus Christ.

<sup>3</sup>Happy is the one who reads this book, and happy are those who listen to the words of this prophetic message and obey what is written in this book! For the time is near when all these things will happen.

## **Greetings to the Seven Churches**

<sup>4</sup>From John to the seven churches in the province of Asia:

Grace and peace be yours from God, who is, who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits in front of his throne, <sup>5</sup>and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first to be raised from death and who is also the ruler of the kings of the world.

He loves us, and by his sacrificial death he has freed us from our sins <sup>6</sup>and made us a kingdom of priests to serve his God and Father. To Jesus Christ be the glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

<sup>7</sup>Look, he is coming on the clouds! Everyone will see him, including those who pierced him. All peoples on earth will mourn over him. So shall it be!

<sup>8</sup>“I am the first and the last,” says the Lord God Almighty, who is, who was, and who is to come.

### **A Vision of Christ**

<sup>9</sup>I am John, your brother, and as a follower of Jesus I am your partner in patiently enduring the suffering that comes to those who belong to his Kingdom. I was put on the island of Patmos because I had proclaimed God's word and the truth that Jesus revealed.

<sup>10</sup>On the Lord's day the Spirit took control of me, and I heard a loud voice, that sounded like a trumpet, speaking behind me.

<sup>11</sup>It said, “Write down what you see, and send the book to the churches in these seven cities: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.”

<sup>12</sup>I turned round to see who was talking to me, and I saw seven gold lampstands, <sup>13</sup>and among them there was what looked like a human being, wearing a robe that reached to his feet, and a gold belt round his chest.

<sup>14</sup>His hair was white as wool, or as snow, and his eyes blazed like fire; <sup>15</sup>his feet shone like brass that has been refined and polished, and his voice sounded like a roaring waterfall.

<sup>16</sup>He held seven stars in his right-hand, and a sharp two-edged sword came out of his mouth. His face was as bright as the midday sun.

<sup>17</sup>When I saw him, I fell down at his feet like a dead man. He placed his right-hand on me and said, “Don’t be afraid! I am the first and the last.

<sup>18</sup>I am the living one! I was dead, but now I am alive for ever and ever. I have authority over death and the world of the dead.

<sup>19</sup>Write, then, the things you see, both the things that are now and the things that will happen afterwards.

<sup>20</sup>This is the secret meaning of the seven stars that you see in my right-hand, and of the seven gold lampstands: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

## Chapter 2

### **The Message to Ephesus**

<sup>1</sup>“To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:

“This is the message from the one who holds the seven stars in his right-hand and who walks among the seven gold lampstands.

<sup>2</sup>I know what you have done; I know how hard you have worked and how patient you have been. I know that you cannot tolerate evil people and that you have tested those who say they are apostles but are not, and have found out that they are liars.

<sup>3</sup>You are patient, you have suffered for my sake, and you have not given up.

<sup>4</sup>But this is what I have against you: you do not love me now as you did at first.

<sup>5</sup>Think how far you have fallen! Turn from your sins and do what you did at first. If you don't turn from your sins, I will come to you and take your lampstand from its place.

<sup>6</sup>But this is what you have in your favour: you hate what the Nicolaitans do, as much as I do.

<sup>7</sup>“If you have ears, then, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches!

“To those who win the victory I will give the right to eat the fruit of the tree of life that grows in the Garden of God.

### **The Message to Smyrna**

<sup>8</sup> “To the angel of the church in Smyrna write:

“This is the message from the one who is the first and the last, who died and lived again.

<sup>9</sup>I know your troubles; I know that you are poor — but really you are rich! I know the evil things said against you by those who claim to be Jews but are not; they are a group that belongs to Satan!

<sup>10</sup>Don't be afraid of anything you are about to suffer. Listen! The Devil will put you to the test by having some of you thrown into prison, and your troubles will last ten days.

Be faithful to me, even if it means death, and I will give you life as your prize of victory.

<sup>11</sup> “If you have ears, then, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches!

“Those who win the victory will not be hurt by the second death.

### **The Message to Pergamum**

<sup>12</sup> “To the angel of the church in Pergamum write:

“This is the message from the one who has the sharp two-edged sword.

<sup>13</sup> I know where you live, there where Satan has his throne. You are true to me, and you did not abandon your faith in me even during the time when Antipas, my faithful witness, was killed there where Satan lives.

<sup>14</sup> But there are a few things I have against you: there are some among you who follow the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak how to lead the people of Israel into sin by persuading them to eat food that had been offered to idols and to practise sexual immorality.

<sup>15</sup> In the same way you have people among you who follow the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

<sup>16</sup> Now turn from your sins! If you don't, I will come to you soon and fight against those people with the sword that comes out of my mouth.

<sup>17</sup> “If you have ears, then, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches!

“To those who win the victory I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give each of them a white stone on which is written a new name that no one knows except the one who receives it.

### **The Message to Thyatira**

<sup>18</sup> “To the angel of the church in Thyatira write:

“This is the message from the Son of God, whose eyes blaze like fire, whose feet shine like polished brass.

<sup>19</sup> I know what you do. I know your love, your faithfulness, your service, and your patience. I know that you are doing more now than you did at first.

<sup>20</sup> But this is what I have against you: you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a messenger of God. By her teaching she misleads my servants into practising sexual immorality and eating food that has been offered to idols.

<sup>21</sup> I have given her time to repent of her sins, but she does not want to turn from her immorality.

<sup>22</sup> And so I will throw her on to a bed where she and those who committed adultery with her will suffer terribly. I will do this now unless they repent of the wicked things they did with her.

<sup>23</sup> I will also kill her followers, and then all the churches will know that I am the one who knows everyone's thoughts

and wishes. I will repay each of you according to what you have done.

24 “But the rest of you in Thyatira have not followed this evil teaching; you have not learnt what the others call ‘the deep secrets of Satan’. I say to you that I will not put any other burden on you.

25 But until I come, you must hold firmly to what you have.

26-28 To those who win the victory, who continue to the end to do what I want, I will give the same authority that I received from my Father: I will give them authority over the nations, to rule them with an iron rod and to break them to pieces like clay pots. I will also give them the morning star.

29 “If you have ears, then, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches!

## Chapter 3

### **The Message to Sardis**

1 “To the angel of the church in Sardis write:

“This is the message from the one who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know what you are doing; I know that you have the reputation of being alive, even though you are dead!

2 So wake up, and strengthen what you still have before it dies completely. For I find that what you have done is not yet perfect in the sight of my God.



<sup>3</sup> Remember, then, what you were taught and what you heard; obey it and turn from your sins. If you do not wake up, I will come upon you like a thief, and you will not even know the time when I will come.

<sup>4</sup> But a few of you there in Sardis have kept your clothes clean. You will walk with me, clothed in white, because you are worthy to do so.

<sup>5</sup> Those who win the victory will be clothed like this in white, and I will not remove their names from the book of the living. In the presence of my Father and of his angels I will declare openly that they belong to me.

<sup>6</sup> “If you have ears, then, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches!

### **The Message to Philadelphia**

<sup>7</sup> “To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:

“This is the message from the one who is holy and true. He has the key that belonged to David, and when he opens a door, no one can close it, and when he closes it, no one can open it.

<sup>8</sup> I know what you do; I know that you have a little power; you have followed my teaching and have been faithful to me. I have opened a door in front of you, which no one can close.

<sup>9</sup> Listen! As for that group that belongs to Satan, those liars who claim that they are Jews but are not, I will make them come and bow down at your feet. They will all know that I love you.

<sup>10</sup>Because you have kept my command to endure, I will also keep you safe from the time of trouble which is coming upon the world to test all the people on earth.

<sup>11</sup>I am coming soon. Keep safe what you have, so that no one will rob you of your victory prize.

<sup>12</sup>I will make those who are victorious pillars in the temple of my God, and they will never leave it. I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which will come down out of heaven from my God. I will also write on them my new name.

<sup>13</sup>“If you have ears, then, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches!

### **The Message to Laodicea**

<sup>14</sup> “To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:

“This is the message from the Amen, the faithful and true witness, who is the origin<sup>a</sup> of all that God has created.

<sup>15</sup>I know what you have done; I know that you are neither cold nor hot. How I wish you were either one or the other!

<sup>16</sup>But because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I am going to spit you out of my mouth!

<sup>17</sup>You say, ‘I am rich and well off; I have all I need.’ But you do not know how miserable and pitiful you are! You are poor, naked, and blind.

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<sup>a</sup> *origin; or ruler.*



**“If anyone ... opens the door, I will come in” (3.20)**

<sup>18</sup>I advise you, then, to buy gold from me, pure gold, in order to be rich. Buy also white clothing to dress yourself and cover up your shameful nakedness. Buy also some ointment to put on your eyes, so that you may see.

<sup>19</sup> I rebuke and punish all whom I love. Be in earnest, then, and turn from your sins.

<sup>20</sup>Listen! I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with them, and they will eat with me.

<sup>21</sup>To those who win the victory I will give the right to sit beside me on my throne, just as I have been victorious and now sit by my Father on his throne.

<sup>22</sup>“If you have ears, then, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches!”

## Chapter 4

### **Worship in Heaven**

<sup>1</sup> At this point I had another vision and saw an open door in heaven. And the voice that sounded like a trumpet, which I had heard speaking to me before, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after this."

<sup>2</sup> At once the Spirit took control of me. There in heaven was a throne with someone sitting on it.

<sup>3</sup> His face gleamed like such precious stones as jasper and carnelian, and all round the throne there was a rainbow the colour of an emerald.

<sup>4</sup> In a circle round the throne were 24 other thrones, on which were seated 24 elders dressed in white and wearing crowns of gold.

<sup>5</sup> From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings, and peals of thunder. In front of the throne seven lighted torches were burning, which are the seven spirits of God.

<sup>6</sup> Also in front of the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal.

Surrounding the throne on each of its sides, were four living creatures covered with eyes in front and behind.

<sup>7</sup> The first one looked like a lion; the second looked like a bull; the third had a face like a human face; and the fourth looked like an eagle in flight.